A Study of Some of the Aspects and Implications of the Anglo-Argentine Commercial Treaty of 1825

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A STUDY OF SOME OF THE ASPECTS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE

AMOLO-ARGENTINE COMMERCIAL TREATY OF 1825

by

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of Loyola University in Partial Fulfillment of
the requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

January

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to Dr. Paul Lests, who tended to be both tolerant and magnanimous whenever the student displayed fits of immaturity; to Dr. Edward Gargan, under whom the student learned a great deal about historical interpretation; and to Miss Sylvia Daniels, whose innate efficiency helped translate this work from the world of ideas to the realm of reality.
FOREWORD

Examination of the principal authorities dealing with Argentina during the revolutionary period (1810-1860) shows a neglect of the 1825 Anglo-Argentine Treaty of Commerce, Amity, and Navigation, or a general approval of it, the acceptance ranging from lukewarm to rabid partisanship. Writing in regard to the major characteristics of the treaty, the distinguished Argentine historian, Ricardo Levene wrote:

The treaty was based upon the principles of reciprocity and equality.¹

Concerning the question of Argentine concessions to British interests in the treaty, Ricardo Pillaí, a noted Argentine economist stated:

Britain has not asked for privileges for herself, nor have they (privileges) been conceded.²

Perhaps the most enthusiastic proponent of the 1825 Treaty was another Argentine historical figure, Vicente Lopez, who wrote:

The important Treaty of Amity celebrated on February 2, 1825, and which properly ratified later as a national pact, has been the foundation of our good commercial relations with the English, and


²The Spanish reads: "La Gran Bretaña . . . ni esta ha solicitado privilégios poro si, ni ellos los han concedido."

also of the excellent results which both nations have enjoyed. Today, it is no longer necessary that we enter into a detailed examination of its (i.e., treaty's) terms, because all have before their very eyes the completely free and independent life which the English subjects brought about in our midst as inhabitants, as businessmen, bankers, and industrialists. 3

J. Fred Rippy ignores the 1825 Treaty in his Argentina, but in his Rivalry of the United States and Britain over Latin America 1806-1830, he follows Pillado very closely in his comment:

It (i.e., the Treaty) . . . did not stipulate any special concessions to the English commerce--none were asked. 4

Rippy does point out, as opposed to Pillado and Levene, that the treaty was of great advantage to England for it "gave Canning and Parish everything they could ask for." 5

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3The Spanish reads: El importantísimo--Tratado de Amistad, Comercio y Navegación celebró el 2 de Febrero de 1825, y que debidamente ratificado después como pacto nacional, ha sido la base constante de nuestros buenos relaciones con el comercio inglés, y de los excelentes resultados que uno y otro país ha recojido.

Hoy no es ya necesario que entremos en el detalle de sus estipulaciones, porque todos tenemos por delante de sus ojos la vida totalmente libre e independiente que los suyos han hecho entre nosotros como habitantes, como comerciantes, lanqueros e industriales.

Cf., Vicente López, Historia de la República Argentina. Tomo IX (Buenos Aires, 190), p. 250.


5J. Fred Rippy, Rivalry of the United States and Britain over Latin America, p. 112.
There is another group of historians who are conspicuous due to the fact that they do not wax quite so eloquently in regard to the 1825 Commercial Treaty. Adolfo Saldias, author of the five-volume *Historia de la Confederación Argentina*, fails to mention the treaty at all. Frederick Kirkpatrick, in his *Argentine Republic*, mentions the existence of a treaty but makes no comment either pro or con. Miron Burgin, author of *Economic Aspects of Argentine Federalism 1820-1852*, ignores the treaty entirely. Woodbine Parish, author of *Buenos Aires since the Conquest*, was the English Plenipotentiary who signed the treaty on behalf of Great Britain, but he makes no comment whatsoever about its provisions, the method of negotiations, or the part he played in bringing about the treaty's ratification.

The writer, in the following pages, attempted to make a detailed examination of the 1825 Commercial Treaty, its clauses and its phraseology, in light of the circumstances and conditions of that time, in the hope of determining why the Argentine representatives signed the treaty, whether or not the terms of the treaty were equitable and reciprocal, and whether special privileges were sought or given.

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In order that the historians' conclusions regarding the treaty be evaluated, a detailed examination of the treaty's terms are necessary. It is this which the historians apparently have not done in the past. 10

The various and somewhat contradictory conclusions must therefore be examined in terms of the sources to see what position can best be taken regarding the status of English rights and privileges as established by the treaty, and the causes of Argentina's acceptance of the same.

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10The writer reviewed over one hundred twenty works attempting to find a study of the treaty's articles in terms of the conditions prevalent in the country at the time it was signed, or if nothing else, an intensive study of the treaty's articles. Neither of these tasks appear to have been performed previously. Ricardo Pillado, pp. 71-89, makes a commentary upon the treaty in general, but he does not list the articles, nor does he make a general study of them.

Ignacio Núñez, Account of the United Provinces of the Rio de la Plata, translator anonymous (London, 1827), pp. 151-167, lists the treaty's articles, but does not examine them. Núñez makes only a short general commentary.
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CHAPTER I

ENGLAND IN THE RÍO DE LA PLATA

1713-1825

The Peace Conference at Utrecht, ending the long War of Spanish Succession, began in January, 1712. Their nation having been victorious over the French at Blenheim, Ramillies and Vallplaquet, British plenipotentiaries were determined to obtain for their own interests, important trade concessions and privileges.1 Primary among those privileges desired was the Asiento, which the English sought from Spain.2 Direct negotiations between Spain and England began in October, 1712.3 On March 26, 1713, a contract, containing the following items was signed:

1Jean McLachlan, Trade and Peace with Old Spain 1667-1759 (Cambridge, England, 1940), p. 46. McLachlan points out that "to obtain direct trade with the Spanish Indies had been the ambition of English merchants and statesmen since the discovery of the new world."

2Somers, John, A Collection of Scarce and Valuable Tracts. 2nd ed. (London, 1819), Vol. XIII, p. 117. "As early as May, 1711 ... the concession of the Asiento (i.e., to Britain) seemed certain." Ibid.

3McLachlan, p. 117. Louis XIV had prevailed upon Philip V not to come to Utrecht, in order that the issue of Bourbon rule in Spain did not begin until October, 1712. Lord Harrington led the British diplomatic mission to Madrid, but the actual "brain directing the negotiations for Britain was Manuel Gilligan." Ibid.
Article I

Her Britannic Majesty does offer and undertake for persons whom She shall name and appoint, that they shall oblige and charge themselves with the bringing into the West Indies of America, belonging to his Catholic Majesty, in the space of the said Thirty Years, to commence on the First day of May, 1713, and terminate on the like Day, which will be in the year 1743. One hundred and forty-four thousand Pesas de India. (Negroes)4

Article VII

... It shall be lawful for the said Asientos ... to introduce their Black Slaves contracted for, into all the parts of the North Sea and of Buenos Aires ... .

Article IX

It is agreed that ... out of the four-thousand eight hundred Negroes, which pursuant to this Asiento, they (Asientos) are to import yearly, to bring into the said River of Plate or Buenos Aires ... in each of the said thirty years of this Asiento, to the number of one thousand two hundred of those Pesas de India of both sexes ... It is hereby declared that Her Britannic Majesty and the Asientos in Her Name may hold in the said River of Plate some parcels of land which His Catholic Majesty shall appoint or assign.5

Article XXIV

... It being requisite for the support and subsistence of the Negro Slaves, who shall be left on shore ... as likewise of all the persons employed in this Commerce to keep constantly, magazines filled with clothing, medicine, provisions, and other necessities,

4The Asiento or Contract for allowing the Subjects of Great Britain the Liberty of Importing Negroes into Spanish America (London, 1713), p. 3. In addition to the right to send slaves to South America by the Asiento Contract, the South Sea Company was also allowed to send one 500 tons ship ("permission ship") a year for thirty years to Spanish America. The boat will be allowed to stop at the ports of Buenos Aires, Porto Bello or Cartagena. The sole stipulation was that the "Company shall not attempt any unlawful trade," Ibid., pp. 43, 45.

5Ibid., pp. 9-10.

6Ibid.
in all the Factories that have been established, for the most easy and better management of this Asiento . . . The scientists trust that His Catholic Majesty will please to allow them . . . to bring from Europe or Her Britannic Majesty's Colonies in North America, directly to the ports and coasts of . . . the River of Plata or Buenos Aires, clothing, medicine, provisions and Naval Stores for the use of the Asientists, their Negroes, Factors, Servants and Mariners . . .

According to the terms of the Asiento Contract, three stations were to be organized as centers for the distribution of slaves and one of these was Buenos Aires. Concerning the commercial importance of Buenos Aires, one sage Englishman observed:

It (Buenos Aires) is the emporium whence the whole of the interior of Spanish South America . . . must be supplied with an innumerable variety of European articles . . . The advantageous situation of that city on a river which constituted the only inlet to all the provinces . . . must render its commercial perogatives permanent and unchanged by any political events.

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7Ibid., pp. 39-40. The request for the direct shipment of needed goods made in Article XXXIV was granted in Article XLI on condition that "the Company shall not attempt any unlawful trade," Ibid., p. 43.

The copy of the treaty found above is a copy of the original document, found in the Ayer Room of Newberry Library. In addition to the English text, there are adjacent columns of the Spanish text. The Newberry Library copy is an official copy, printed with the government's permission, by J. Basset, in 1713.

The English translation is not too laborious, but the Spanish, with its rambling phrases and grammatical structure, and changes in letters, was extremely difficult to understand.

8Vera Lee Brown, "South Sea Company and Contraband Trade," American Historical Review, XI (July, 1926), p. 57. The two other locations for organization centers were Jamaica, Porto Bello and Buenos Aires.


Piezas de India refers generally to Negro slaves, but each Negro slave was not a piezas de India. Postletaway's Universal Dictionary of Trade and
The assignment of the Asiento Contract to England was soon followed by the sale of the Contract to the South Sea Company for £7,500,000. In addition, both the monarchs of Spain and England became members of the Board of Directors of South Sea Company, Article XXVIII of the Asiento Contract having reserved for them one-fourth of the Asiento trade profits.

Commerce (London, 1714), Vol. I, Part I, p. 131, notes that for purposes of determining the head-tax to be paid on slaves, by British slave-shippers, a number of distinctions were set up.

Technically, a Piezas de India (literally, pieces of India) had to be (1) able-bodied, and in good health, (2) between the ages of 15 and 30, (either male or female), (3) at least seven quarters tall, (4) well-shaped and without serious blemish. Ibid., p. 130. Slaves falling in the above category were first-class, and the full head-tax (33 1/3 pieces of eight) was to be paid on each first-class slave (one first-class slave equals one piezas de India). Ibid.

The elderly, the sick, children between the ages of 10 and 15 were second-class slaves. Ibid. Children between the ages of 5 and 10 were considered third-class slaves. Ibid.

On an actual voyage, undertaken by an English captain to Buenos Aires in 1714, the following duties were paid:

250 first class - pay full duty

Second (60 old or sick - pay 1/4 duty or the equivalent of
class (150 children (10 to 15) - pay 2/3 duty or the
equivalent of

Third (150 children (5 to 10) - pay 1/2 duty or the
class (equivalent of

610 actual slaves landed. Ibid.


11 Asiento, p. 33. The kings themselves each held 1/4 of the stock, but...
The prospect of extensive profit as a result of the procurement of the Asiento Contract appeared almost certain to many of the South Sea Company's stockholders. However, some of the more important of the Company's officials were determined to follow the lines of policy originally suggested by Lord Bolingbroke. In August, 1713, while at Utrecht, Bolingbroke had remarked that he considered "the value of the Asiento to be that it would serve as a shield for illicit trade."12

It appears that from the beginning of the period of the contract, an inner clique of stockholders and directors used the resources of the Company as a means of supplementing their own fortunes with profits from the sale of contraband goods. The direction of the traffic in contraband was taken over by secretly appointed Sub or Deputy Governors, who kept records of all contraband trade and issued statements of profit.13

Officially, the Company not only refrained from smuggling, but declared that it intended to punish any of its employees found guilty of such an offense.

In the Rio de la Plata, South Sea Company local officials (factory keepers, slave drivers) and Spanish governmental representatives soon discovered that

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12 Jean McIlwain, Trade and Peace with Old Spain (London, 1940), p. 61.
13 George Nelson, "Contraband Trade and the Asiento 1730-1739," American Historical Review, LI (October, 1945), p. 56. The Sub-Directors or Sub-Governors appointed between 1721 and 1739 were Sir John Byles, Sir Richard Hopkins and Peter Burrell, Ibid., p. 56.
their mutual interests could be extremely compatible. Many Buenos Aires merchants were deeply resentful of what to them seemed favoritism shown for the interests of Lima Peninsulares by the Spanish Government, which forbade the direct shipment of goods from Cadiz or Seville to Buenos Aires. Merchants at Buenos Aires often had no ready bullion with which to make payments for slaves or goods. However, whereas the Spanish and Company trade officials always wanted bullion, contraband traders took hides, tallow, and even extended credit to the merchants. Furthermore, all official trade was subject to sales and excise taxes; contraband trade required no tax payments.

South Sea contraband activities were initiated when the first "permission ship" (Bedford) sailed into Cartagena. The sale of contraband goods there provided the Spanish Governor with 75,000 pieces of eight. The first "permission ship" to enter Buenos Aires was the Kingston. Loaded with contraband, the Spanish Governor of the city was given twenty-five per cent of the profits as his share of the booty. In 1716, the Asiento Contract was modified and the South Sea Company was allowed to store in Buenos Aires and other locations where their factories were located "surplus goods left for the bartering of Negroes in Africa." In addition, the South Sea Company was not permitted to send its agents inland to deliver slaves. The possibilities for contraband

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1Browne, pp. 666-668.
15 Ibid., p. 668.
16 Ibid., p. 668.
17 Nelson, p. 59.
were thus increased immeasurably. Some Spanish officials in Buenos Aires began shipping products to Britain on Company vessels free of charge.

Those South Sea Company officials who were involved in the contraband traffic had no qualms about using part of their profits to prevent the detection of their activities. For example, Don Guillermo Eon, the Spanish King's representative on the Company Board of Directors, was granted £1,000 and an £800 pension in return for agreeing to allow contraband to be shipped from Britain to Spanish America. On yet another occasion, Benjamin Keene, a Company agent, was sent to Spain in an effort to bribe members of the Council of the Indies.

While the profitability of the illicit trade has been described, the legal slave trade between Buenos Aires and the South Sea Company languished.

Supplying slaves legally was a haphazard operation. Slave ships were usually dispatched from London to Buenos Aires in pairs, but they rarely arrived either that way, or on schedule. The fact that captains involved in the legal slave traffic always demanded bullion did not encourage legal sales. Indeed, the legal traffic of Spanish America proved so disappointing that by 1732, those not involved in the secret contraband affairs proposed the cancellation of the Asiento Contract. That the contract was not terminated was primarily due to the efforts of the inner clique which continued to reap large profits from contraband trade.

16 Brown, p. 666.
19 Nelson, p. 56.
20 Melachlan, p. 123.
During the period 1730-1739, the volume of contraband trade rose to a point where it threatened the commercial framework of the Spanish Empire. "Spanish commerce in the New World declined two-thirds (from 15,000 tons to 4,000 tons yearly between 1730 and 1739)."21

Faced with disruption of their valuable trade, the Spanish Royal Government took steps to counteract the contraband menace. Spanish doubloons and gold pesos spoke as eloquent a language as English pounds, and after 1725, Spain offered bribes to those possessing information about the South Sea Company's contraband activity. These efforts were crowned with success in 1727, when two ex-Company officials, a Doctor Burnett and Nathan Flowes, provided the Spaniards with extensive information, regarding South Sea contraband activity.22 With Count Barrenochoe acting as chief investigator, the Spaniards presented the Company with evidence of its duplicity.

War over this and other matters was temporarily averted when on November 9, 1729, France, Spain and England signed a treaty calling for friendship and mutual defence. However, the activities of the inner clique of the South Sea Company continued; the audacious efforts of sea captains and private individuals to sell contraband goods became increasingly brazen. The Spaniards retaliated

21 Nelson, p. 55. Nelson carries on a lively description of South Sea Company smuggling operations, Ibid., pp. 52-61. His conclusions regarding the decline in Spanish trade as a result of far-flung contraband operations is fully supported by Vera Lee Brown, pp. 659-661.

22 It appears that both Burnett and Flowes had been fired by the South Sea Company for personal contraband activities. Cf. Nelson, pp. 55-56. Both Flowes and Burnett were promised pensions by the Spanish Government, but only Dr. Burnett received his. Cf. Brown, p. 678.
by seizing English ships considered to be illegally in Spanish American ports, replacing some corrupt officials, and refusing to the Company the right to send to Spanish America the "permission ships," which had been permitted in the Asiento Treaty.

On January 11, 1739, officials representing the Spanish and British Governments signed a convention calling for an end to

... searching and taking of vessels, the seizing of effects ... and other grievances on each side in the West Indies ... to prevent an open rupture between the two crowns ... 23

Spain broke the brief period of compromise and conciliation by demanding a complete examination of all the South Sea Company's books. The Company officials refused, and charged the Spaniards with having destroyed Company property worth £400,000. These events, coupled with a series of minor incidents in the West Indies (i.e., Jenkins' Ear), led to Spain's declaration of war against Britain (November 26, 1739). It is interesting to note that the problems of trade and English contraband were the first problems dealt with by the King of Spain in his declaration of war. 24


24 The King of Spain's Declaration of War against Great Britain (London, 1739), p. 7. In His Catholic Majesty's Manifesto (London, 1739), the King of Spain declared that all British ships damaged, captured or destroyed by Guarda Costas since 1729 had been employed in contraband operations. Philip V, also insisted that Britain did not possess the "Liberty of free Navigation in all seas." Cf. His Catholic Majesty's Manifesto (London, 1739), pp. 5-7, 33, 35 and 45-47.

The British position is well portrayed in two anonymously authored works, A Review of All That Both Passed between the Courts of Great Britain and Spain, Relating to Our Trade and Navigation, (London, 1739), and Reasons for a War
War between England and Spain finally came to a halt in 1744. The thirty years of the Asiento Contract had been completed, but certain Company officials insisted that since the privileges of the contract had been interrupted by four years, the privileges of the contract should be extended for a like period.

Negotiations for a new contract began in 1746, but ground to a halt in June, 1749. The South Sea Company claimed that during the period 1729-1749, Spanish officials and ships had seized or destroyed Company property and merchandise worth £800,000. However, when the Marques de la Ensenada, Spanish negotiator, offered to Lord Benjamin Keene, representing the interests of the Company, £100,000, the Company accepted, and the Asiento Contract became null and void (1750). 25

Some Englishmen protested bitterly against the loss of the contract. One unidentified group of merchants bitterly lamented:

against Spain (London, 1738). The former stressed British freedom of the seas (pp. 5 and 28), and states that British shipping "taken and pilleged by the Guarda-Costas" was not involved in contraband trade (pp. 8 and 19). A payment of £95,000 for damages to British ships, cargo and crews was demanded (pp. 39-10).

The later work, written by a merchant, states flatly that "war is just where restitution or satisfaction is denied for goods taken away by violence," (p. 6). The author then proceeds to denounce the actions of the Guarda-Costas, (p. 8) and declares that Spain proposes to destroy British commerce in America, (pp. 12-13).

25 McCallan, pp. 126-139. It is quite possible that the "Lord Benjamin Keene" mentioned above and the "Benjamin Keene" who attempted to bribe members of the Council of the Indies (cf. p. 7 of this work) are one and the same.
The interests of Land and Trade are now so interwoven in this country that they may be deemed the same in the strictest sense and with the utmost propriety. The interests of trade cannot be prompted if advantageous contracts are to be terminated.\textsuperscript{26}

In particular, complete expiration of trade relations between colonists of the Río de la Plata and Great Britain was not deemed to be in the best interests of either party.

Spain employed all of her limited resources in an effort to break the back of contraband trade. A system of specially-licensed "register ships," able to carry on trade in any South American port was inaugurated. In 1767, "packet-boat" service, half of the cargo being mail, the other half cargo, was extended to the Río de la Plata. In 1776, the Vice-Royalty of La Plata was created, and in 1778, Charles III ended the Seville-Cadiz shipping monopoly, opening Buenos Aires and other ports to all Spanish trade.

All of these measures were apparently unsuccessful in terminating British contraband trade in the Río de la Plata. In 1781, British goods were barred, by special order, in the La Plata area. From 1781 until 1784, England and Spain were at war. The English Navy, now Mistress of the Seas, practically severed all connections between Spain and the Río de la Plata. Commercial activity in the La Plata area suffered a severe decline, and did not recover until the end of war, in 1784. At that time, the old order banishing English goods was reaffirmed, and in addition, severe restrictions were introduced upon

\textsuperscript{26} Considerations on the Advantages of the Yieldings up to Spain the Unexpired Term of the Asiento Contract (London, 1749), p. 11.
the entry of foreign vessels into Buenos Aires under any pretense.27 Despite these laws, English contraband shipping was resumed, Spain being unable to eradicate contraband shipping in Rio de la Plata.

The desire for the further acquisition of the Rio de la Plata commerce was, considering the fruitfulness of the trade on the maritime character of Great Britain, only natural. However, the trade in Rio de la Plata had been primarily that of contraband. While the profits had been large, contraband trade is, by its nature, uncertain and highly dangerous. Thus, the idea gradually developed in some circles that the best method of assuring the permanence of British interests in the Rio de la Plata was to seize the area. Since Spain would never part with the area willingly, force would be necessary.

English interest in the annexation of the Rio de la Plata can be traced as far back as 1711. At that time William Pullen, Governor of Bermuda, wrote to the Earl of Oxford stating that the Rio de la Plata was the "best place in the world for forming an English Colony."28 The idea of starting an English colony in the Rio de la Plata obviously pleased the Earl, for he wrote a pamphlet in 1713 entitled A Proposal for Humbling Spain. This pamphlet was not


published, however, until 1739. Among other things, the Earl proposed English conquest of Buenos Aires and Asuncion (Chile). 29

In 1741, Admiral Vernon informed the British Government that in his opinion, it was necessary to favor the emancipation of the Spanish colonies, in order to open their markets to the businessmen of London.

Following the expiration of the Asiento Contract in 1750, the British Government made no effort to hinder the contraband trade with Rio de la Plata. 30 At the same time, the British Government failed to encourage any attempt to seize the area. Thus, lobbyists, adventurers, and greedy profiteers attempted to change the course of governmental policy and direct it along more aggressive lines. 31

In 1780, Colonel J. L. Fullerton produced a plan for the capture of Buenos Aires, but his plans failed when high British Army officials failed to produce sufficient troops for the projected invasion. 32

In 1784, spies in London informed the Spanish Viceroy, Vertiz, that an invasion of the Rio de la Plata by English troops was imminent. The invading


30 The importance of Asiento can be demonstrated by the fact that the South Sea Company was dissolved in the same year the Asiento ended. Cf. Elena de Studer, La Trata de Negros en el Rio de la Plata durante El Siglo de 18 (Buenos Aires, M. R.), p. 193.

31 Ibid., pp. 24–25. Especially after 1776, pressure on the British Government to take action in regard to Rio de la Plata increased.

32 Ibid., p. 25.
English were supposed to be carrying a thousand extra rifles, in order to arm
the Indians against the Spaniards. Late in the year 1784, William Powers, an
English agent, was actually sent to Rio de la Plata, where he traveled to
Arequipa and worked (until apprehended) inciting Indian rebellion.

During the period of the Asiento Contract, numerous English officials came
to carry on South Sea Company business in Rio de la Plata. After the expiration
of the contract, some Englishmen remained, and became thoroughly Hispanised. At various times, a few English merchants came to Buenos Aires and though they were outside of the law and at the mercy of the Spanish officials, they were able
to maintain themselves and become invaluable members of the community.

For example, in 1748, the Cabildo of Buenos Aires pleaded for special status
for two English carpenters. In 1785, Englishmen in Buenos Aires laid the
foundation for the contemporary Argentine meat industry by building installations
for the processing and export of jerked beef. In 1791, Irish tanners were
brought to Buenos Aires, while in 1794, one hundred Irish-Catholic bachelors
were brought to Buenos Aires in order to work in the meat salting and packing
works. Prior to 1800, numerous Englishmen attempted to open stores and do

33 Roberts, p. 25.
35 Roberts, pp. 95-96.
36 Ibid., exactly how the British made arrangements to set up most of the
processing and packing plants in Buenos Aires when such actions were ostensibly
against the law is unexplained in Señor Roberts' work and in all other works
reviewed by the student.
37 Ibid., p. 96.
legitimate business in Buenos Aires, but due to war, blockades, and occasional attempts to enforce the existing laws against foreigners, no English businessman was able to maintain a store for a prolonged period of time in Buenos Aires. After 1800, the first Englishman to successfully maintain a store in Buenos Aires was Mark Riley who started business in 1801. As of December, 1804, registered as foreigners doing business in Rio de la Plata were 24 Englishmen, 10 Irishmen and 3 Scots. In addition, there was a large number of unregistered Irish and English who were ship deserters, criminals or contraband merchants. While none of these people were ardent revolutionaries or professed liberals, their presence in Rio de la Plata would suggest to many of the inhabitants the desirability of increased commercial relations with Great Britain.

Probably the most valuable partisan of English intervention in Latin America was Francisco de Miranda. Miranda, originally a Creole born in Venezuela, had deserted the Spanish Army in America (where he had achieved the rank of colonel), primarily because he had been involved in a Creole plot to bring about an end to Spanish rule in Venezuela. Miranda first arrived in England in 1785, but due residence was not established there until 1788. Thanks to references gained (especially from

38 Williams, p. 52.

39 William Scorse Robertson, The Life of Miranda, I (Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1929), pp. 64-68. It would seem that Miranda's unpaid debts and his rapid advancement had made him many enemies, especially among the young Peninsulares.
Catherine the Great, and his own great personal charm, Miranda was able to make contact with such influential Englishmen as Lord Pownall, and eventually in 1789, he became a confidant of William Pitt, "The Younger," who was the Prime Minister of England.

Hitherto, while English ministers had expressed an interest in Spanish America, at the crucial moments, they had refrained from taking action, or allowing others to take action. William Pitt marks the end of this era. With Miranda supplying the plans and the propaganda, Pitt resolved that a sufficient pretext to seize all or part of Spanish America would be presented if at any time war was to be joined with Spain.  

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140W, and J. Robertson, I, pp. 96-100, 167-168. That Mr. Pitt had a definite interest in the future of South America and particularly the future of British interests in Spanish America is rather obvious. To Miranda, Pitt personally remarked that he viewed Spanish America as "an almost inexhaustible source of commerce" and that the emancipation of Spanish America was a matter which would infallibly engage the attention of every minister of the country, Ibid., pp. 95-97.

Miranda also broached to Pitt the idea of British military assistance in Spanish American revolution, and British recompensation by means of trade agreements or bullion. Both of these ideas were agreed upon by Sir William, Ibid., pp. 96-97, 167-168.

In 1790, the possibility of British intervention in Spanish America was discussed by Pitt and Miranda for British-Spanish relations had deteriorated seriously during the Nootka Sound controversy (February-July, 1790). However, Florida's concessions removed the pretext for war, and cancelled at least temporarily all British plans for Spanish American intervention.

Perhaps Pitt's most important contribution to the cause of revolution in Spanish America was that he allowed Britain to become the shelter for the numerous Creole conspirators who used England as their headquarters for the planning of sedition and the dissemination of propaganda.
From 1790 until 1812, Miranda spent the greater part of his time in London or Paris, but wherever he was, he was the center of a maelstrom of revolutionary activity and conspiracy being organized and planned by Creoles in Britain and France. Spanish officials claimed that Miranda was "the focus of those persons who conspired against Spain." 

Probably the greatest contribution made to the cause of revolution in the Rio de la Plata was the part played by Miranda in the creation and organization of that international association of South American revolutionaries, the Lautaro Lodge. Among the celebrated South American revolutionaries and adventurers who joined this organization were Sir Howe Popham, Bernardo O'Higgins, and San Martin.

Plots concerning proposed British intervention in Spanish America continued to be presented by revolutionists and sympathizers in Britain throughout the last decade of the eighteenth century. With the beginning of the nineteenth century, the pace quickened, and the plotting came to a climax in 1804.

188. Concerning the activities of Miranda and his importance in the Lautaro Lodge, Carlos Roberts declares: "Miranda had from London, supervision over all lodges (Lautaro Lodge branches) both in Spain and America... he (through them) coordinated his plans, giving out all kinds of news about the expeditions the British Government planned." Cf., Roberts, pp. 42-43.

Miranda's Biographer, Robertson, admits that Miranda was an associate of many of the Lautaro Lodge members, but he declares that there is "no proof" that Miranda was the founder of the lodge, or that he was even a member. Cf. Robertson, I, p. 199. Robertson does admit that O'Higgins asserts that Miranda was a member of the Lautaro Lodge, Ibid., pp. 199-201.

For a discussion of the questions of the masonic character of the Lautaro Lodge, see Chapter II. of this work.
By June, 1804, due to Spanish alliance with Napoleon Bonaparte, the prospect of war between Britain and Spain had heightened considerably. Pitt sent two agents, Lt. Col. Francis Burke and Thomas O'Gorman to Buenos Aires. There, these men held a series of meetings with Castelli, Rodriguez, Fena, and other Creole members of the Buenos Aires Consulado, concerning Río de la Plata independence and English support.43

One of Miranda's most enthusiastic backers in regard to South American independence was Sir Home Popham, British Commodore. By September, 1804, war with Spain seemed imminent; therefore, Popham and Miranda enlisted Lord Melville and numerous influential British merchants in a new scheme to bring British forces into plan against Spanish power in Río de la Plata. War was declared in December, 1804, after British attacked and captured a Spanish treasure fleet. However, Pitt's actions aroused the "ire of the Tsar," who wanted no war between England and Spain whatsoever.44 This unexpected intervention seems to have cooled Pitt's ardor for a Spanish American adventure, for he failed to give his sanction to the plans of Popham and Miranda.

Popham, in particular, chaffed at Pitt's inaction in regard to the plans for invasion of Río de la Plata. Finally in July, 1805, Pitt informed Popham that friendly negotiations were being carried on with Spain in an effort to

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44 Cf., Kaufman, pp. 11-13.
detach that nation from the alliance with France. Any serious discussion or offensive action (i.e., preparation for British assault on Río de la Plata or any other area of Spanish America) might cause the rupture of these delicate negotiations. In effect, the proposed La Plata expedition was cancelled.

Popham was now given a fleet, and ordered to take the Dutch colony of Cape of Good Hope. This mission was completed on January 7, 1806. Independently of Miranda, Popham now developed his own scheme for the capture of Río de la Plata. A small number of reinforcements having been sent to Cape of Good Hope under Major-General Carr Beresford, Popham resolved to use Beresford's troops and his own ships to carry out his plans.

Popham set sail for St. Helena, and reached the island at the end of April, 1806. Here he informed the British Government of his intentions, and after a brief respite and without waiting long enough to receive a reply from London, Popham sailed for Río de la Plata. In June, the British forces reached the La Plata estuary and, on the 26th of the month, Beresford's troops were landed. Buenos Aires was captured the next day. The formal surrender of the city took place on July 2. Since the Viceroy, Sobremonte, had fled in company with many Peninsulares, the surrender of the city was signed by the Spanish Governor, Quintano.

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46 Notes on the Vice-Royalty of La Plata in South America (London, 1808), p. 114. When Popham attacked Buenos Aires, he had only 1,635 soldiers and marines who could be used as troops.
Now having established themselves on shore, Popham and Beresford began interesting themselves in the more mundane aspects of conquest. The port of Buenos Aires was thrown open to free trade, and the tariff duties were cut in half, with special rates for British vessels. Popham and Beresford confiscated the funds (about £1,290,000) found in the city treasury, and shipped this money to London on board the Narcissus. The two adventurers also seized about £1,432,514 worth of Cinchona, Mercury and Vicuna wool.

In Buenos Aires, many Creoles welcomed the British with open arms:

The English officers were boarding in the most important Creole houses, where they became very popular... the chiefs, Beresford and Popham, also taking part in all feasts (i.e., fiestas). The English were delighted with the beautiful women of Buenos Aires for whom they played the piano and guitar... perfectly...

Many Creoles, possibly misled by the promises of the spy Burke, expected the British to declare the independence of the La Plata Vice-Royalty. These hopes were crushed when Beresford informed Castelli that "he had no instructions

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47 Williams, p. 47.

48 Notes on the Vice-Royalty, op. 127-12. Upon reaching Britain, the money was exhibited in London, where it served to excite the imaginations and greedy sentiments of many merchants. Some of the money went to the Bank of England, some of it went to various private persons, and some of it eventually returned almost twenty years later, in the form of a can. Cf. Roberts, p. 110.


50 Roberts, p. 122.
regarding plans for independence."51 Beresford's announcement seemed to have
chilled some of the ardor which the Creoles had manifested for the British
invaders. For a few of the, such as Pueyrredón, began to cooperate with those
forces (mostly led by Peninsulares) which were preparing to reconquer the city.

The failure of the English conquerors to declare the independence of the
La Plata Vice-Royalty, and inactivity of the British Government in this regard
were factors which sealed the fate of Beresford and Popham. Liniets, a French
officer in the service of Spain, began maneuvering his forces for an attack
upon the British in Buenos Aires. The campaigns began on August 4, and by
August 10, Liniets reached Buenos Aires. After a short, but sharp battle, Beresford surrendered his forces on August 12.52

Popham, without fresh troops with which to turn the tide of battle, remained with his fleet at the mouth of the La Plata estuary until he was

51Ibid., p. 123. One of the most important but unsung acts of the
British commanders at Buenos Aires was the founding of Cruz del Sud,
(Southern Cross) a masonic organization into which many Creoles were
initiated. Ibid., pp. 121-122.

52Notes, p. 136. The anonymous author of this work puts English losses
at 165 killed, wounded and missing, while Spanish casualties were placed at
700. Ibid., cf. also Roberts, p. 142, who puts Beresford's losses at 49
killed, 157 wounded, and Spanish losses at 58 killed, 147 wounded.
Beresford and his aid-de-camp, Colonel Peck, soon escaped from Buenos Aires,
thanks to the aid of two Creoles, Peña and Padilla. Martín Alsaga had
Padilla imprisoned, but he was released, and both men subsequently received
British government pensions. Cf., W. P. and J. P. Robertson, Letters on
South America (London, 1843), Volume II, p. 79.
replaced in October by Rear Admiral Stirling. Meanwhile, news of defeat at Buenos Aires had been received in England. A small force of troops under Brigadier-General Sir Samuel Auchmuty was sent to the Río de la Plata. Landing at Valdonado (January 3, 1807), Auchmuty proceeded to invest the city of Montevideo, finally capturing the city on February 3, 1807. Auchmuty, feeling that his forces were too small to capture Buenos Aires, called for reinforcements.

While Buenos Aires had still been in British hands, Popham and Beresford had addressed a circular letter to the mayor and corporation of each of the great manufacturing towns of England, stating the commercial potential of the La Plata Vice-Royalty. Napoleon having issued the Berlin Decrees (October, 1806), new markets for British manufactured goods were a necessity. Buenos Aires seemed to various Englishmen an ideal market. Thus, when in May, 1807, Lt. General Whitelocke arrived in the La Plata estuary with some 9,000 troops, one hundred British vessels loaded with manufactured articles, arrived also.54

On June 22, 1807, Lt. General Whitelocke landed with some 12,000 troops below Buenos Aires. In preparation for the attack, Martin Alzaga, a Peninsularo.

53Ibid., pp. 269-290 states that Popham was never court-martialled, and saw active duty with the Royal Navy, giving a creditable account of himself with the British fleet in the Baltic, especially at Copenhagen in 1807.

54Williams, p. 49. Apparently, the British merchants confidently expected an easy victory, and a quick sale of their goods. Cf., also, Notes, pp. 199-100.
had seen to the fortification of the city, and had armed the citizenry.55

After several skirmishes, Whitelocke began attacking the city of Buenos Aires at dawn on July 5. Forcing their way into the city, the British forces found every house turned into a fortress with buildings barricaded and civilians firing from the rooftops. The British fought bravely, but the attacking force was cut to pieces, as Whitelocke made little or no use of the naval forces (i.e., bombardment) in the harbor. On July 6, 1807, Whitelocke capitulated.56

Whitelocke's surrender caused an even greater shock than Beresford's had. A fresh force under General Sir Arthur Wellesley was prepared, but before it could be embarked Napoleon invaded Spain. The British Government felt that the nation's military honor was at stake, but Spain was more important than Buenos Aires, and thus on June 20, 1808, the La Plata expedition of Wellesley was cancelled, finally ending British attempts to impose political and territorial sovereignty over the Río de la Plata.

55Woodbine Parish, Buenos Aires from the Conquest (London, 1852), p. 115. Parish notes that the Buenos Aires commanders had even armed some 5,000 Negro slaves, and these slaves had been promised their liberty if the British were repulsed.

56Notes, pp. 192-193 state that Whitelocke employed 4,500 troops in his attack upon the city. Total British losses were given as 1,070 officers and men killed, 1,620 officers and men captured. Ibid., p. 232.

As terms of surrender, Whitelocke had to not only evacuate all troops, but he had to surrender the town of Montevideo within two months. When Whitelocke had embarked for Río de la Plata, the British Government had appointed him "Governor-General of South America," but on his return he was court-martialed, and deprived of all military appointments and pecuniary emoluments. Ibid., pp. 246, 290.
Fortunately for Britain, the rancor toward Britain rapidly dissipated itself, for British manufactured articles had lost none of their appeal for many of the Buenos Aires citizenry. In the fall of 1809, the English agent, Lt. Burke, again visited Buenos Aires and on November 9, 1809, Creole elements in the city forced the Viceroy (Liniers) to issue an edict calling for free trade. The new Viceroy, Cisneros, with the help of the Peninsulares, abrogated this document, and issued a decree calling for the expulsion of all English and American traders (December, 1809). 57

With the commencement of Creole revolt in Buenos Aires (May 25, 1810), Britain's relationship with the Río de la Plata took on new aspects. On May 26, 1810, the Creole Junta in Buenos Aires sent a letter to Lord Strangford, requesting that he forward to the British Government in London "a favorable impression of them (i.e., their cause)." 58 The messenger who delivered the message intimated to Strangford that the Creoles of Buenos Aires were loyal to Ferdinand VII, but desired an end to the crippling trade regulations which had been imposed by the Spaniards. 59

Shortly after the dispatch of the letter to Strangford, the Creole Junta declared the port of Buenos Aires open to all trade, and hostilities were initiated between the Creole Junta of Buenos Aires and the Loyalist forces

57 Williams, p. 51. It appears that Cisneros and other Peninsulares believed that American and British traders had provided aid and/or sympathy for the Creole insurgents during Creole uprisings the previous month.

58 J. Street, "Lord Strangford and Río de la Plata," Hispanic-American Review, XXXIII (November, 1933), p. 496.

59 Ibid., p. 496.
concentrated at Montevideo. These two actions, plus the return of many English merchants and traders to Buenos Aires brought on new problems for Britain. Britain and Spain were allies. Yet, if the Loyalists succeeded in crushing the Creole Junta, British merchants would again have to revert to contraband trade, if they desired to ship goods to Buenos Aires. Thus, while Britain's economic interests lay with the rebels, intervention on their behalf would be considered an unfriendly act by the Spanish Cortes.

To meet this new situation, Sir Henry Wellesley, British Foreign Secretary, began formulating new policy, but it was his successor, Castlereagh, who on April 12, 1812, defined the British position regarding Spain and her revolted colonies:

"England, as the mediating power, neither could nor would employ force to bring about a settlement of the dispute (i.e., Spain and its revolted colonies), ... nor would she cease to trade with the Colonies."

Great pressure was brought to bear on the Spanish Cortes of Seville, in an attempt to wring from it the right of free trade in all ports of Spanish America. However, despite offers of loans, which the Spanish government needed desperately, the Cortes refused to yield this right. Probably realizing that the yielding of such a right would probably cause irreparable harm to Spanish commercial interests, the Cortes did grant to a few British merchants

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61 Williams, p. 53.
special licenses with which to do business in Buenos Aires and Caracas for the duration of the Napoleonic Wars, but this was the extent of all concessions. 62

Several questions immediately arise: If somehow Spain interfered with British trade in Spanish America, what would Britain do? What would Britain do if British individuals provided aid to the rebel forces? In answering these questions, we shall let the examples speak for themselves.

In 1811, Matias Irigoyen, in company with an American, David C. De Forest, were dispatched to England by the Buenos Aires Junta, to buy munitions. Upon arrival in England, Irigoyen met the Foreign Minister, Sir Henry Wellesley, who informed Irigoyen that England would not interfere in the war between the rebels and the Loyalists. However, De Forest intervened. He made contact with prominent British manufacturers, who sold to Irigoyen the munitions he desired. Irigoyen still, however, needed government clearance papers before he could ship the goods to Buenos Aires. The necessary clearances were mysteriously obtained, however, and Irigoyen sailed from England with not only the munitions and the necessary clearance, but also a letter from Sir Henry Wellesley "recommending him (Irigoyen) to the protection of the British Minister at Rio de Janeiro (Lord Strangford)." 63

62 Webster, 2nd ed., p. 10. The extent of these license rights were rather vague. Cf., Kaufman, p. 67.

Shortly after the Creoles revolted in 1810, most of the *Peninsulares* and the groups loyal to Spain crossed to the opposite side of the Río de la Plata, and made Montevideo their headquarters. There, with a few ships, they set up a blockade of Buenos Aires. British and Creole merchants in Buenos Aires began to feel the effects of the blockade, and called for help. In October, 1810, the blockade was broken when a group of British merchantmen, sailing under the protection of the Brazil Squadron of the Royal Navy (Admiral De Courcey commanding) reached Buenos Aires harbor. In February, 1811, the Spanish Viceroy, Elio, from Montevideo, again declared blockade of Buenos Aires to be in effect. Again, British merchantmen, under Admiral De Courcey’s protection, passed through the blockade and effectively ended it.

Finally, early in 1812, the Spanish Government sent the frigate, *Mercurio*, to blockade Buenos Aires harbor. From Rio de Janeiro came the H. M. S. *Mistletoe*, an armed schooner, Lt. Ramsey commanding. The *Mistletoe* sailed into Río de la Plata, drew alongside the *Mercurio* and threatened to attack the Spanish warship unless she withdrew. The Spanish commander of the *Mercurio* could have easily blasted the schooner out of the water, but, Lt. Ramsey knew that such an attack, provoked or not, could bring about strained relations, or even war between England and Spain. The Spanish

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64 J. Street, p. 496.

commander apparently realized the implications of answering the Mistletoe's challenge, because he withdrew, and the last Loyalist attempt to blockade Buenos Aires ended. 66

In regard to aid to the rebels by private individuals, the British government apparently took the position that in such matters, individuals were free to do what they pleased. For example, English naval officers (apparently acting in a non-official capacity) openly attended the installation ceremony of the Creole Junta of 1810, and publicly expressed their joy over the end of Spanish control in Buenos Aires. 67 In Buenos Aires Province, British merchants openly solicited and provided weapons and powder for the revolutionary forces. When in 1814, the Loyalist fleet was preventing a successful attack against Montevideo, English merchants provided the money to outfit a squadron which crushed the Loyalist fleet, and eventually enabled the rebels to take the city (June, 1814). 68 The commander of this fleet was an Irishman (Admiral William Brown), and many of his sailors were English and Irish seamen, deserters, pirates, etc.

The examples cited thus far would seem to indicate that Britain indeed had some regard for the independence of Spanish America, other than commercial

66Ibid., pp. 113-114.
67Street, p. 490.
interest. This, however, does not seem to be the case. As early as December 24, 1812, Lord Strangford, British Minister at Rio de Janeiro had informed Lord Castlereagh that the Creole Junta of Buenos Aires desired total independence, not reconciliation with Ferdinand VII. During the year, 1814, Ferdinand VII irrevocably rebuffed all efforts at reconciliation with the Creole revolutionaries. In December of that year, Lord Strangford wrote to the Foreign Office and warned London that with the Napoleonic Wars over, Spain might move to reassert her authority over the revolted colonies and terminate the lucrative commercial relations being enjoyed by British subjects in the Rio de la Plata:

Your Lordship (i.e., Foreign Minister) knows that the mass of British property which is now collected here (Buenos Aires and environs) is exceedingly great, and I fear that there would not be much inclination on part of the Spaniards to respect it, as the conduct of the British residents has been that of devotion to the Government by which their commerce has hitherto not only been tolerated but encouraged.69

Writing from Rio de Janiero (January, 1815), Buenos Aires representatives, Belgrano and Rivadavia, newly returned from Europe, write to Buenos Aires, and assured Alvear (then the Supreme Director) that Britain would protect the Rio de la Plata from Spanish invasion forces.70

However, the British Foreign Office had no intention of declaring itself officially in favor of the independence of Rio de la Plata at that time. In


February, 1815, the Foreign Office instructed Strangford that

It is not His Royal Highness' intention to oppose by force a measure of this kind . . . you must immediately adopt the effectual measures to warn those of His Majesty's subjects who may now be trading in the Río de la Plata without the protection of a license from the Spanish Government, of the consequences which may result to them . . . and that it will probably be expedient therefore, that they should lose no time in removing . . . their effects whether afloat or ashore.71

At the time of this dispatch to Strangford, Britain's chief policy making officials, Lord Castlereagh and the Duke of Wellington, were busily engaged with the negotiations for European reconstruction going on at Vienna. While the Creole elements in Río de la Plata were known to be seeking independence, more than a year would pass before they could actually cast off political ties with the Spanish Monarch. British naval and military opposition to the Spanish assertion of its right to put down rebellion in the Río de la Plata would have led to war with Spain. In addition, open British intervention in Spanish-American affairs probably would have led to war with France, Austria and Russia also, for by attempting to prevent Spanish efforts to crush the revolutionaries, Britain would have in effect shown herself opposed to the type of order that was being created in Vienna.

71Webster, 1st ed., I, p. 97. In the answer of the Foreign Office, Strangford was instructed to warn those English merchants who possessed no license to prepare to evacuate the La Plata region. However, nothing was said as to whether the British Government intended to protect licensed merchants who had aided the revolutionary cause. In regard to the licensed operators, their right to be in Buenos Aires was in question, for as of February 1, 1815, the Napoleonic Wars had been over for more than eight months, and the license granted by the Cortés were in themselves neither permanent nor grants allowing British merchants to aid the rebels. Cf., p. 26, of this work.

Fortunately the troops sent by Ferdinand to America went to Venezuela.
At the time the reply to Lord Strangford was sent out, Maitland, Talleyrand and associates, were at work in Vienna, arranging and extolling the virtues of the policy of "Legitimacy" in regard to European territorial problems. Thus British efforts to thwart the "legitimate" rules of Spanish America would have definitely put Britain in an unfavorable position. 72

Lastly, lest it be forgotten, while British activities, both governmental and private, had aided the revolution, the securing of trade privileges was the chief motive for British Governmental actions.

Self-interest, or more specifically the exigencies of trade and commerce, were more important to the British Government than Latin dreams of independence. The British, however, did nothing to discourage Latin Americans from believing that the British Government was friendly toward their aspirations for political liberty:

The Admiralty, long on experience in such matters, could employ the Royal Navy—that most discreet of all military engines—as a vehicle for the exchange of assurances... The Foreign Office could receive revolutionary agents at the side door and authorize the purchase of arms and equipment. All these delicate attentions could be, and were extended as evidence of British intentions... Their cumulative significance for Spanish Americans was deep and abiding. 73

In July, 1816, the United Provinces of Rio de la Plata declared their independence. As of 1816, the value of British trade with the United Provinces of Rio de la Plata stood at £388,487. 74 In 1817, British merchants

72 C. W. Webster, Congress of Vienna. 2nd ed. (London, 1940), pp. 112-116.
73 Kaufman, p. 57.
74 Parrish, p. 361.
began buying up sections of the Argentine pampa. In 1822, Britain changed its navigation laws, so as to allow for the entrance into British harbors of those ships flying the flags of South American rebel states. By 1825, the value of La Plata imports from England reached £800,000 or 51.1% of the total value of all goods imported. Under circumstances such as these, it is not surprising that as of 1825 "English merchants began to exercise a beneficial though . . . indirect influence on public affairs and public opinion."

A general summary of British policy in regard to the Río de la Plata must take cognizance of the extremely important role played by British commercial interests. As one British author so aptly defended British commercial activities:

... by commerce, the British Empire alone exists. When the sources of that are cut off—we can only expect immediate ruin and annihilation.

The foreign policy decisions reached by British governing officials during the period 1713-1825 regarding the La Plata area indicates that to an extent, the men who determined British Governmental policy during that period were greatly influenced by the statement quoted above.

Quite often, policy is determined by means and methods less carefully planned and conceived than many diplomats and historians are willing to admit.

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76 Ibid., p. 361.
77 W. and J. Robertson, II, p. 105.
78 Ibid.
When the Asiento Contract was obtained, the majority of the merchants who were involved in trade (contraband or otherwise) were primarily interested only in breaking the Spanish monopoly on Spanish American trade. However, the profitability of the trade and Spain's outmoded mercantilist, commercial policy toward Rio de la Plata which she no longer had the power to uphold, proved to be the major factors in bringing to the fore a new possibility. Bluntly, after the English began to experience the profitability of La Plata trade, the sharp traders began to question the necessity of sharing any of the La Plata trade with Spain at all.

The natural culmination of the new line of policy was the Buenos Aires defeats of Popham and Whitelocke. By all normal rules, British possibilities for economic hegemony in the La Plata should have declined disastrously, but the nation which rules the waves does not necessarily follow the normal rules. The desire for British manufactures (which the Rio de la Plata citizens had become accustomed to) plus the fruition of Enlightenment thinking and writing among Buenos Aires Creole groups, helped to maintain an atmosphere favorable to the reception of British wares, products and merchants. In particular, the Creole groups in Buenos Aires generally looked to Great Britain as that nation which most typified the ideas of the Enlightenment.79

79 Evidence of the Creole admiration for Great Britain can be found in p. 20 of this chapter, and Chapter III of this work; cf., Ricardo Levene, Historia de la Nación Argentina, V (1), (Buenos Aires, 1959), pp. 15-31, and Edwin J. Pratt, "Anglo-American Commercial and Political Rivalry on the La Plata," Hispanic-American Review, XII (October, 1931), p. 146. Pratt states that England stood so high the eyes of many La Plata Creoles, the United Province officials "told all their diplomatic agents to proceed to London before going to their posts."
In the final analysis, the favorable attitude of the Creoles of Buenos Aires toward Britain was heightened by the aid rendered to the Creoles during their struggle with Spanish and Loyalist elements. In the years following the Tucuman Independence Declaration, with the aid of friendly governments in Buenos Aires, British merchants were able to obtain what Spanish control would have denied them—economic hegemony in the Rio de la Plata. 80

However, economic privilege can be lost or challenged, and while the Creole leaders welcomed British goods and merchants, British merchants had no actual political protection. Since their rights were not specifically spelled out, a change of government might bring about an abrogation of the economic privileges enjoyed. Thus, it is not surprising that the first official document signed by the British Government with the Buenos Aires governmental representatives (who claimed to be acting in the name of all the provinces) was the Commercial Treaty of 1825. In the evidence presented, it is not accidental that the document was the method chosen by which diplomatic recognition was conveyed to the United Provinces of the La Plata by the Government of Great Britain.

80 For proof of this assertion, see Woodbine Parish, p. 368.
CHAPTER II

INDEPENDENCE AND THE STRUGGLE FOR POWER

I. BACKGROUND TO THE ENLIGHTENMENT

During the sixteenth century, the seamless tunic of Christendom was torn to pieces. The emergence of new religious groups, new scientific discoveries not in keeping with the conclusions of Aristotle's Physics brought about a condition whereby the assumptions and conclusions of scholastic philosophy came to be questioned, doubted, and in some cases rejected.¹

With the decline of interest in scholastic philosophy came the emergence of interest in the natural sciences. Bacon, Descartes, Liebnitz and others

¹John Tate Lanning, "A Reconsideration of Spanish Colonial Questions," Americas (October, 1944), Volume I, Number 2. Lanning made an examination of those theses in logic, physics, metaphysics and ethics at the Universities of Cordoba, Chuquisaca, Mexico City and Lima, and noted that Aristotle came under severe attack in many of these works. As one thesis author put it, "St. Thomas Aquinas did not learn from the infamous books of Aristotle." Ibid., p. 174. The authority of St. Thomas apparently went unquestioned, however.


The impression is gained that in Spain, during the last decades of the eighteenth century, the authority of Thomas Aquinas as well as Aristotle came to be questioned by some avant-garde radicals. Cf., Herr, pp. 170-174.
helped to lay the foundations upon which the philosophy of the natural sciences (and ultimately, many of the assumptions of the Enlightenment thinkers) was built.

The scientific discoveries and conclusions of Kepler, Huygens, La Lavoisier and particularly, Sir Isaac Newton in his work, *Principia Mathematica* (1687), seemed to have established the final truth concerning the fundamental progress of the universe. It was believed that the physical mysteries of the universe soon would be unraveled.

We have noted before that Descartes was, in many ways, one of the spiritual progenitors of the new scientific revolution which grew in European intellectual circles after the Protestant Reformation. Contemporary students, teachers, and scientists during the period of the Enlightenment often refer to the fact that Descartes was the originator of one of the chief trade marks of contemporary scientific practice. This is the attitude that one should cultivate in the mind, or attachment to the principle of holding nothing true until there is positive evidence in its favor. This premise is generally referred to as the Principle of Doubt. In regard to the Enlightenment, Descartes is also important for another assumption he imparted to it:

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There is, in the universe, a body of fixed general laws which operate uniformly and which are capable of apprehension by human reason.3

The success of the Inductive Method and the startling discoveries in the field of the natural sciences persuaded some men to seek to achieve a similar method for use and development in the humanistic disciplines.

Following the Cartesian Principle of Doubt, scholars, authors, students and others came to deny the rights and privileges of nobles, kings and Churches. Influenced by Descartes' conception of a fixed law of the universe, some writers and scholars became convinced that once the laws governing human behavior were discovered and incorporated into a science of rational sociology (or some humanistic science equivalent to physics or zoology), man's true wishes would be brought to light and satisfied by the most efficient means possible.4

It is upon these tenets that theists and atheists, believers in automatic progress and skeptics, materialists and sentimentalists, united in their convictions that all of mankind's problems were solvable by the


discovery of objective answers. Thus inspired, men charged ahead, applying so-called scientific ideas and concepts to human nature. Among the more conspicuous of the results were the findings of Adam Smith, John Locke, Voltaire, the French "Physiocrats", Montesquieu, David Hume, Bayle and Campananés. The ideas, views and opinions of these men became one of the most prominent motive forces behind the upsurging power of the Enlightenment. The ideas expounded by these men became widely diffused, and often distorted, but it will be many centuries before the effects of these ideas will have vanished from the face of the earth.

II. ASPECTS OF THE ENLIGHTENMENT IN RIO DE LA PLATA

The passage of the Enlightenment philosophy to the Rio de la Plata was accomplished in several ways. Many Creole families sent their sons to schools in Spain, and here the young Creoles learned the philosophy of the Enlightenment. For others, contact with the ideas of the Enlightenment came through the reading of contraband books, or through the reading of translations of the works of the Enlightenment sent from Spain. Some Creoles received their grounding in the new philosophical and economic ideas in the University of Chuquisaca. 5

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5 Ricardo Levene, "Un Historia de la Nación Argentina," Tome 7 (1), p. 16. Levene notes that Don Gregorio Humes, Dean of the University of Cordoba,
Until 1778, Rio de la Plata merchants had been restricted by Spanish commercial regulations from making the full use of the harbor of Buenos Aires. Prior to 1778, if the merchants chose to use the legal method of shipping their goods to Spain, they had to:

... load their wares on the backs of mules for ... journey over the mountains to Lima; there to be shipped by sea to Panama, then shipped by pack mule to Cartagena, and finally loaded on galleons for Spain.

The 1778 Edict which opened the port of Buenos Aires and other Spanish American ports to all Spanish and Spanish American trade brought about an increase in wealth for Buenos Aires merchants, but not satisfaction. The high quality English goods were still legally forbidden, for Spain stubbornly refused to grant Great Britain the right to compete with her in the South American commercial market. Thus, while the 1778 Edict had provided

was an avid disciple of many of the ideas of the Enlightenment.

Ricardo Levene, A History of Argentina, translated by William Spence Robertson (Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1937), pp. 168-169. Levene holds that the University of Chuquisaca in Upper Peru (now Bolivia) "was one of the major instrumentalities that diffused political and philosophical liberalism in La Plata ..." there, works of the encyclopedists of the eighteenth century were expounded. Potential La Plata lawyers attended the University of Chuquisaca, for while a chair of jurisprudence was instituted at the University of Cordoba in 1791, no legal degrees were granted by that school. Ibid., p. 161. Chuquisaca, graduated such distinguished future revolutionaries as Samuel Moreno and Juan Castelli. Ibid., p. 163. Manning, p. 176, notes that fourteen of the signers of the Tucuman Declaration of Independence (July 9, 1816) were Chuquisaca graduates.

Hubert Herring, Good Neighbors: Argentina, Brazil and Chile (New Haven, Conn., 1941), p. 20.
for a rise in profits, Buenos Aires merchants realized that the policy of complete free trade, excluding no nations, would probably increase their profits much more.

As early as 1776, the Consulado of Buenos Aires had been forwarding requests of this kind to the Spanish Court. The Edict of 1778 satisfied some interests, but not others, especially the Creole groups, confronted with what they perceived as Spanish intransigency. It was natural that, just as the American colonists had done, Creole merchants of Buenos Aires and the neighboring environs would seek philosophical and logical defenses for their position of dissatisfaction. Such weapons were provided them by Adam Smith and the French Physiocrats. The chief propagandists of these ideas in Río de la Plata were Buenos Aires Creoles, who were deeply involved in commercial activities. These Creoles resented the advantageous positions allowed to Peninsulares, and desired equality.


8Charles Chapin, Colonial Hispanic-America (New York, 1933), p. 116, states that: "The group which was the 'super elect' in Spanish America were those whose mother was in Spain at the time of (their) birth."

Spanish-born inhabitants of Hispanic America (called Peninsulares) generally held the higher ranking administrative, political and religious offices—American born descendants of Spanish parents (called Creoles)
One such Creole was Manuel Belgrano (1774-1820). In 1793, Belgrano completed his education in Spain, where many of the new doctrines were being taught in the universities. As early as 1790, Belgrano had received from Pope Pius VI a permit which entitled him:

"... to read, and keep, during his lifetime, any and all works of condemned authors, although they might be heretics, and in whatever form they might be published..."

Belgrano returned to Buenos Aires in 1796. In that year, Belgrano translated from the French and published The Principles of Science and Political Economy (Los Principios de la Ciencia Economico-Politico). In that same year, Belgrano became secretary of the Buenos Aires Consulado, next to the Cabildo, the most important organisation in Buenos Aires city and province.

occupied generally, the more inferior social and administrative posts. This inferiority of class and status was not relished by the Creoles.

In Rio de la Plata, Creole discontent centered around the control of the chief local commercial organisation, the Consulado of Buenos Aires. The highest offices in this organization were generally held by Peninsulares, many of whom were representatives of Cadiz, rather than individual or local interests. Cf., Chapman, p. 237, and Ricardo Levene, A History of Argentina, p. 140.


As secretary and officer of the Consulado, Belgrano made many addresses before the body, stressing the rights of the merchant, and the necessity of free trade. One of these speeches, made in 1799, demonstrated the influence of Adam Smith and Physiocrats on Belgrano:

"... self interest is the only motive force in the heart of man, and well managed, it can furnish infinite advantages." 12

Another Buenos Aires Creole who sustained a steady diet of Enlightenment literature was Bernadino Rivadavia, who possessed a complete collection of Rousseau and Voltaire, Bolingbroke, Montesquieu, Necker, Campanales, D'Alembert, Reynal, Helvetius, Bacon, Locke and Newton. 13 An admirer of the British customs and ideas, Rivadavia's personal economic adviser in the years after the 1810 revolution was Jeremy Bentham, an arch-exponent of economic liberalism. 14

Still another Buenos Aires Creole who was a supporter of the economic aspects of the Enlightenment was Joseph Vieytes, a former officer and member of the Buenos Aires Consulado. Vieytes, a fond reader of Smith, Jovellanos, and Campomanes published a journal, The Weekly of Agriculture.


Industry, and Commerce (El Seminario Agricultura, Industria, y Comercio).\textsuperscript{15} This journal was actually a blind, for the magazine became a means to disseminate the economic and political ideas of Smith and the Physiocrats in the Río de la Plata.\textsuperscript{16} Another magazine which was employed as a means of furthering the teachings of the Enlightenment was Caballo's El Telegrafico Mercantile, published in 1801 and 1802. Among its contributing authors were Belgrano, Funes, and Azoenaga. Perhaps the most brilliant of the Buenos Aires Creoles active in the defense of the ideas of free trade and in the spreading of the new economic thought was Mariano Moreno. Moreno was perhaps more influenced by the ideas of Rousseau than many of his Creole associates. Moreno published in Buenos Aires in 1806, a Spanish copy of Rousseau's Social Contract.\textsuperscript{17} One of Moreno's most interesting contributions to the spread of the new economic and social thought occurred in 1806-1807. After the defeat of Beresford and Popham, British agents in Montevideo began publishing a newspaper, the Southern Star (Estrella

\textsuperscript{15}Robert Smith, p. 122.

\textsuperscript{16}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{17}Ricardo Levene, A History of Argentina, p. 234. No deletions were noted by this source.
de Sud), which was used to present British propaganda in regard to Rio de la Plata peace, independence and the advantages of free trade for Buenos Aires. The Audiencia of Buenos Aires attacked the British paper and commissioned Moreno to print a refutation of the English ideas. However, the ideas espoused by the Estrella de Sud were to Moreno "the liberal ideas of the future." Thus, Moreno employed his talents not in refuting the ideas of the British paper, but in persuading the Audiencia that the means of refuting the British ideas was to ignore them.

Others besides Buenos Aires Creoles were important proponents of Enlightenment ideas. One of the foremost of these was Don Gregorio Funes, Sector of the University at Cordoba. Funes, in order to be better informed concerning the new ideas in science, economics and politics, enlisted agents in Europe who sent him the latest literature there in vogue. Funes boldly exhibited his thoughts on economy and economic philosophy in speeches and orations. On one occasion, when he had been picked to deliver the Oracion


19 Ibid., pp. 238-239. The quoted section reads in Spanish "Los Ideas Liberales del Futuro."

20 Carlos Robert, p. 239.

21 Ricardo Levene, Un Historia de la Nacion Argentina, Volume V 1), p. 16.
Funesbre in regard to the death of Charles III (1790), Funes turned the oration into an exposition of his thought in regard to the new ideas being preached in political economy.22

Perhaps the most important reason for studying the ideas of Descartes, Smith, the French Physiocrats, etc., and the effect of their works upon the Creoles of Rio de la Plata lies in the fact that these young Creoles (Belgrano, Moreno, Veytes, Rivadavia to name a few) became leading government officials after 1810. All, with the exception of Funes, became military or political leaders. Thus, in the crucial years following 1810, these men were at some time or another, in a position to exert a marked influence upon both Buenos Aires and La Plata economy and government. It is thus, not surprising that in the years following the May Revolution, the various governmental pronouncements emanating from Buenos Aires relating to such things as politics and economics displayed a decided pro-free trade and laissez-faire flavor.23

III. THE LODGES AND RIO DE LA PLATA INDEPENDENCE

The part played by the various lodges in the events which marked the 1810 revolution in the La Plata Vice-Royalty and the first years of the struggle

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22Ibid.

23It must be remembered that practically all of the assemblies and congresses claiming to represent the people of the United Provinces of Rio de la Plata met in, or were under control of Buenos Aires. During the period 1810-1820, Buenos Aires officials consistently assumed the right to act for, or represent the national interests of all of the Provinces of Rio de la Plata. Cf., F. A. Kirkpatrick, A History of the Argentine Republic (Cambridge, 1931), pp. 71-73.
for independence are still relatively unknown and incomplete. Secret and semi-secret associations of men working to bring about the triumph of some of the ideas of the Enlightenment in regard to Spanish America had been established in Spain since at least 1774.

One of the most important of the early lodges formed in Spain was the Junta de Diputados de los Pueblos y Provincias de la America Meridional, (Committee of Deputies of the Cities and Provinces of South America) founded in Madrid in 1795. This organization had branches in Cadiz, and even a few in America. Among those South American Creoles who eventually gained membership were Alvear, Balcore, Zapiola, Pueyrredon and San Martin.

A major work in English regarding South American lodge activity (masonic and otherwise) is non-existent. While such Argentinian historians as Mitre maintain a fairly accurate commentary on the activities of some of the lodge groups, English language works (with the exception of some translations from the Spanish) are unusually silent in this regard.

In many cases, lodge activity is disregarded. For example, in his Historia de la Nacion Argentina, V (1), Ricardo Levene dedicates a section to the investigation of lodge activity. William Robertson’s translation of Levene’s A History of Argentina (Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1937) makes no specific reference to any lodge group. This edition notes some of the activities of the Lautaro Lodge, but fails to list the organization in the bibliography.


Carlos Roberts, p. 40.

Ibid., p. 41, cf., also Mitre, pp. 33-34.
In Rio de la Plata, the first native lodge formed which became prominent in regard to Rio de la Plata independence was the Logia Independencia, (Independence Lodge) formed in 1802. Among the members of this organisation were a number of Buenos Aires merchants, Rodriguez Pena and Juan Pazo. Other known members include Castelli, Belgrano, Chilano, Irigoyen, and Terrada, most of whom all became prominent revolutionary figures in the years following 1810.

The activities of the Logia Independencia became so disturbing that in 1805, the Viceroy Sobremonte commanded that an investigation be undertaken to determine its leadership and its membership.

Following the British invasions of 1806-1807, a number of semi-secret economic and political organisations were formed. Such groups as the Club, the Patriotic Society (Sociedad Patriotica) came into existence, but soon split into many branches, some of them eventually becoming masonic in nature.

28C, Roberts, p. 42.

29Tbid.

30Tbid. The roles played by Belgrano, Castelli and Chilano in Buenos Aires revolutionary affairs after 1810 are to be found in almost any standard text of Argentine history.

Irigoyen was the first representative sent by the Buenos Aires Junta to reach England (1811). Terrada became a colonel in the Buenos Aires Army under Alvear.

The greatest period of lodge activity in Rio de la Plata began in March, 1812, when on the ninth of the month, the British frigate George Canning, deposited in Buenos Aires, San Martin, Alvear and Zapiola, all three former members of the Logia de Cadiz, and the Lautaro Lodge.32

San Martin and Alvear quickly established in Buenos Aires, the Sociedad Literatura, which was essentially a means for the establishment of the Lautaro Lodge in Buenos Aires. Within seven months after arriving in Buenos Aires, (October 8) the Lautaro Lodge, still under the guise of the Sociedad Literatura, staged a revolution and seized power.33 The Lodge President, San Martin, the Vice President, Alvear, and the Secretary, Zapiola, then chose Rodriguez Pena, Juan Paso and Antonio Alvarez to head the new Buenos Aires national government.34

The avowed program of the Lautaro Lodge was "to work systematically for the independence and happiness of America, proceeding with honor and justice."

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33The Sociedad Literatura was the "sounding board" (caja de resonancia) for the lodge, and its official face, cf., Ricardo Levene, Un Historia de la Nación Argentina, V (2), pp. 694-695. Levene also notes while the Sociedad Literatura was the facade behind which the lodge operated, the Lautaro Lodge performed its more devious and secret actions in its own name. Ibid.

34Antonio Alvarez, Paso and Pena all had become members of the Lautaro Lodge by October, 1812, cf., Ricardo Levene, Un Historia de la Nación Argentina, V (2), pp. 694-695. Carlos Roberts, p. 413, verifies the fact that Pena, Paso, etc. were picked by the lodge's leaders. Mitre, pp. 47-59, insists that all Lautaro Lodge members and lodge branches took orders from the chiefs of the mother lodge, and that members of the lodge were ordered to appoint only other members (if at all possible) to government posts. Orders as to which member should be appointed came from the mother lodge.
but in Rio de la Plata affairs, the Lautaro Lodge did much much than that.35

The Lodge (Lautaro) became quite strong. It incorporated the Masonic Lodge of Julian Alvarez . . . The Lodge was well informed about everything . . . It . . . won to its ranks important people . . . The Lodge dictated the policies (for the government) to follow, while in the shadow, it crushed the opposition and removed opponents.36

35Mitre, p. 47.

36Ricardo Levene, Un Historia de la Nacion Argentina, V (2), pp. 405-406, and 695. The mute question suggested here is whether or not the Lautaro Lodge was a masonic organization. Ricardo Levene, Un Historia de la Nacion Argentina, V (2), pp. 257-258, notes that the commerce and manufacturers of Liverpool and Birmingham were "almost exclusively in the hands of British Free Masons." Through agents of these manufacturers in the port cities, (example, Buenos Aires) Free Masonry may have been introduced into Rio de la Plata. Ibid.

The first known masonic lodge officially opened in Buenos Aires was the La Cruz del Sud (Southern Cross), initiated in 1806 by Popham and Beresford, cf., C. Roberta, p. 120.

After 1806, the Masonic Lodge of Julian Alvarez (La Logia Masonica de Julian Alvarez) came into existence, and this group remained in existence at least until 1812.

The problem arises: Was the Lautaro Lodge a masonic organization? Only two historians, Bartolome Mitre and Ricardo Levene, treat the subject with any depth or perception, and they tend to be inconclusive in their findings. Mitre, p. 47, confirms the fact that Masonic Lodges in Buenos Aires had been in existence prior to 1810. In regard to the Lautaro Lodge, Mitre declares that "neophytes" (i.e., those entering the lodge) were initiated according to the ritual of the masonic lodges." Ibid.

Levene, Un Historia de la Nacion Argentina, V (2), states that the Lautaro Lodge incorporated the Logia Masonica of Julian Alvarez (La Logia se robustecio incorporando tambien a ser seno la Logia masonica de Julian Alvarez) p. 695. In Volume V (1), p. 257, Levene states that the "Masonic Lodge of Julian Alvarez . . . was a subordinate element to the Lautaro Lodge" ("La Logia Masonica de Julian Alvarez . . . fue elemento subordinado a la logia Lautaro.") The material cited need not be considered conclusive, but the question arises: Would a Masonic Lodge become a subordinate element in another lodge if its leadership or it were masonic in character?
Almost immediately after the successful seizure of power, the Lautaro Lodge broke into two factions, one led by San Martin, the other by Carlos de Alvear, each man struggling to gain complete control of the Lautaro Lodge.

Eventually, Alvear won the struggle, for he managed to have San Martin made commander (in place of Belgrano) of the Army of the North, fighting primarily in Upper Peru. With San Martin removed from Buenos Aires, Alvear crushed all opposition, and made himself the head of the Lautaro Lodge.37

On January 22, 1814, the United Provinces National Assembly, meeting in Buenos Aires, decreed the creation of a national executive and made Gervasio Posados Supreme Director (Director Supremo) of the country.38 In power slightly less than a year, Posados was succeeded by Alvear, who assumed dictatorial powers. Early in April, with the Caudillo Artigas moving to invade Buenos Aires Province, Alvear sent an army of troops under Colonel Alvear Thomas to destroy Artigas' forces. Barely out of sight of the city, the army revolted (April 15), and within two days, Alvear had fled Buenos Aires aboard a British man-of-war.39

37Ricardo Levene, Historia de la Nación Argentina, VI (1), p. 117. Levene also notes that the struggle for power carried on between Alvear and San Martin "took place without publicity." Ibid.

38Mitre, p. 62. Posados was Alvear's uncle.

Thus ended government by lodge, for the Lautaro Lodge fell from power, and Alvear's faction was utterly suppressed.\textsuperscript{40} However, elements of the Lautaro Lodge continued to exist:

Its shoots (i.e., affiliated lodges of the Lautaro Lodge) still surviving . . . united with the Provincial Lodge of Buenos Aires, and later with the Unitarian Lodge (Logia Unitario).\textsuperscript{41}

In considering the part played by lodges in the Río de la Plata movement toward independence, it is to be noted, that whatever the effect of the early societies, these groups functioned more or less independently and not necessarily in collaboration with other groups. The Lautaro Lodge represented an attempt to systematize and organize the La Plata revolution, and give it efficient direction through centralized authority.

However, the Lodge, essentially an engine for political revolution, was miscast in its role as a machine of government. The government of the Lodge was essentially authoritarian. When the Lodge took over the reins of power in October, 1812, it was faced with the problem of making the Lodge a more democratic organization, or supervising the authority of the leaders of the Lodge over the entire country. The latter solution was attempted, and the result culminated politically in Alvear's dictatorship (January-April, 1815). It is indeed curious that an organization dedicated to the fostering of political independence when pressed into service in a task that it had never been intended to perform, became eventually as autocratic and dictatorial as

\textsuperscript{40}\textit{Ibid.}, V (1), pp. 254-255.

\textsuperscript{41}\textit{Mitre}, p. 46.
that regime that it had been designed to destroy.

In summary, it may be said that the various lodges did a great deal to further the ideas of independence in political and economic matters, and thus indirectly in spiritual and social matters also. However, the liberation from the old, and the propagandizing of the new was all to what purpose?

Who was to gain by independence? Obviously, many Buenos Aires Creoles believed that they would be able to enrich themselves if the economic concepts of Campanoys, the Physiocrats and Adam Smith were adopted, but would the Indians, Negroes, Mestizos and other Creoles in other parts of Rio de la Plata also profit? And was it not possible that certain foreign groups and other interests might not gain more than Buenos Aires Creoles?

IV. POLITICAL ASPECTS OF THE ARGENTINE REVOLUTION 1810-1825

The defeat of the British under Lt. General Whitelocke in 1807 set the stage for the last phase of the movement toward La Plata independence. When in July, 1808, news of the deposition of Charles IV and Ferdinand VII reached Buenos Aires, the Peninsulares became apprehensive as to their continued economic and political privileges. 42 Martin Alzaga, the Senor Alcalde,

42 Benjamin Keen, David Curtis De Forest and the Revolution of Buenos Aires (New Haven, Conn., 1947), p. 35. It was already known that Creole elements were working for La Plata independence, and Liniers, a Frenchman, was thought to be too friendly with them. Frio, Governor of the Place at Montevideo, had (September, 1808) set an example by defying Liniers, calling him a traitor, and setting up (in Montevideo), a governing Junta of Peninsulares. Cf., F. A. Kirkpatrick, A History of the Argentine Republic (Cambridge, 1931), p. 64.
advanced a plan calling for the crushing of the Creole Party by deposing the Viceroy (Liniers) and placing all the governing power in the hands of a Junta controlled by Peninsulares. Alzaga's scheme was executed on January 1, 1809. A specially convened Cabildo packed with Peninsulares forced Liniers to resign. However, Saavedra, leading the Creole Militia (Patricio) forced Liniers to withdraw his resignation. The revolt being suppressed, Alzaga and four associates fled from Buenos Aires.

Liniers now owed his position to the good will of the Creoles. In the spring of 1809, Belgranó, backed by the British Admiral, Sir Henry Smith, called for the adoption of a free trade policy. Liniers accepted the idea, but June, 1809, news arrived that the Junta Central of Seville had replaced Liniers with Cisneros, a veteran of Trafalgar; Cisneros, confronted with the demand for free trade, knew a few moments of uneasy expectancy, and thus chose a conciliatory course. In December, 1809, Cisneros opened the port to all vessels of nations friendly to Spain on a limited basis. He then ordered the expulsion of all foreigners from Buenos Aires and Río de la Plata. The curtain came down on the last act preceding the revolutionary episode.

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44Benjamin Keen, p. 75.

45During the period between December, 1809, and May, 1810, the standard historical interpretation holds that a group of patriots (usually Belgrano, Paso, Virytes, Bonadio, Terrada, Chiclana, Berruti, Irigoyen, Rodríguez Peña, and Delcarce) formed an organization known as La Sociedad de Los Siete, which plotted the revolutionary movements and directed the agitation. This viewpoint is subscribed to by C. Roberts, pp. 387-389, Kirkpatrick, p. 65, among others,
On May 13, 1810, an English ship brought to Buenos Aires the news that
the French Army had broken out across the plains of Andalusia, and captured
Seville, the seat of the Junta Central.\footnote{Kirkpatrick, p. 68.} Cisneros was able to suppress the
news until May 1, but then, rumor running rampant in the city, he published it.
On May 20, early in the day at a special meeting of military commanders called
by Cisneros, Saavedra informed Liniers that "the Viceroy authority no longer
existed."\footnote{Cf., Kirkpatrick, p. 70.} That evening a group of Creoles met at the house of Rodriguez
Pena and laid plans for the calling of a \textit{cabildo abierto}.\footnote{Cf., Kirkpatrick, p. 70.} At ten o'clock
that evening, Castelli and Martin Rodriguez forced their way into the viceregal
apartments, and by "peremptory demand" received Cisneros' consent for the
calling of a \textit{cabildo abierto} on May 22, 1810.\footnote{Ricardo Levene, \textit{A History of Argentina}, p. 219.}

and proclaimed by Don Gregorio Funes' account in Rodney and Graham, pp. 139-140.

The major opponent of this interpretation is Ricardo Levene, \textit{Un Historia
de la Nacion Argentina}, V (1), pp. 297-298, 303-304. Levene derided this con-
ception of the May, 1810, revolution as "romantic" and declares the the
\textit{Sociedad de Los Siete} "is a myth repeated by a tradition of errors," \textit{Ibid.},
p. 304. Levene believes that all of these men were indeed conspirators, but
he denies that any single group of men directed the revolutionists' strategy
cr agitation.

\footnote{The Junta Central fled to the island city of Cadiz, and there dissolved,
\textit{Cf., Kirkpatrick}, p. 68.}

\footnote{Cf., Kirkpatrick, p. 70.}

\footnote{Ricardo Levene, \textit{A History of Argentina}, p. 219.}

\footnote{Kirkpatrick, p. 70.}
For the meeting of May 22, 1810, four hundred and fifty invitations were issued, but only two hundred fifty persons appeared. The delegates (Creoles apparently not holding a majority) were about evenly divided, and thus it was not until May 24, 1810, that a Junta including O'neiros as President, Saavedra and Castelli and Peninsulares Sola and Inchaverri was installed.

However, the final decision in these matters no longer rested with the cabildo abierto. On the night of May 24, another meeting took place at Rodriguez Pena's house. That evening Saavedra and Castelli resigned from the newly formed Junta. The next morning, May 25, a petition calling for the creation of a Junta including the names of Saavedra, Castelli, Belgrano, Acuénaga, Alberti, Matheu, Larrea, Paso and Moreno was presented to the cabildo abierto. Despite disturbances, shouts, poundings on the door of the chamber where the cabildo met, the cabildo abierto refused to accede to the wishes of the submitters of the petition. Finally, late in the afternoon of

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50 Benjamin Keen, p. 76, C. Roberts, p. 389, Kirkpatrick, p. 70, and Ricardo Levene, A History of Argentina, p. 222. All agree that a picket line of Creole Militia (Patricio) kept many conservative delegates and many European Spaniards from making use of their invitations. Kirkpatrick puts the number of absentees at 200, ibid., C. Roberts puts the figure at 221, ibid., Levene, A History of Argentina, p. 222, notes that 251 people were present at the May 22 meeting, but only 224 voted.


53 Ibid.
May 25, the cabildo abierto went to the balcony of the cabildo hall, in order to witness a public demonstration in favor of the men whose names were presented on the list. However, from the balcony, instead of a huge crowd, they were confronted by a small group of men. In answer to the query of "where are the people?" made by Doctor Il Eva, the Sundic-Proctor, the group replied that "If up to this juncture they (i.e., revolutionaries) had proceeded with prudence, in order that the city might not suffer disaster, it was not time to use violent measures."54

If in any case the cabildo abierto failed to cooperate with the desires of the revolutionaries, "the city would suffer what up to that time it had been possible to avoid."55 Faced with the prospect of violence, the cabildo acquiesced. That evening, a Junta consisting of Cornelio Saavedra as President, Juan Castelli, Manuel Belgrano, Miguel Azcénaga, Manuel Alberti, Matheu and Juan Larrea was appointed, with Juan Paso and Mariano Moreno assigned as secretaries.56 These men swore "to observe the laws of the kingdom and to preserve this part of America for our august sovereign, Ferdinand VII."57

54Ibid., p. 220.
55Ibid.
56Rodney and Graham, p. 136. Don Gregorio Funes, in his account, insists that the men of the Junta would have liked to declare complete independence, but they believed that they had not as yet garnered sufficient support: "But for the purpose of making an experiment upon the dissimilar classes of men . . . till events should render it expedient, the capital (i.e., Creole revolutionaries) limited itself for the present only to the course sanctioned by prudence. This was, that the province, in the name of Ferdinand VII should assume the direction of public affairs," ibid., pp. 139-140.
57Kirkpatrick, p. 73.
Thus, in this fashion the city and province of Buenos Aires set up a new government and ended the Vice Royalty without consulting any of the other provinces, and possibly against the will of all except a group of Buenos Aires Creoles who had taken the ideas of the Enlightenment as their creed.\(^5\)

From this point, until 1820, war, conspiracy and counter-revolution liberally spiced with episodes of civil warfare became the order of the day as Buenos Aires Creoles moved to establish hegemony in all the provinces, in order to maintain the revolutionary steps already taken, and to prepare for those contemplated.\(^6\)

**SOME IMPORTANT EVENTS OF THE LA PLATA REVOLUTION 1810-1820**

- **Junta of Buenos Aires**—May 25, 1810
- **First Triumvirate declared**—April 5-6, 1810
- **Second Triumvirate declared**—October 1, 1812
- **Special National Assembly**—January 31, 1813
- **Pasadas becomes Supreme Director**—January, 1814
- **Alvear becomes Supreme Director**—January, 1815
- **Fueyreddon becomes Supreme Director**—March, 1816

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\(^5\) Strangely enough, while no author declares that the cabildo abierto ever informed the provinces of its intentions (the establishment of a special Junta to rule all of the La Plata Vice Royalty), only Thomas Dawson, *The South American Republics* (New York, 1903), p. 90, bothers to deny that any other provinces were informed of the intentions of the cabildo abierto.

\(^6\) It is not necessary for the purpose of this thesis to make a detailed study of the numerous activities of the revolutionary cabildo of Buenos Aires, or of the various attempts at national government which followed. Instead, concentration will be focused on those revolutionary aspects and tendencies deemed as essential to the character and development of this thesis.
From the beginning, Buenos Aires Creole liberal elements acted arbitrarily as the national governing body for the United Provinces of Rio de la Plata. All "rebels" (i.e., royalists, Bourbon supporters, anyone not acknowledging the suzerainty of the Buenos Aires governments) were denounced as insurgents. Buenos Aires officialdom attempted to appoint and dismiss other provincial governments depending upon their own desires and intentions.

The establishment of an independent Junta in 1810 did not meet with the approval of many of the provincial chiefs. Saenz, Governor of Potosi, and Nieto, President of Charcas, refused to acknowledge Buenos Aires authority, and set up independent provincial governments. In August, 1810, Buenos Aires sent out troops, which took control of much of the interior. Moreno and Veytes became the driving spirits behind the Buenos Aires attempt to enforce its control of the rest of the provinces. Opposition leaders such as Nieto, Saenz, and eventually Santiago Liniers, the former Viceroy, were captured and

60Kirkpatrick, op. 78-79.
Within the borders of the old Vice Royalty, only in Paraguay, where another independent government was set up, in upper Peru, where military hostilities commenced, and in the Banda Oriental, which Spanish royalists made their stronghold, were the forces of Buenos Aires checked.

Arbitrary direction of the internal affairs of the other provinces became a Buenos Aires trademark after 1810. However, the continual instability of Buenos Aires rulers, and the incessant conspiring of various groups hungry for power gradually tended to undermine the control which Buenos Aires exercised over the rest of the country.

In the name of democracy, freedom, and independence, several constitutional and national assemblies were held in various parts of Río de la Plata. The first of these, taking place in Buenos Aires, January 31, 1813, was held under the auspices of the Lautaro Lodge, and Juan Paso was named as President of the assembly. Several provinces (notably Tucumán, Entre Ríos, Corrientes,

61 Ricardo Levene, A History of Argentina, p. 245. Levene claims that the shooting of liniers and other rebels was the decree of Moreno. Kirkpatrick, p. 79, feels that the other executions (Saenz, Meto) were primarily the work of Castelli.

62 No delegates from the rest of the United Provinces were allowed to take part in the Junta Government until December, 1810. At that time, Don Gregorio Funes, and several other liberals from the various provinces gained admission to the Junta. Paso and Moreno both fought viciously against the entry of non-Buenos Aires individuals into the Junta. Don Funes defended his right to Junta membership declaring: "The capital city did not have the legitimate right by itself to elect rulers whom the other cities ought to obey." Cf., Ricardo Levene, The History of Argentina, p. 261.

63 The character of the assembly is noted by Ricardo Levene, De Historia de la Nación Argentina, V (2), pp. 727-728. Mitre, p. 53, declares that the Lautaro Lodge was responsible for the National Assembly.
and Rioja) either did not appoint delegates, or were not invited. Delegates from the Banda Oriental (appointed by José Artigas) were admitted, but later dismissed.

The assembly of 1813, while it took deliberate steps toward independence, and constitutional government, stopped just short of the accomplishment of these goals. Instead, the assembly created a national executive office, which lasted only about fourteen months. In April, 1815, Alvear having been

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65 Kirkpatrick, p. 116. Certain members of the assembly had already drawn up a preliminary constitution calling for a strong central government to which Artigas' representatives disagreed.

66 Caution reigned finally in 1813. The Venezuelan revolt had been apparently crushed. The new assembly did, however, sweep away the Inquisition, the mita for Indians, legislate Catholic Church (i.e., baptismal) methods, and proclaimed a new national anthem. Cf., Kirkpatrick, p. 115, and Woodbine Parish, *Buenos Aires from the Conquest* (London, 1852), p. 129.

Theoretically at least, the declaration of a new national anthem and the assumption of the power to legislate for the Catholic Church indicate that the Assembly assumed it possessed the power to rule independently of Ferdinand VII. In particular, the regulation of the Church had been in the hands of the Bishops, the King, and the Council of the Indies. Thus, legislation for the Church, in the name of the national assembly, could only be rebellion. It is the student's belief that external circumstances and the fear that such a move would incite fresh civil war, were the prime reasons that independence was not declared outright in 1813.

67 The last Director, Alvear, was exceedingly pro-British. Writing to Lord Strangford in 1813, Alvear declared, "These provinces (Rio de la Plata) desire to belong to Great Britain, receive her laws, obey her government, and live under her influence. . . . Under these circumstances, only the generous British nation can put an effective remedy to so many evils. . . . these provinces. . . . will obey her (Britain's government) and receive her laws with pleasure." Cf., William Graham, *English Influence in the Argentine* (Buenos Aires, 1840), p. 13.
removed from office, the Buenos Aires cabildo once again assumed national power (May 6, 1815) and appointed a new Supreme Director, General Rondeau. Rondeau failed to last the year out.

Buenos Aires efforts to convene another congress finally bore fruit on March 24, 1816, when the Congress of Tucuman opened. Less than two months after the opening of the Congress, May 3, 1816, delegates had chosen Pueyrredon as the new Director Supremo. Despite opposition, Buenos Aires delegates soon held a commanding position in the new Congress. Two of its delegates, Juan Paso and Juan Serrana, became the secretaries of the Congress.

Concerning the question of independence, San Martin and Belgrano combined their influence to insure the declaration of Río de la Plata independence on July 9, 1816. However, on the question of constitution, the Congress

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69 British Foreign and State Papers, Volume V (London, 1831), p. 744. Buenos Aires domination of the conference is partially explained in the report of American Stephen Bland who noted that at the Tucuman Congress, delegates voted numerically, not by province. In addition the provinces of Entre Ríos, Santa Fe, Corrientes, and Banda Oriental sent no delegates at all. Bland, p. 744 declares that the Buenos Aires delegation had seven delegates. Cordoba, he notes, had only one. Cf., Kirkpatrick, p. 120. Ricardo Levene, En Historia de la Nación Argentina, VI (1), pp. 675-676, credits Buenos Aires with only five delegates, but demonstrates plainly that it was twice the size of any other delegation.

70 British Foreign and State Papers, Volume V, p. 804.

71 The complete Manifesto directed to all nations by the General Constitutional Congress of the United Provinces of Río de la Plata is found in Rodney and Graham, Reports, pp. 215-232. The document accuses Spain of numerous crimes and speaks of natural rights, ibid., p. 231. The document shows the influence of Deistic thought, for God is never mentioned directly. Instead, there are references to the "Creator," and "Supreme Judge of the Universe,"
foundered. The problem of centralized control versus a loose confederation of provinces proved insurmountable. Furthermore, Belgrano's endorsement of an Inca dynasty and Buenos Aires schemes for the establishment of a constitutional monarchy, were bitterly attacked by some representatives but praised by others.72

Despite these factors, Buenos Aires liberal elements had no intention of letting the Tucuman Congressional organisation escape its grasp until a constitution favorable to Buenos Aires had been adopted. On October 16, 1816, by order of the Supreme Director, The Sovereign Congress of the United Provinces was permitted to remove itself from Tucuman to Buenos Aires.73

When the news of this change of headquarters was made known, anger against Buenos Aires and the Director Supremo became general. Defending himself against charges of tyranny, Pueyrredon declared:

The provisional removal of the Sovereign Congress to the city of Buenos Aires has already been sanctioned by law. Citizens! Dismiss all insidious prejudices! . . . Be assured that this removal was the result of mature deliberation. . . . The removal of the Congress to Buenos Aires might produce a disagreeable effect upon the minds which

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72 Ibid., pp. 217, 233, 231-232. Britain, of course, was praised for the parts she played in La Plata affairs. Ibid., p. 226.


72 British Foreign and State Papers, V, p. 1072.
are either too sensitive or too tenacious of the inviolability of their rights . . . We are fully aware of the feelings of the Provinces on this question.74

From this point on, disobedience and disregard by the interior provinces of the orders of Pueyrredón increased markedly. Finally, in October, 1817, Pueyrredón issued a manifesto stating that:

It is no longer possible to bear with the insolence by which the Supreme Authority is obstructed in the exercise of its functions . . . From the first moment of my entering office, I have employed every means to induce . . . malcontents to come to a reconciliation . . . Wait but a few days, and you will witness the overthrow of all those who have tried to deceive you (i.e., the people) by infusing into your minds the blackest suspicions against your government. Unless you have been metamorphosed into a gang of slaves, you have naught to fear.75

Late in 1817, the shadowy remnant of the ex-Tucumán Sovereign Congress issued a decree declaring that it intended to frame a constitution, but until it did, the executive power was to be vested in the director of the state "who should be chosen by the outgoing director from a list of persons prepared by the cabildos of each province."76 The net effect, however, was to make Pueyrredón temporary dictator. Several provinces not bothering to comply with invitations to send delegates to Congress, meeting in Buenos Aires on April 22, 1819, drew up a constitution.77 This constitution was promulgated on May 25, 1819, and Pueyrredón resigned as Supreme Director on June 9, 1819.78

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74Ibid., pp. 1072-1073.
75Ibid., VI, p. 985.
76Ricardo Levene, A History of Argentina, p. 333.
77Ibid., p. 333.
78Ibid., p. 336.
The constitution called for a strong central government, and declared Buenos Aires to be the executive seat and federal capital. The constitution was centralistic in tone, and aristocratic in nature.

79 Ibid., p. 334.

80 The provisions of the 1819 constitution were these: The legislative department was bicameral. The lower house would consist of deputies; one per 16,000 to 25,000 inhabitants. The upper house was to consist of a member of each province, three military officers, a bishop, three priests, and a member of each university. The executive authority was to rest in the hands of a Director, who was to be elected by the two legislative houses acting jointly. When one considers the population of the United Provinces as of 1819, (about 600,000), it may be seen that the lower house would have had a membership of between 20 to 32 persons, cf., Miiron Burgin, Economic Aspects of Argentine Federalism (Cambridge, Mass., 1946), p. 114, for a comparison of the Plata census figures in various sources. The upper house would have probably not included more than 50 persons. Kirkpatrick, p. 129, notes that nowhere in the 1819 constitutional document is the word "republican" to be found.

Commenting upon the aristocratic character of the 1819 constitution, Ricardo Levene, A History of Argentina, declares that the "Unitarians (primarily Buenos Aires liberals favoring a strong central government) desired the establishment of a constitutional monarchy, but did not proclaim it. The majority of the members of the congress were monarchists, who although they professed monarchical ideas, had discarded this system of government in view of the violent opposition it had provoked, and had sanctioned a constitution, which if it was not monarchical, was not democratic, and hence could not satisfy general aspirations," Ibid., p. 333.

Efforts by certain Buenos Aires interests leading toward the creation of a limited monarchy in the United Provinces under the French Prince de Lucca had been under way since 1817. Cf., Levene, A History of Argentina, pp. 332-333 and Kirkpatrick, pp. 121-125.

Miles A. Cleve, Readings in Hispanic-American History (New York, 1927), pp. 477-479. Cleve presents the records of the secret sessions held in Buenos Aires by the self-styled "National Sovereign Congress," on November 11-12, 1819. These records show that the Congress approved the plan for the creation of a limited monarchy in Rio de la Plata by the Prince de Lucca. It was expected that a French Army would accompany the Prince in order that opposition from the interior provinces could be destroyed. Active British opposition to
The constitution of 1819 was flatly rejected by the interior provinces. When Pueyrredon resigned (June 9, 1819), he was replaced by General Rondeau. In July, 1819, Rondeau summoned a secret session of the "rump" national congress in order to discuss the possibilities of making the Prince of Lucca the king of the United Provinces. 61

Once again, opposition made itself felt. Lopez and Ramirez, caudillos of Entre Rios and Santa Fe provinces, rejected all monarchical proposals. After making several strong protests, the two caudillos made ready to fight. 62

Frightened, General Rondeau called for the return of the armies of Belgrano and San Martin, but to no avail. 63 The military power of Buenos Aires having been drastically reduced, Buenos Aires political power in the interior provinces waned. Rebellion against Buenos Aires authority had been going on at this scheme was to be the only reason for its cancellation. Ibid., pp. 478-479.

When the above evidence is considered by this observer, the Constitution of 1819 becomes not some variety of muddled compromise as Levene suggests, but a transitional plan designed to possess sufficient flexibility to allow for the establishment of a monarchy whenever favorable conditions warranted such a move.

61 Cf., Kirkpatrick, p. 129.

62 Ibid., Kirkpatrick, p. 129.

63 When General Rondeau called for the return of the armies of San Martin and Belgrano to Buenos Aires, San Martin, busily campaigning in Chile, quickly rejected the command. Cf., Ricardo Levene, A History of Argentina, p. 337.

Belgrano ordered his army from Tucuman to Buenos Aires province, but on route, after Belgrano had departed due to ill health, the army revolted. Cf., Kirkpatrick, p. 129.
least since 1814, but by the end of 1819, Entre Ríos, Corrientes, Santa Fe, Tucumán, Salta, Ríos and Córdoba Provinces had all either declared their independence or were actually governing independently in fact.84

Early in the year 1820, General Rondeau decided to march against Lopez and Ramírez, but at Gepeda, on February 1, 1820, his army was crushed and Buenos Aires now sued for peace. As an answer, Ramírez and Lopez announced their willingness to discuss peace, "if the Congress and the (Supreme) Director were dismissed."85 The Buenos Aires cabildo agreed to these terms and monarchy, constitution, and national assembly became the curios of yesteryear. On February 23, 1820, Buenos Aires, Santa Fe, and Entre Ríos signed a treaty of peace between provinces.86

Civil war reigned in Buenos Aires from the time of the Gepeda debacle until on September 24, 1820, Martín Rodríguez, with Bernadino Rivadavia as "chief officer and guiding genius," took office.87 Shortly afterward, both Buenos Aires and Córdoba made a joint appeal for a new general congress, to meet at Córdoba.

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84Ricardo Levene, A History of Argentina, p. 334. In several of these states, (notably Córdoba and Tucumán) civil wars were also in progress.

85Ibid., p. 339.

86British Foreign and State Papers, VII (London, 1822), pp. 311-316. This agreement, called the Treaty of Pillar, called for: (1) peace between provinces, and no mention of ultimate authority, (2) a "Federal government" was to be proclaimed after "deliberation," p. 312.

87Antonio Iarri, Historia de los Gobernados de Los Provincias Argentinas, Tome II (Buenos Aires, 1792), p. 358. Iarri notes that between February and September of 1820, no fewer than twenty governments ruled at least temporarily in Buenos Aires.
Despite their shocking fall into oblivion, Buenos Aires liberals still maintained control in Buenos Aires. The delegates thus sent to the Cordoba conference acted as though the battle of Cepeda had never occurred. The fact that the Cordoba Congress was not held in Buenos Aires was a token that her officialdom accepted in "bad grace." Bernadino Rivadavia and his delegation let it be understood that "Buenos Aires would take no part in a congress not held under her immediate influence." Under these circumstances, the congress collapsed.

Despite these sharp rebuffs by the other provinces, Buenos Aires liberals with Rivadavia directing the government carried on foreign relations with such nations as the United States and Britain, and acted in the name of a national government which did not exist.

Not until December 16, 1824, was Buenos Aires again able to assert her claim as leader of the United Provinces of Rio de la Plata. At that time,

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69Cf., Humphries, p. 16.

90The Buenos Aires delegation managed to have Rivadavia elected as secretary of the congress, but at this point the provinces joined to appeal Buenos Aires machinations, ibid. In special laws passed in 1823, Rivadavia sold mining sites in Catamarca, Rioja, to a British mining company and never bothered to inform the provinces of what he had done. The entire story is revealed in William Andrews, Journey from Buenos Aires, Two Volumes (London, 1827). Andrews was the engineer of the company to which Rivadavia sold the sites.
promising to each province the right to veto any constitution that might be drawn up, Rivadavia managed to have a National Constitutional Congress established in Buenos Aires. Once again, the centralist versus federalist constitutional struggle was to be renewed, but this time, with more conclusive results.

In summarizing the attempts of Buenos Aires (particularly the liberals) to assert her leadership and direction over the rest of the provinces, Stephen Bland, American Consul in Rio de la Plata (1817-1819) struck out at those who tended to glorify Buenos Aires' leadership presumptions:

It cannot nor ought it be concealed that the ruling party of Buenos Aires had managed the affairs of the Union in such a strain of domineering monopoly as to render the ... provinces extremely dissatisfied.91

V. ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF THE POLITICAL STRUGGLE FOR CONTROL
OF RIO DE LA PLATA 1810-1825

An understanding of the struggle for the establishment of a constitutional and national government in Rio de la Plata becomes, despite its political implications, well nigh unintelligible without an investigation of their economic overtones. It is on the economic level that much of the conflict became truly climatic. Both the portenos in Buenos Aires and the caudillos in the provinces felt that the group which would eventually determine

the nature of the union which would govern Rio de la Plata, would also determine the economic future of all the provinces.92

In the beginning, the La Plata region had been divided into various regions. With the passage of decades, each of these regions experienced a pattern of development which differed from the other regions both in pattern and degree. Many factors conditioned the development of the various areas of the Rio de la Plata. The available labor, the physical environment, and perhaps most important, the exigencies of Spanish colonial policy.

It should be remembered that until 1776, Buenos Aires was not a leading Spanish American port in terms of legal commerce. Shipping headed for South America rounded Cape Horn for Lima, or docked at Cartagena or Porto Bello. Commerce intended for Rio de la Plata came across the Andes and upper Peru into La Plata territory. Thus, cities and towns grew up along the trans-Andean route and prospered, for not only incoming, but much export trade left La Plata via the Andes to Lima. Crude manufacturing and processing factories struggled for, and eventually achieved a reasonable rate of profit, thanks to the idiosyncrasies of Spanish commercial policies.

Buenos Aires was, of course, the natural center of trade in La Plata. Its excellent natural harbor and advantageous location made it the natural entrance and exit for products leaving or intended for the La Plata area.

92 The term "porteno" usually referred to those persons who lived in the city of Buenos Aires. However, on a broader basis, porteno was often used to refer to any resident of Buenos Aires, city or province.
The efforts of Buenos Aires Creoles to attain the establishment of a free trade policy in the port city have already been noted in this work. The Creoles realized that the adoption of a free trade policy unhampered by Spanish control would end the privileges of the peninsulares and probably enrich the Creoles.

The Revolution of May, 1810, benefited economically, only the Buenos Aires merchants and Buenos Aires provincial estancieros engaged in cattle raising. With Spanish control swept away, foreign interests (particularly British) exhibited an increasing interest in Pampa beef and hides. Thus, since much of the best pampa (grazing lands) was in Buenos Aires province, the land value there appreciated greatly.

But what did the revolution of 1810 do for the interior provinces, which had, through the protective features of Spain's commercial and administrative policies, attained a degree of economic prosperity and self-sufficiency?

Course textiles were produced in considerable quantities in the Jesuit missions in the province of Cordoba... linen of fair quality was manufactured in Catamarca. Corrientes supplied the Vice Royalty with girths; the production of wines and brandy reached a high degree of development in Mendoza and San Juan... In Tucuman and Mendoza, local timber was utilized in the production of wagons; and in Tucuman, sugar was manufactured.

93 Miron Burgin, p. 15. Mr. Burgin carries on a long discourse (pp. 12-20) as to why the 1810 revolution provided no great economic advantages to the interior provinces, but great advantages to Buenos Aires.

94 Ibid., p. 15.

95 Burgin, pp. 14-15. Magnus Norner, S. J., The Political and Economic Activities of the Jesuits in the La Plata Region (Stockholm, 1951), pp. 146 points out that the silver mines in Potosi provided a market for all the cotton goods that could be produced. At various schools and missions in the interior of the United Provinces, Jesuits carried on the manufacture of cotton cloth in the La Plata. As early as 1685, cotton cloth was made at Asuncion. Other
The gradual relaxation of Spanish mercantilistic protection (after 1778), and the abrupt opening of the country to a veritable deluge of manufactures (after 1810) swarmed the local industries. Still in their relatively primitive state, the native industry of the interior provinces was in no position to withstand foreign competition, either with regard to cost or productive quality.

War in Upper Peru (1810) and the declaring of independence (1816), destroyed the old lines of intercourse across the Andes, and thus forced the interior provinces to carry on the export and import trade which survived the revolutionary dislocation through the port of Buenos Aires.

The revolution of 1810 brought into play previously undetected forces which only increased the dependence of the interior upon Buenos Aires. For example, the rapid acceleration of the beef and hide industry in Buenos Aires Province, after 1810, necessitated the importation of not only manufactured goods but also foodstuffs, some of which were raised in the interior provinces.

Jesuits collegios (located at Corrientes and Santa Fe) also produced cotton cloth, while the Jesuit school in Cordoba made woolen cloth. Ibid., pp. 166-168.

These early Jesuit efforts probably had a great part in stimulating the growth of the textile industry which flourished in the interior of the United Provinces prior to the wars of independence. Cf., Horner, p. 168.

96 Proof for this unfortunate climax to Rio de la Plata's first awkward steps toward self-sufficiency and national manufacturing is found in Ricardo Levene, A History of Argentina, pp. 349-350, and Burgin, p. 16. Burgin asserts that after 1810, "Domestic industry was far 'with ruin," ibid.


98 Burgin, pp. 16-17, 34-35.
The demands of Buenos Aires for more foodstuffs provided still another basis for commercial intercourse between the province and port city with the rest of the country. However, porteno merchants soon learned that they could increase or reduce their demands, and thus extract additional concessions and profits from the interior. Here was another means by which the nation's chief port could exercise economic hegemony over the rest of the country. Thus, for the interior provinces, economic self-defense became one of the most important factors in the formulation of that brand of political particularism known as Federalism.

The provincial Federalist position was clear. In terms of La Plata economics, that which was desired was protection for local industry against external competition. But, in Río de la Plata, external competition implied not only that from other countries, but that of other provinces. Each province possessed its own tariff schedules, and it desired to see its schedule maintained at a level which would keep competition for the home industries at an absolute minimum. Under these circumstances, not one provincial Federalist...

99 Ibid.

100 Hatred of Buenos Aires leadership by the provinces manifested itself as early as 1813, in the clash between Artigas' delegates to the 1813 assembly, in Buenos Aires and other proponents of a centralist constitution, cf., p. 60 of this chapter.

Kirkpatrick, p. 120, notes that in 1816, candidates campaigning in Salta for selection as members of the Salta delegation to the Tucuman Congress did their campaigning amid shouts of "death to the portenos."

101 Miron Burgin, pp. 83 and 101.
party rose, but several, and the cohesion of the various factions hinged on cooperation in opposition to "unitarian policy, inter-provincial cooperation, and the acknowledgement of the existence of a few specific interests, complementary to, and compatible with the interests of all the provinces." 102

The vast territorial extent of the old Vice Royalty and the paucity of communication, favored the formation of an autonomous nuclei, or so it seemed to Federalist supporters. The translation of the economic ideal (protection) into political reality presented the picture of a loose confederation of semi-autonomous provinces, each more or less sovereign, but cooperating when the interests of the group were at stake, and always more or less on terms of equality. The presence of special provincial interests and heterogeneity of social groups supporting the Federalist idea tended to hinder the development of formalized party doctrine and political organization, but in that the Federalist idea was an expression of the general views and hopes of the majority of artisans, workers, small producers and manufacturers of the nation, it was the only effective means of expression perhaps for those, who in the long run, would determine the rise or fall of the nation.

In opposition to the provincial Federalist governmental concept, was that of the exponents of strong centralized government, the Unitarians. The Unitarian Party was composed chiefly of merchants, lawyers, business interests residing primarily in or near the city of Buenos Aires and the few other ports. Its leaders included such La Plata political giants as Bernadino Rivadavia,

102 Ibid., pp. 83-84.
Juan Paso, Serratea, and many of the other city dwellers who had played such a
great part in the revolution of 1810, and the attempts to establish a national
government in the years that followed. Thus, the Unitarians, concentrated
largely in one area, conscious of their minority, but highly articulate and
occupying a strategic position (i.e., the outlet of the country commercially
being Buenos Aires) were well prepared to struggle for the ends they desired.

The Unitarians were for the most part the spiritual sons of the economic
philosophers of England and France. Their objective was bluntly, the elimina-
tion of the mercantilistic idea, and the establishment of a state in keeping
with the idea of economic liberalism:

From the unitary point of view, the economic and social backwardness
of Argentina was owing to ... the policy of restriction ... based
upon the notion that the interests of the state were opposed to those
of the individual ... The notion was mistaken and harmful ... The individual prosperity was the foundation of the economic and
political strength of the state.104

The proponents of laissez-faire, or so-called economic liberalism have
long maintained that government should interfere in the machinations and
activities of business and commerce as infrequently as possible. But a
dilemma seemingly is presented here. Rio de la Plata liberals sought the
foundation of a strong, centralized state, and the virtual emasculation of
provincial autonomy. At first glance, the question seems to be how could
proponents of laissez-faire economy advocate strong central government?

103 Ibid., p. 103.
104 Ibid., pp. 87-88.
The dilemma is only apparent, for the answer seems to lie in the fact that in Río de la Plata, the conditions present shaped ideology, rather than vice-versa. The revolution of 1810 had accomplished the desired results in terms of freeing Buenos Aires merchants from Spanish control. But, if the advantages gained from revolution were to be maintained, a political system had to be set up which would consolidate the gains made, and gradually provide new ones. Thus, believers in strong, centralised government tried in 1813, 1816, and 1819 to force their political creed down the unwilling provincial gullets. It was the strength of the opposition and their great inferiority of numbers which made the establishment of a strong central government imperative for the safeguarding of liberal gains and the achievement of liberal ends.105

105 It is most probable that the fear that the opposition to Buenos Aires liberal plans for political organisation in the interior might become extreme, caused many porteno liberals to feel that the establishment of a monarchy, a bulwark against the Federalists, was necessary. Cf., Ricardo Levene, A History of Argentina, p. 353.

Buenos Aires liberals had long been involved in schemes to bring about a monarchy in Río de la Plata. Belgrano, Rodríguez, Pena, Castelli and several other Creoles desired the candidature of the Princess Carlotta of Brazil, as far back as 1807, cf., Ricardo Levene, A History of Argentina, pp. 204-205.

In the years following the May revolution, several attempts at establishing one form of monarchy or another were attempted. In 1813-1814, Sarrato, Buenos Aires ambassador-at-large in Europe, proposed the idea of the establishment of one of the Spanish princes in Río de la Plata. Cf., Ricardo Levene, En Historia de la Nación Argentina, VI (1), pp. 602-603. Ambassador-at-large in Europe, Bernadino Rivadavia and Manuel Belgrano, were involved in various schemes (1814-1815), first to bring about the reign of Charles IV (deposed father of Ferdinand VII) in Río de la Plata, and later in fruitless efforts to persuade Spanish and/or French princelings to accept the crown, cf., Ricardo Levene, En Historia de la Nación Argentina, VI (1), pp. 953-955, 957, 962-963, and Woodbine Parish, p. 75. The May, 1815, proposal by Rivadavia and Belgrano
Thus, while in theory the Unitarians were liberal and at least nominally democratic, in practice they were aristocratic and authoritarian. In one sense, the achievement of Unitarian ends would have placed them in a privileged position not greatly different than that enjoyed by some Peninsular merchants and traders during the era of Spanish rule. At length, some Unitarians realized this fact and admitted it openly. In a speech in 1825, before the Constitutional Congress, convened in Buenos Aires, Manuel Castro, Buenos Aires delegate and supporter of Rivadavia, flatly declared:

It is said that in this manner (i.e., through the new constitution being promulgated) is introduced insensitively an extremely harmful aristocracy, that being the aristocracy of money. Before I have

to Charles IV is particularly interesting: "No other than a monarchical form of government is best suited to the habits of the people ... no foreign Prince can so well insure their (people's) welfare and prosperity as ... one of your majesty's family," Ibid.

Belgrano returned to Rio de la Plata late in 1815, and at the Congress of Tucuman proposed the fantastic scheme of putting the descendant of the Inca of Peru on the throne of Rio de la Plata, cf., Ricardo Levene, A History of Argentina, p. 326.

The two Supreme Directors of the United Provinces, Pueyrredon and General Rondeau, both were supporters of the candidature of the French Prince of Lucca and the Duke of Micheliou, cf., Kirkpatrick, pp. 124-125, and 129. Pueyrredon went so far as to exile Sorrego and several other Buenos Aires province citizens who attacked him as being a royalist sympathizer. Cf., Ricardo Levene, A History of Argentina, p. 332. Most of the people knew that the Unitarian Party desired kingship and thus all the democratic elements were primarily Federalist, Ibid., pp. 332-333.

Many historians tend to gloss over the monarchical designs of many Buenos Aires liberals (who were chiefly Unitarians), and dismiss these designs as eccentricities. However, it is the student's contention that many Unitarians (Buenos Aires and otherwise), came to seriously favor the establishment of limited monarchy for the reasons stated at the beginning of this footnote.
said, and now I repeat, . . . there can never stop being this aristocracy . . . There are certain aristocracies which we flee from, but there are others to which we should give value, and let them ride like a torrent . . . to intercept . . . would be dangerous. 106

Thus, actually, the Unitarians, in their quest for centralized government, desired the establishment of a state controlled by themselves with Buenos Aires as capital. The most consistent and perhaps, the most effective, opposition to the Unitarians came from a third group which gradually became known as the Buenos Aires Federalists. 107 Their followers consisted chiefly of meat and hide producers of Buenos Aires Province. The Buenos Aires Federalist was perhaps, more than anything else, the product of the economic conditions arising from the 1810 revolution. The revolution and the resulting increased demands for more and more beef catapulted the Buenos Aires estanciero into a position of more importance. In the sense that the revolution had helped to bring about an increased demand for their products, the Buenos Aires estanciero supported the various efforts of city merchants and liberals to form national governments, etc. However, on many points the estanciero interest was at odds with that of the city merchants and liberals. Primarily, while Buenos Aires merchants needed the trade of the interior provinces, the estanciero interests were much less dependent. 108

108 Ibid.
desired was the expansion of the borders of the province southward, so that new grazing lands could be acquired.

Especially after the ascendancy of the Rodriguez government and the promulgation of the Rivadavia program, estanciero and merchant interests clashed. Previously, Buenos Aires provincial meat interests had received special privileges over those of Santa Fe and Entre Rios provinces. If Buenos Aires became the national capital, and a centralized control was established, estanciero special privileges would of course be nationalized. Furthermore, the revenues (customs duties) which were collected in the port of Buenos Aires were used, at this time, only in Buenos Aires Province. If a centralized government was formed, and Buenos Aires became the national capital as the Unitarian Party desired, the revenues previously used only in Buenos Aires Province would be expended throughout the nation. Since many provinces were poor, assessments for Buenos Aires tax payers would increase. The estanciero, as a holder of property, would of course have to pay more. Even more ominous was the fact that when the estancieros, led by Manuel de Rosas, requested increased protection against frontier Indian attacks, Rivadavia declared that the government had too many other activities to consider. Such actions made the estancieros apprehensive about future Unitary plans.

109 Miron Zurig, p. 105. The special privileges enjoyed in the city of Buenos Aires by provincial estancieros was one of the chief causes for the bad feeling which the provinces of Entre Rios and Santa Fe held for Buenos Aires Province.
In February, 1826, all of the apprehension of the estancieros seemed borne out when in brazen contradiction of the Fundamental Law of January, 1825, through the action of the Constitutional Congress, Buenos Aires became the federal capital of the United Provinces, and early in March, 1826, Bernadino Rivadavia became president. Bluntly, actions such as those noted convinced the estancieros that Rivadavia and his Unitary Party supporters did not intend to protect the interests of the Buenos Aires provincial meat producers.

The Buenos Aires Federalist position evolved chiefly through the efforts of Manuel Borrego and Manuel Moreno. From the economic standpoint, these men argued that the federalization of the city of Buenos Aires and the nationalization of the port city's income was too great a price for the province to pay. Politically, these men took a less provincial attitude. They believed that the ten years of constant revolution (1810-1820) had stripped from the provinces the borrowed apparel of national unity. Since there was as yet no great sentiment for it, a strong central government such as the Unitarians proposed was senseless. Borrego and Moreno declared that the provinces were capable of self-government, and should be allowed to function semi-independently.

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112 Ibid., p. 356.
Under these conditions, the Buenos Aires Federalist position emerges. Buenos Aires Federalists wanted no part of a centralist government which would take the revenues of the port of Buenos Aires and disperse them throughout the country. The revolution had brought to the fore the beef and hide industry. With its outlet for shipping (Buenos Aires Harbor) and possessed of the most profitable industry in the provinces, Buenos Aires estancieros were practically independent of the rest of the United Provinces. Since this was the case, if the other provinces wanted political autonomy, that also was in keeping with estanciero ideas. What had to be taken care of was the problem of provincial expansion southward, and more internal improvements within Buenos Aires province.

V. SUMMARY

Especially in the Río de la Plata, political control meant to a large extent, economic control. In the three-sided melee for governmental control, from the economic point of view, the intertwining of economics and politics made ideals and doctrines the servants of immediate needs and aspirations.

The tragedy of the situation lay in the fact that all three groups manifested some ideas which the entire people would have supported. What was needed in reality was a group which might have stood above the hue and cry of sectional interests, and instead been an advocate of a policy of something for all.
The United Provinces indeed needed unity, for by 1825, the Union Jack was flying omnisciently on the La Plata horizon. In that year, better than fifty per cent of the nation's imports came from Great Britain. Even though a state be nominally independent, what kind of independence could a nation of beef, tallow, wine, and hide producers possess if they were dependent upon one nation for their manufactured goods? Would not the producer of beef, hides, tallow and foodstuffs become for all practical purposes, a virtual colony, or at best, a dependency of the manufacturing nation?
CHAPTER III

AN EXAMINATION OF SOME ASPECTS OF THE TREATY OF 1825

I. ENGLISH DESIGNS

The genesis of the Great Britain-United Provinces of Rio de la Plata Commercial Treaty of 1825 lies in part in the ideas of Manuel Moreno, a primary figure in the May, 1810 revolution. Once hostilities began between Spanish royalists and the revolutionary forces, Moreno became convinced that direct English aid and protection might be the only means that the revolution and its fruits might be perpetuated. To his mind, the only way in which Britain might be encouraged to aid the revolutionists was by awarding Britain trade concessions. In a speech before a group of estancia owners in the summer of 1810, Moreno declared:

It is only just that we put ourselves at the disposal of that great and good nation (Britain) because she will give us the goods we need.¹

On December 11, 1810, after several months of friction and disagreement with the Junta President, Cornelio Saavedra, Moreno resigned his position as Junta secretary. Shortly after, he had himself appointed as special ambassador of the Buenos Aires Junta to Great Britain. Among Moreno's instructions

was a provision which empowered him, conditions permitting, to sign a treaty of trade and commerce with Great Britain.\(^2\) Moreno sailed for Britain before the end of the month, but he suddenly became ill, and died at sea (January 16, 1811).

During the next ten years, British merchants established themselves and strengthened and consolidated their positions in Rio de la Plata. On September 26, 1820, in Buenos Aires province, a particularly liberal economic and political regime under Martín Rodríguez, took office. However, the real head of this governing group was its Minister of Finance and Foreign Affairs and erstwhile leader of the Unitarian Party, Bernadino Rivadavia.

Between September, 1820, and April, 1824, Rivadavia initiated or decreed legislation which further encouraged the entrance of foreign capital into the Rio de la Plata.\(^3\) Rivadavia placed his province in debt, to British interests, for in 1824, he borrowed from the Baring Brothers of London £1,000,000 (65,000,000) at 6% interest. He also instituted in 1822, a Bank of Buenos Aires. Later, through laws which he proclaimed on May 3, 1824, and September 27, 1824, Rivadavia officially threw Buenos Aires province open to foreign investment and provided for foreign and estancia interests the right to rent

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at bargain prices, huge sections of the public domain. 4 Rivadavia's favorable attitude toward Britain, his acceptance of the tenets of laissez-faire liberalism, plus the steady increase of British exports to Buenos Aires (£700,000 to £800,000 yearly from 1822 until 1824) excited the profit instincts of many British merchants. 5

The low prices of British goods especially those suited to the consumption of the masses of the population . . . ensured a demand for them (goods) from the first opening of trade . . . The gaucho is everywhere clothed in them . . . If his wife has a gown . . . it is from Manchester. The camp-kettle in which he cooks his food . . . his knife, spurs, bit, and the poncho which covers him—all are imported from England. 6

With the suicide of Castlereagh in August, 1822, George Canning, debonair, resourceful and skilled in the arts of diplomacy, became Britain's Foreign Minister. It was Canning who resolved to complete acquisition of La Plata trade for British interests.

In October, 1822, France sent a menacing fleet into the Rio de la Plata, and down the eastern coast of the United Provinces. Writing to the Duke of Wellington (November 8, 1822), Canning noted that if Britain did not soon act to assure her commercial position in the United Provinces:

4Rivadavia's selling of non-existent mining sites in provinces beyond his control in 1823 is noted in Chapter II of this work. Cf., Miron Burgin, p. 97, and R. A. Humphries, British Consular Reports on the Trade and Politics of Latin America 1821-1826, Camden Third Series (London, 1940), Volume LXXIII, p. 73, tell the story of the La Plata land grants.


6Ibid., p. 363.
"In time, we shall know the loss of our opportunity never to be recovered... We will trade with the late Spanish colonies... We will not respect the guara-costas... if France sends a fleet to help the guara-costas, we will send a large one to watch their operations."7

The rather avant-garde position taken by Canning was bitterly opposed by both Lord Wellington and George IV, as well as the members of the Holy Alliance, but Canning persisted in his policy. On July 23, 1823, the Cabinet, at Canning's instigation forwarded a memorandum to the king declaring that a "decisive step was demanded by the need of protecting commercial interests."8 The memorandum recommended that full power be given to a British Consul-General, so that a commercial treaty could be negotiated with the Río de la Plata.9

On October 10, 1823, Canning issued instructions to Woodbine Parish, designating him British Consul-General in Buenos Aires.10 Parish left Britain


8Cf., Harold Temperley, The Foreign Policy of Canning 1822-1827 (London, 1975), pp. 146-147. When Canning appointed Parish as Consul-General, the cabinet struggle over his avowed purpose of recognizing the South American rebel states was far from finished. It was not settled until December 14, 1823, when faced with the Duke of Wellington's stubborn opposition to his policies, Canning threatened to resign, forcing Wellington and his conferees in the cabinet to capitulate. George IV remained adamant, until January 30, 1824, when Canning bluntly informed the king that unless he proved less truculent, "there might be an exposure in Parliament and a coup de'tat." Ibid., pp. 146-147.

9Ibid., p. 147.

10For a copy of Parish's Consul-General instructions, cf., Mina Way-Shuttleworth, op. 426-433. These instructions do not empower him to sign any treaty. Parish in Buenos Aires held the office of (1) Consul-General and (2) Canning's political agent; Parish was to judge whether or not the United
in December, 1823, and arrived in Rio de Janeiro in February, 1824. Not until March 25, 1825, was Parish able to establish himself in Buenos Aires, but the Junta Ministers, Rivadavia and Manuel Garcia swiftly put themselves at his disposal.

Consultations with Rivadavia and Garcia brought instant concessions from Buenos Aires. On April 10, 1824, Rivadavia agreed that:

I. English commanders may disembark with letters for the Consul-General without waiting to see the Captain of the Port.

II. The Consul-General may establish in his office a bag (una estafeta) for the sole purpose of receiving mail without the intervention of the post office.

III. All mail packets will be relieved of port dues.

IV. Official dispatches for the Public Agent of Her Britannic Majesty in Chile and Peru will be conveyed by the couriers of the (Buenos Aires) government free of charge.

Shortly before the previously mentioned agreement was signed, the Rodriguez Junta resigned, and was succeeded by one formed by General Juan Las Heras (April 3, 1824). Las Heras asked Rivadavia and Garcia to remain at Provinces were competent and settled enough to sign a commercial treaty with Britain. Military alliance was not to be considered. Ibid., pp. 167-168.

In particular, the fourth proposal bears examination. The Provinces of Rio de la Plata acknowledged no federal or national government in 1824. Thus, if the fourth proposal was to be carried out, Buenos Aires couriers would have had to ride across huge areas, with no relief (unless other provinces agreed to aid in this endeavor). We have no indication as to the efficiency of the service.

It is well to remember that Buenos Aires Province had made no similar concessions to any other nation, and Britain had not yet even recognised Buenos Aires Province, or any of the United Provinces as yet.

**Note:**

their positions, but Rivadavia remained only until May 3. On the 27th of August, Rivadavia left for Britain and Europe, with the position of Pleni-
potentiary Ambassador.12

From the time of his arrival, Parish had been forwarding reports of conditions in the United Provinces (especially Buenos Aires).13 On July 23, 1824, the British Cabinet agreed to the authorisation of a commercial treaty with the United Provinces of Río de la Plata, to be negotiated by Parish. The authorisation to negotiate arrived in Buenos Aires (August 23, 1824), together with a special dispatch to Parish from Canning. The Prime Minister shared none of Parish's enthusiasm for Buenos Aires liberalism or social amenities. He cautioned Parish:

There is one point upon which your report is not so clear . . . . I mean as to the power of the Government of Buenos Aires to bind by its stipulations with a foreign state all the members of the Confederacy constituting the United States of Río de la Plata.14

Canning's warning apparently had the proper effect on Parish, for despite Garcia's willingness to accommodate (Garcia had a reasonable idea why Parish had been sent to Buenos Aires), he decided to wait for the formal installation of the National Constitutional Congress before publicly announcing that he

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12Mina Kay-Shuttleworth, p. 290. Rivadavia was commissioned "to treat with England in order to establish more permanent relations between the two countries," ibid.

13C. K. Webster, Britain and the Independence of Latin America, Volume I (New York, 1838), pp. 111-115. These reports noted the favorable prospects for British economic development in Buenos Aires, and the personal characteristics of La Plata officials.

14C. K. Webster, I, p. 115.
possessed the authority to negotiate a commercial treaty.\textsuperscript{15} Parish's efforts at discretion were all in vain, however. The news of Parish's mission was "leaked" by Buenos Aires officials to the public. Parish had no choice but to confirm the rumour (November 30, 1824).\textsuperscript{16}

Thus, with the opening of the National Constitutional Congress, December 16, 1824, perhaps the most immediate objectives of both the Buenos Aires political chieftains and the British interests was the persuading of the representatives of the interior provinces to agree to a commercial treaty with Great Britain. In making the opening address to the National Constitutional Assembly, Garcia laid great stress on the fact that a commercial treaty with Britain meant at least de facto recognition of the United Provinces by the British crown:

Great Britain had adopted . . . a noble conduct, truly worthy of the most civilized, the most free . . . the most powerful nation of Europe. The solemn recognition of the Independence of the new Republic will be the result of those principles which she has proclaimed; and you (i.e., delegates) may be assured, gentlemen, that this important event (i.e., recognition) so far as regards the Provinces of the Rio de la Plata depends principally upon their (United Provinces) appearing as a nation capable of maintaining institutions (i.e., the primary "institution," would of course be the passage and maintenance of a commercial treaty with Britain).\textsuperscript{17}

With this objective in mind, Parish and Garcia set to work to prepare the National Congress for the ratification of the commercial treaty. On January 23, 1825, the Fundamental Law of Union of the Provinces of Rio de la Plata was

\textsuperscript{15}Ibid., p. 117.
\textsuperscript{16}Nina Fay-Shuttleworth, p. 291.
\textsuperscript{17}British and Foreign State Papers, XII (London, 1826), p. 861.
promulgated. This document declared (Article III) that "the internal affairs of the Provinces shall be regulated by their own institutions."\(^{18}\) Article IV stated that "All that regulates to the independence, integrity, security, defense and prosperity of the nation, belongs especially to the General Congress."\(^{19}\) In a supplementary addition to Article VII, Buenos Aires received the right to "conclude treaties," with the special concurrence of Congress.\(^{20}\)

Subsequently, the commercial treaty's terms were introduced, and signed, despite rather violent American opposition, on February 2, 1825, by Parish and Manuel Garcia, the new "Minister Secretary of the Departments of Government, Finance and Foreign Affairs of the National Executive Power of the said Provinces."\(^{21}\)

Historians of both Argentina and Britain, in commenting upon the commercial treaty of 1825, have long termed it a treaty that was mutually advantageous.\(^{22}\)

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\(^{18}\) Ibid., p. 862.

\(^{19}\) Ibid.

\(^{20}\) Ibid., p. 862.

\(^{21}\) C. W. Webster, I, p. 120. In British and Foreign State Papers, Volume IX, p. 380, there is a memorandum from John Forbes, United States Minister to the United Provinces, to President John Quincy Adams, which declares that Rivadavia had privately assured Forbes that "it was the firm determination of the Government to grant no exclusive privileges to any nation whatsoever." At the time of the signing of the treaty, Forbes angrily protested the duplicity of the Buenos Aires politicians and warned Garcia that Britain meant to trick them, ibid., pp. 380-381. Cf., also, J. Fred Rippy, Rivalry of the United States over Latin America 1808-1830 (Baltimore, 1929), pp. 138-140.

\(^{22}\) Ricardo Hillado, p. 75, praised the equitable and reciprocal nature of the treaty. Ricardo Levene, A History of Argentina, translation by W. F. Robertson (Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1937), pp. 377-378, declared the treaty to be "based on the principles of reciprocity and equality."
However, a study of the articles of the treaty leaves a contradictory impression.

In considering the terms of a treaty, that which must be stressed is not what the treaty says, but what it means. Such is the inevitable imperfection and ambiguity of all human language that the words of any written treaty may mean just the opposite of what the reader thinks they mean. Thus any realistic study of the Treaty of 1825 must consider the economic, maritime and political realities in both Britain and the Rio de la Plata before reaching a conclusion as to the equality, fairness or reciprocity of the treaty's terms.

Initially, if a treaty can be said to have been equitable, then the terms of the treaty should have been arrived at through arbitration, or mutual negotiation and concession. The Commercial Treaty of 1825 appears entirely lacking in this respect. The terms of the treaty were not to be considered negotiable. Woodbine Parish presented the treaty to the representatives of the United Provinces on the basis of unconditioned acceptance or rejection.²³

Proof of this assertion is to be found in a letter written by Parish to his superior, Joseph La Planta, on February 18, 1825:

"It is quite impossible for me to explain to you the trouble and difficulties I have had . . . (vis-a-vis the treaty's ratification) . . . Many of the Deputies were under the impression that they were at liberty to alter the treaty when it was once submitted to them . . . two or three actually had drawn up their own ideas of various articles to be submitted. With these gentlemen, I was obliged to enter into all sorts of explanations in order to point out to them the difference

²³In his defense of the Treaty of 1825, Ignacio Nunez, Rivadavia's personal secretary, admits that the treaty "was proposed by Britain as now worded." Cf., Ignacio Nunez, Account of the United Provinces of the Rio de la Plata, translator anonymous (London, 1827), p. 163.
between the matter before them and the usual business of passing laws . . . García (La Plata Minister who signed the treaty) fought the battle every day in Congress, and I was obliged to cram him with the Acts of Parliament . . . every night. At length, the matter ended as we knew it would. 24

Article I of the treaty begins in an optimistic fashion by stating:

There shall be perpetual amity between the dominions and subjects of his majesty, the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and the United Provinces of the Rio de la Plata and their inhabitants. 25

No treaty is truly perpetual. The terms of a treaty usually are in vigor only so long as one party or parties possess the power to enforce the treaty's terms, or both parties believe in the necessity or prudence of abiding by them. In this case, the following question should be asked: Are the terms of the treaty perpetual if no time limit is placed upon them? Some Río de la Plata interpreters have held other views, but the idea of the immutability of terms unless mutually revised has always had the firm support of British commercial interests in the La Plata area. 26

Article II declares that there exists between the subjects of Great Britain and the territories of the United Provinces "a reciprocal freedom of

24 Nina Kay-Shuttleworth, pp. 297-298.
25 See Appendix II.
26 The Argentine historian, Ricardo Levene, Un Historia de la Nacion Argentina, Tome VI (2) (Buenos Aires, 1947), p. 565, and in Ricardo Levene's A History of Argentina, p. 377, holds that "amity" was to be perpetual (Amistad perpetua).

The only problem is that no expiration date was fixed in regard to the treaty's terms. Cf., Judith Williams, "The Establishment of British Commerce with Argentina," Hispanic American Historical Review, IV (February, 1934), p. 63, holds that the terms were to persist for as long as Britain could insist upon their recognition.
commerce," and that the inhabitants of the two countries respectively shall have liberty freely to securely come with their ships and . . . reside in any port of the said territories respectively; and also to live and occupy houses and warehouses for the purposes of . . . commerce . . . subject always to the laws and statutes of the two countries respectively.27

This article provides for the inviolability of property in both nations, but what properties did La Plata inhabitants hold in Britain?28 On the other hand, British traders in the La Plata were by 1823-1824, exporting products worth between £700,000 and £1,000,000 yearly. Great Britain was at this time the world's leading manufacturing nation with an established market, commercial position, and trading companies. In comparison, the United Provinces were primarily an agricultural state with seemingly unlimited possibilities for exploitation. If British interests already in Rio de la Plata could be protected legally, then the development and the processing of the agricultural and mineral wealth of the country by British interests seemed assured.

In contrast, even had Rio de la Plata merchants possessed sufficient capital to establish themselves in the United Kingdom, they would have had no equal opportunities for the exploitation of wealth, as Britain was primarily

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27See Appendix II.

28The following works, William Cunningham, Alien Immigrants to England (New York, 1897), Arnold H. White, The Destitute Alien in Great Britain (London, 1892), Abstract of the Population Census of 1841 (London, 1842), Population Census Records for 1801, 1811, 1821 and 1831 (London, 1831), all were reviewed, and none of these show any record of United Provinces immigrants or citizens living in Britain, nor are any records of the property held (if any) revealed. The Statistical Abstracts for 1869 to 1882 (London, 1869) are the first books of record to give any figures in regard to United Provinces inhabitants living in England, or the amount of property held.
a commercial and manufacturing nation. With little or no experience in manufacturing method, the intricacies of commerce, and without the protection of the British fleet, they would have been no match for their British competitors.

The clause which states that the "inhabitants of the two countries, shall have liberty to come with their ships and cargoes to ... ports and rivers, etc..." is in particular devoid of any real notion of equality. Britain possessed the world's most powerful navy and an exceedingly large commercial fleet. The naval armory of the United Provinces consisted of a few privateers, while the commercial fleet consisted primarily of small sailing ships. The fact of the matter is that at least since 1822, the bulk of the La Plata international trade had been carried in British merchantmen.29

Article III provides for La Plata participation in British Empire trade, but the terms of the article were not immediately applied.30 Reciprocity and

29Robert Humphries, British Consular Reports. In the year 1822, 72 United Provinces vessels, of 5,750 tons, cleared Buenos Aires; the same year 118 British merchantmen of 18,630 tons cleared Buenos Aires harbor. In 1823, 103 La Plata owned vessels of 7,611 tons cleared Buenos Aires harbor; 113 British vessels of 17,422 tons cleared Buenos Aires harbor.

In the years 1822 and 1823, 94 United Provinces vessels of 5,617 tons entered Buenos Aires harbor; 123 British merchantmen of 20,792 tons of goods entered Buenos Aires harbor.

Clearly larger, if not more, British ships than United Provinces vessels were involved in the trade of the United Provinces. In addition, no figures exist showing how many of the United Provinces merchantmen were owned by British interests in Buenos Aires, or some other part of the United Provinces. Cf., Humphries, p. 60.

equality are senseless words, if one or the other partners to the treaty reserves the right of private interpretation of a treaty's terms.

In cognizance of the position the British held as chief commercial carriers of La Plata products, Article III is extremely interesting. It declares that:

The same duties shall be paid on the importation into the said United Provinces of the growth, produce or manufacture of His Britannic Majesty's dominions, whether such importation shall be in vessels of the said United Provinces, or in British shippers. 31

The same rights were of course granted to Rio de la Plata vessels, but again, the semblances of equality suggested by the terminology of the treaty are not in keeping with the actual conditions. 32

With the opening of Buenos Aires harbor to the trade of all nations, the port duties and tariff collections by the Buenos Aires harbor officials had provided the greatest single source of revenue in all the United Provinces. 33

stated that "British vessels, of the burthen of 120 tons" were being charged extra rates in Buenos Aires, not in keeping with the terms of Article III of the 1825 Treaty. No proof of the allegation is demonstrated, nor is any reason given for the restoration of rights. Ibid., p. 124.

31 See Appendix II.

32 In the preliminary debates, opponents of the treaty argued that many years would pass before the United Provinces had ships to engage in such trans-oceanic traffic. They further argued that it was not certain that businessmen would take advantage of this reciprocity. It is to be noted that the proponents of the treaty did not deny these assertions, and chose to defend the treaty on other grounds. Cf., Libro de Actas Reservadas Del Congreso General Constituyente 1824-1837, Tome VII (Buenos Aires, 1936), pp. 130-139. Cf., Goodbine Parish, Buenos Aires from the Conquest (London, 1852), pp. 362 and 368 notes that the United Provinces had no navy, and that British vessels carried practically all of the United Provinces imports and exports.

33 Miron Burgin, pp. 70-71.
Prior to the passage of the Treaty of 1825, all foreign ships entering Buenos Aires harbor had paid extra fees. Since the bulk of the La Plata trade lay in British hands, many of the duties and fees paid were paid by the British boats. Now according to the Treaty's terms, the extra fees which had been received from British interests were no longer collectable. The United Provinces, a debtor nation, needed money.

Article VIII destroys completely the contention that equality or reciprocity were tenets basic to the formulation of the terms of the 1825 commercial treaty.

All merchants, commanders of ships, and others, the subjects of his Britannic Majesty, shall have the same liberty in all the Territories of the said United Provinces as the natives thereof to manage their own affairs. . . . absolute freedom shall be exercised in all cases, to the buyer and seller to bargain and fix the prices of any goods, wares or merchandise imported into, or exported from the said United Provinces as they (i.e., buyer and seller) shall see good.

In no part of this treaty is this right granted to any real or mythical United Provinces merchants who might be in Britain. Under the guise of the ideal situation envisioned by all economic liberals—(the unrestrained buyer and seller operating without governmental checks or restrictions)—British

Among the port rules (1824) of Buenos Aires harbor were the following:
(1) All foreign boats that load or discharge cargoes pay four reales per ton. National vessels loading for the high seas pay half that figure. United Provinces national vessels trading along the coast of Patagonia paid no port duties at all. (2) A visit by the health boat on arriving or sailing—$12 per trip; all national vessels—$6. (3) Custom house dues on all foreign ships entering Buenos Aires harbor—$9. On all United Provinces merchants, the fee was $5.50. Custom house clearance for all foreign vessels—$12; on all national vessels—$7.50. Of., Humphries, pp. 61-60.

35 See Appendix II.
36 See Appendix II.
merchants were given carte blanche to ply their wares wherever in the United Provinces they might choose to do so. This article, in effect, denies to whatever central authority the United Provinces might install, the right to regulate British commercial interests in Rio de la Plata.

In addition to the deliverence of Rio de la Plata to British commercial interests, the Treaty of 1825 sounded the death-knell for those few, crude industrial beginnings which had been made in the interior provinces. With no centralized power willing to prevent the influx of cheap but superior British goods, the various interprovincial duties could only serve to protect the primitive industrial specialities of a particular province. Yet the possibility of sufficient profit depended upon the marketability of the product outside as well as inside of the province in which it was made. Outside of the province, the superiority of the British competitive products sealed the fate of the crude industries in the interior provinces.

Article IX reads:

In whatever relates to the loading and unloading of ship, the safety of merchandise goods, and effects, the disposal of property of every sort of denomination ... as also the administration of justice, the subjects of the two contracting parties shall enjoy, in their respective dominions, the same privileges, liberties and rights as the most favorable nation, and shall not be charged, in any of these respects with any higher duties on imports than those which are paid, or may be paid by the native subjects or citizens. 37

The "most favored nation" clause again demonstrates the stark emptiness of the treaty in regard to benefits for the United Provinces of Rio de la Plata.

37 See Appendix II.
This "most favored nation" type of commercial treaty was the first that the United Provinces signed with any nation, and the only one to be signed with any nation with the exception of Chile, for a period of twenty-seven years. Since the majority of the commercial trade of the United Provinces was with Great Britain, this meant that from 1825 until 1852, Britain would enjoy over twenty-seven years of special economic privilege in Rio de la Plata, with competition only from Chile. On the other hand, Great Britain had signed commercial treaties, granting the "most favored nation" privileges, to several nations prior to 1825, and in October, 1832, it placed eleven nations on a co-equal basis in British ports. In Rio de la Plata, Britain possessed pre-eminence; in Great Britain, the United Provinces were one of many.

The second part of this article again emphasizes the ability of the British to make a distinction between the ideal reciprocity and the actual physical situation whenever necessary.

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38 Collection de Tratados Celebrados por La Republica Argentina. Publicacion Official (Buenos Aires, 1863), pp. 65-70, shows that the United Provinces signed a similar treaty on February 18, 1827, with Chile. No commercial treaty with a nation capable of supplying quantities of manufactured articles other than Britain was signed until July 27, 1853, when the United Provinces signed a "most favored nation" treaty with the United States, ibid., pp. 280-293. The only commercial treaties signed after the 1827 treaty with Chile were treaties with Portugal (August, 1852) and Paraguay (July, 1852), ibid., pp. 243-251.

39 See Herslet's Commercial Treaties, Volume IV (London, 1846), pp. 217-218. The nations are Colombia, Mexico, Austria, Brazil, United States, Denmark, and the Free States of Lubeck, Bremen and Frankfurt, in addition to the United Provinces of Rio de la Plata. It should be noted that at least two other nations (Colombia and Brazil) could be counted upon to provide quantities of those products (beef, hides, horns, etc.) which constituted the chief exports of the United Provinces to Great Britain. Cf., also Woodbine Parish, pp. 363-365.
On April 10, 1821, the Junta of Buenos Aires promulgated a decree stating that:

Foreigners, residing in this city or province, should be compelled to aid with their services, in consideration of existing circumstances, the Country whose protection they enjoy . . . Every foreigner having a ship or store, being an owner of property, of art or profession, must be enlisted in the local militia.40

The day following the promulgation of this decree, forty-nine British merchants, in company with a British Naval Officer, George O'Brien, Commander of the Frigate H. M. S. Slaney protested violently to Junta officials and demanded the withdrawal of the decree.41 However, the Junta stood its ground.

The British merchants were told that the order stood.42

The effect of the Junta order was soon to be allowed to lapse. One of the clauses of Article IX read:

They (citizens of Rio de la Plata and Great Britain) shall be exempted from all compulsory military service whatsoever, whether by sea or land, and from all forced bans or military exactions or requisitions.43

Thus, this section of Article IX, which provides complete freedom from military service for British merchants, was of great significance, because freedom from military duty was a prerequisite for the encouragement of further British commercial development in the Rio de la Plata. It is highly unlikely

41 Ibid., pp. 1022-1023.
42 Ibid., p. 1023.
43 Cf., Appendix II.
that young British merchants or traders would come to the La Plata area if they found that they had to serve in the armed forces of the United Provinces.

The importance of this clause can be at least partially witnessed by the events that followed. In the three months following the signature of the treaty on February 2, some six hundred of the inhabitants of the British Isles landed in Buenos Aires. Since the number of British subjects registered in the United Provinces in January, 1825, stood at 1,355 persons, this represented an increase of nearly fifty per cent. It is thus rather probable that the assurance of freedom from military service was a major factor contributing to the migration of many Englishmen to the United Provinces.

Article XVI specifies:

For the better security of commerce between the subjects of his Britannic Majesty and the inhabitants of the United Provinces of Rio de la Plata, it is agreed, that if at any time interruptions of friendly commercial intercourse ... should unfortunately take place between the two contracting parties, the subjects and citizens of either of all the two contracting parties residing in the dominions of the other have the privilege of remaining and continuing the trade therein, without

\[\text{Nina Kay-Shuttleworth, p. 291.}\]

\[\text{45 Humphries, p. 26. These figures do not include possibly another thousand unregistered persons of British origin, because many of these might be involved in extra-legal activity. The figures provided by Humphries include some 67 clerks, 93 tradesmen. Cf., Judith Williams, p. 56, puts the grand total of Englishmen doing business in Rio de la Plata at 3,000. Miss Williams also notes that by 1825, at least 40 large business houses had been established, ibid. Cf., also Alfred Hasbrouck, "Some British Activities and Influences in Argentina," Argentina, Brazil and Chile since Independence (Washington, D. C., 1935), pp. 432-440. Hasbrouck states that 5,000 British were present in Buenos Aires in 1831.}\]
any manner of interruption, so long as they behave peaceably . . .
Their effects and property, whether entrusted to individuals or
to the State, shall not be liable to seizure or requesstration.46

The literal wording of this article almost provides for the establishment
of a "special immunity" during periods of hostility for British citizens in
the United Provinces, or for United Province citizens in the British Isles
would have ever accepted completely the establishment of such privileges for
what would be enemy aliens.

The possibility of determining what property may be damaged during a
period of hostilities is extremely hazardous. The United Provinces presented
a quite different situation. Civil war had been carried on intermittently
since 1810. As of 1825, no constitution existed, hence no executive authority
had been created. The possibility of attack on British merchants by semi-
civilized gauchos, or on British merchantmen by United Province privateers
seemed a distinct possibility.

One of the major factors contributing to the negotiations of a treaty
between Great Britain and the United Provinces had been the desire of British
merchants to obtain protection under law for their lives, property and con-
cessions in the United Provinces. Article XI, in effect, provided them with a
basis for the demanding of compensation in case of damage caused by warfare.
In the opinion of the writer, it is in this aspect that the true significance
of the article lies. At least from the time of the signature of this treaty.

46 See Appendix II.
on British claims for damage to property were to be honored.\footnote{47}{See Chapter III of this work.}

Article XII declares:

The subjects of his Britannic Majesty residing in the Rio de la Plata shall not be disturbed, persecuted or annoyed on account of their religion, but they shall have perfect liberty of conscience, therein, and to celebrate divine service either within their own private houses, or in their particular churches or chapels . . .

Liberty shall also be granted to bury the subjects of his Britannic Majesty who may die in the territories of the said United Provinces, in their own burial places, which in the same manner, they may freely establish and maintain . . .

In the like manner, the citizens of the said (i.e., United) Provinces shall enjoy, within all the dominions of his Britannic Majesty, a perfect and unrestrained liberty of conscience, and of exercising their own religion publicly or privately, within their own dwelling houses or in the chapels and places of worship appointed for that purpose, agreeably to the system established in the dominion of his said Majesty.\footnote{48}{See Appendix II.}

The tired myopia of reciprocity envisioned in this treaty by some persons is again made mockery of. Article XII gives British inhabitants of the United Provinces unrestricted liberty of conscience, but restricts the liberty of real or theoretical citizens of the United Provinces in Great Britain to those actions which fit "agreeably to the system of toleration established in the dominions of his said Majesty (i.e., King of Great Britain and Ireland)."

Being virtually the only religion of the state, it can be reasonably assumed that the majority of all the possible United Provinces inhabitants resident in Great Britain would be at least nominal Roman Catholics. In the British Isles, as of 1825, all Roman Catholics were (1) excluded from holding public office; (2) excluded from Oxford and Cambridge Universities; (3) refused
burial grounds consecrated in their own faith; (b) forced to conform to objectionable (i.e., Anglican) rites in order to have their marriages legally recognized. Legislation approved in 1829 removed some of the old restraints, but the prohibition against Catholic attendance at Oxford and Cambridge universities lasted until 1837. The legal stipulations requiring Anglican recognition of Catholic marriages were removed in the same year, but the repeal of the law forbidding Roman Catholic cemeteries was not achieved until 1880.

Enlightened Buenos Aires liberals such as Rivadavia might move to destroy the old privilege of the Catholic Church, and favor religious toleration of all sects, but British liberal elements were much too cognizant of the power of the Anglican Church, and some of the anti-Catholic feelings of many Englishmen to allow for true reciprocity of liberty in religious matters.

In the opinion of the writer, this article, more than any of the others, is perhaps of questionable legality. Article III of the Fundamental Law (passed January 2, 1825) provides that the "internal affairs of the Provinces shall be regulated by their own institutions," while Article IV states that


50 Ibid., p. 33.

51 Ibid. For some strange reason, the restriction on Roman Catholics in the British Isles were not discussed during the Constitutional Congress' debate of the 1825 Commercial Treaty. Cf., Libro de Actas Reservadas, pp. 135-158, 163-181.

For a review of Rivadavia's Church reforms, consult Ricardo Levene, Un Historia de la Nación Argentina, VI (2), pp. 176-461. Ignacio Huérez, p. 162, comments that there were only two dissenting votes in regard to the 1825 treaty from the National Congressional Deputies, and these were from clergymen. Cf., Huérez, p. 163.
"all that regulates to the independence, integrity, security, defense and prosperity of the nation belongs especially to the General Congress."

Into which category then, did the provision for special religious liberty for Englishmen fall? Religious control prior to 1810 had always been in the hands of the Spanish king and the Council of the Indies. Prior to the passage of the Commercial Treaty of 1825, only the National Assembly created in 1813 had attempted to promulgate religious regulations and the overthrow of Alvear and military defeat at Cepeda obliterated whatever influence the Assembly may have ever exercised. Thus, from 1810, for the most part, religious regulations had been in the hands of the individual provinces. The question of religious toleration had been brought up in Buenos Aires Province, and in 1822, Rivadavia had issued a decree providing for freedom of conscience for all inhabitants of Buenos Aires Province. None of the other provinces had followed his lead, however. As conditions stood in February, 1825, no legislation establishing religious toleration or establishing the position in the state of the Catholic Church had been introduced by the Congress.

54No discussion of religious toleration and the legal position of the Catholic Church appears in the record of the National Constitutional Assembly until December, 1824, in Libro de Sesiones Reservadas de la honorable Junta Representativas, 1822 y 1823; y Libro de Actas Reservados de Congreso General Constituyentes 1824-1827, Tome VII (Buenos Aires, 1936), pp. 156-158 and 178-179.
The argument may be advanced that had this concession (as with so many other cases in this treaty) not been made, the British would not have agreed to a treaty at all. However, such an argument has no basis other than expediency, and it ignores the problem of whether or not the National Constitutional Congress violated its own law (Fundamental Law of January, 1825) when it gave to the British residents special religious privileges, to be observed in all the provinces. 55

In consideration of this question, the student would like to point out again that Article IV of the Fundamental Law declares that all that relates to "integrity, security, defense and prosperity of the Nations belongs especially to the General Congress," while Article III states that "the internal affairs of the Provinces shall be regulated by their own institutions ..." Religion is not in any manner referred to in company with "integrity, security, defense," or those other areas in which the National Congress is to be preeminent.

The argument may be advanced that the questions pertaining to religion fall under "security, integrity, and prosperity," but if this be true, then all things with the exception of extremely minor provincial actions would fall within the legislative scope of the National Congress. But, it is to be noted that no question of provincial versus National Congress supremacy had been settled; no constitution existed; the National Congress was a product of the will of the provinces. Thus, to assume that this body possessed a grant of

55 Not all the provinces chose to accept as valid, Article XII—for example in the province of Tucuman, the legislative body, on September 21, 1825, declared that the Catholic Religion was the only religion of the province, and that Article XII of the 1825 Commercial Treaty was null and void in Tucuman.
power allowing it to include all which its membership considered to be necessary to their authority, is not in keeping with the actual situation. Since the individual provinces had to approve the Constitution which the Congress drew up, it is unlikely that there was any intention that the National Congress be preeminent in matters which might have been considered both provincial and national business matters.56 Thus, the student concludes that sanction of Article XII by the National Congress was an act of doubtful legality.

Article XIII further buttresses the right of British residents in Río de la Plata to dispose of their property in the United Provinces, without governmental restriction by that power.57 It also provides for the disposition of British property, in case of death, by the British Consul-General, or his representative. These acts shall be performed

... for the benefit of his (i.e., deceased British subject) lawful heirs and creditors without interference, giving convenient notice thereof, to the authorities of the country; and reciprocally.58

At this point, the article ends. The last word "reciprocally" is used so vaguely in this article, that the question arises as to whether the whole article is to be reciprocal, or just the last clause. At any rate, the terms of this article in effect, grant to British citizens the power to prevent the United Provinces from confiscating, or even effectively regulating British


57See Appendix II.

58See Appendix II.
property. British economic gains in Río de la Plata may constantly mushroom, but it will remain in British hands. In so far as British property is concerned, a "State within a State" situation has been created.

Article XIV deals with the elimination of the slave trade in Río de la Plata. In this Article, Great Britain calls upon the United Provinces to aid Great Britain in the humanitarian task of eliminating the slave trade, and in prosecuting British or Río de la Plata slave-shippers and merchants. It is perhaps a bit cynical to note that the initial British penetration of the Río de la Plata in 1713, had been made possible through the awarding of the Asiento Contract to the British enterprise, the South Sea Company.

With the signing of the treaty in February, 1825, the British merchants threw a magnificent celebration in Buenos Aires, for which £25,000 was subscribed. When British officials signed the document (May 12, 1825), the United Provinces awarded Woodbine Parish a gift of £1,200.

In regard to British designs and the Commercial Treaty of 1825, its negotiator (Parish) does not hesitate to note that Britain desired and possessed an economic monopoly in Río de la Plata. The treaty thus became a means of

59 See Appendix II.
61 Nina Kay-Shuttleworth, p. 298. Manuel Garcia, the United Provinces plenipotentiary, received a diamond-studded snuff-box, the value of which is not stated. (Caja de Rame, fabricada en care y cuya cubierta superior ornada par un circulo de brillantes, sobre una plancho de ora.) Cf., Vicente Lopes, El Historia de Argentina (Buenos Aires, 1890), Tomo IX, p. 251.
62 Woodbine Parish, p. 363.
by which this monopoly was blessed and legalised. The treaty became the basis of all future British economic negotiation with the United Provinces, and the concessions gained became the foundation from which British merchants consolidated, and then tightened their stranglehold on La Plata economic life.

Politically independent in 1816, the United Provinces agreed to economic dependence in 1825. While the Congress which drew up the treaty might be dissolved (as it was in 1827), only superior force of arms, or the focusing of world opinion on the economic situation could have driven the British out, once they had gained the legal right to stay. The United Provinces did not have the former, and the possibility of developing the latter in the nineteenth century was pathetically diminutive, if at all possible.

On December 17, 1824, in a letter to Lord Greeneville, Prime Minister George Canning gloated:

"The deed is done: The nail is driven. Spanish America is free: if we do not mismanage our matters sadly, she is English. Novus Saecolorum Nascitor Ordo . . . (A new eternal order is born.)"

The 1825 Treaty signed between Great Britain and the United Provinces was not that which the Prime Minister was directly referring to, but in the

63 The 1825 Commercial Treaty was not revised until 1933, when the Roca-Runciman Treaty was concluded. Cf., Preamble of "Roca-Runciman Treaty in John White, Argentina. (New York, 1947), p. 342.

sense that Canning's "new order" meant British economic dominion in South America, the 1825 Commercial Treaty with the United Provinces became the first milestone.65

II. THE TREATY RATIFICATION AND LA PLATA MOTIVATION

Writing to his friend and adviser, Jeremy Bentham, August 6, 1822, Bernardo Rivas noted:

"Since the last time I had the honor of spending with you, more than eighteen months ago, I have never stopped thinking about your principles concerning legislation . . . You will see, Sir, that the laws which I have had established are exercising the eternal principles displayed so wisely in your course of legislation . . . Diligently have I worked to reform the ancient abuses of every kind . . . to protect commerce, science, and the arts, to provoke also a necessary Church reform . . . in a word (i.e., diligently have I worked) to make all the advantageous changes the hope of your approval has given me the strength to undertake . . . and . . . to carry out . . . .66

65Ibid. The immediate cause of the Canning-Greenville communication of December 17, 1824, lies in a dispatch of December 5, 1824, from Canning to the French government, asking when the French troops would withdraw from Spanish territory. The French reply was vague, as no certain date would be given as to when they might withdraw. Canning was aware of this, and thus he had a pretext for officially announcing that the British government intended to recognize the South American Republics.


In his Principles of Morality and Legislation (Oxford, England, 1884), pp. 250-251, Bentham states that legislatures often "interfere" with individuals and their activities. All legislators can really do in regard to private entrepreneurs is to "increase the efficacy of private ethics," ibid., p. 251.

The principles found in Bentham's course on legislation are stated in his Fragment on Government (London, 1884), p. 34. Bentham sought to bring about the "greatest good to the greatest number," and change the shape of law by means of codification, ibid., p. 34. Bentham further believed that the first claims
From the assumption of power by the Rodríguez Government (September 26, 1820 until April 2, 1824) Rivadavia was free to walk in Bentham's footsteps. Economically, radical changes were inaugurated; the law stating the inviolability of private property was promulgated on September 5, 1821; the Office of Minister of Finance was created, and Manuel García became its first occupant; all the old Spanish commercial taxes (example: alcabala) were abolished, and direct administration of taxes was attempted. In February, 1822, the government decreed that "laborers entering Buenos Aires from other provinces were not to be pressed into military service if they were employed"; in February, 1823, beggar's permits were denied to all who could maintain themselves by labor.67 These economic changes were capped by the founding of the Bank of Buenos Aires in September, 1822, and by Rivadavia's decrees which set up a committee which was to encourage immigration (April 23, 1824) "by all means advisable," and another which declared the country open to foreign investment (May 3, 1824).68

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67 Cf., Ricardo Levene, Un Historia de la Nación Argentina, Tome VI (2), p. 457. In particular, the last two laws mentioned were designed to place a greater labor supply available to Buenos Aires merchants and estancieros. For a record of economic reforms, cf., Miron Burgin, pp. 45-56, Ricardo Pihadó, p. 75, and Ricardo Levene, A History of Argentina, pp. 361-363.

Socially and politically, several changes were inaugurated. Freedom of
speech and of the press (Ley de Olividio) were introduced in 1822; and an
Official Register publishing all government documents, and codifying these
was introduced in August, 1824.69

In matters of religion, Rivadavia moved to subordinate the Catholic
Church to state control. Freedom of religion was declared, the tithe was
abolished, persons being less than twenty-five were forbidden to take religious
vows, the "ecclesiastical fuero" was abolished, and the Bethlehemite Order
was suppressed, and its property confiscated by the state.70

Philanthropy was thrust into private hands. The Hermanidad de Caridad, a
semi-religious order, was ordered to cease functioning on June 1, 1822, and
the Sociedad de Beneficiencia, composed of the Buenos Aires ladies of fashion,
took over the dispensation of charity in the city of Buenos Aires.71

In effect, the legislative program inaugurated by Rivadavia was intended
to create a regime that was in keeping with the ideas of economic and social
liberalism then in vogue. However, these decrees, while favored generally by
all Buenos Aires liberals, were possessed of effectiveness only within the
limits of Buenos Aires Province. Somehow, if this program was to be enacted

69Núñez, p. 73, and Ricardo Levene, Un Historia de la Nación Argentina,

70The "ecclesiastical fuero" referred to the right of the Church to try
clerics in religious courts. Cf., Ricardo Levene, A History of Argentina,
p. 364.

nationally, the Unitarian Party (which was in control in Buenos Aires) must extend its dominion throughout the provinces. Unitarian efforts at national control had failed in 1819, but the Constitutional Congress of December, 1824, offered new opportunities for success.

The public hearings concerning the ratification of the Treaty of Commerce and Amity began on the evening of February 12 at 8:30 in the evening. The deputies of the Constitutional Congress organised themselves into a Committee of the Whole, with the Congressional President (Señor La Frida) leaving his chair. The National Minister of Finance and Foreign Affairs, Manuel García, proceeded to explain and defend the articles of the treaty, answering the queries directed to him by the deputies.

Almost immediately, the treaty came under violent attack. Several deputies questioned whether the treaty was reciprocal in any respect.

It was observed that the reciprocal liberty of commerce was a known advantage for Great Britain, and only a good ideal for the inhabitants of the United Provinces which neither had ships to participate in commerce . . . nor would they have for many years

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Proof of the Unitarian Party's control of the government of Buenos Aires (under the regimes of Las Heras and Rodrigues) is supplied in Levene, En Historia de la Nación Argentina, Volume VI (2), p. 346, and Miron Burgin, pp. 86, 88, and 89.

Evidence that the party of those espousing liberal principles was the Unitarian Party is to be found in L. S. Rowe, The Federal System of the Argentine Republic (Washington, D. C., 1921), pp. 13, 21, and Miron Burgin, pp. 88-89.

... Thus, it would be better not to bind oneself with new obligations... since it (the treaty) carried with it (in regard to the United Provinces) no known advantages.74

A number of deputies further contended that the establishment of British commercial interests would bring ruin to the interior provinces, because the provinces had no way of competing with British merchants and manufactures.75

The opponents of the treaty, hammered home the same arguments time and time again. They insisted that the Treaty contained:

... imaginary advantages which we (United Provinces) could not enjoy nor was there any hope of obtaining real advantages for many years... in this matter (vis-a-vis Treaty), it would be better to leave things as they now exist and not commit ourselves with a treaty... if this is done, we (United Provinces) could imitate the conduct of England itself, which under the contrary system has prospered and its lesson in economy should be meriting our attention.76

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74 Ibid. The quotation reads: "Se observó, que la libertad reciproca de comercio era una ventaja conocida para Gran Bretaña, y un bien ideal para los habitantes de las Provincias Unidas que ni tenían Basques para este comercio, ni los tendrían muchos años;... que así sería lo mejor no ligarse con obligaciones nuevas, puesto que no se reportava ventaja alguna conocida."

75 Ibid., p. 138.

76 Ibid., pp. 138-139. The "contrary system" (sistema contrario) refers to that system which is the opposite of free trade, or free reciprocal trade. As of 1820, Britain had a tariff schedule on the following terms: China-porcelain, 15-20%; leather goods, 20-30%; brass, copper, 25-30%; cotton, 10-20%; corn, wheat, cereal, grains, 7-50%; silk (raw), 30%; hides, horses, beef, free. Cf., Frostua Begelow, The Tariff Question (Boston, 1862), pp. 4, 149.

In essence then, the British government, despite the protests of various commercial groups, was committed to the policy of protection. Only with the repeal of the Corn Laws (1846, etc.), would the advocates of free trade obtain an effective majority in these questions. Opponents prudently realized that while vociferous groups might clamor for an end of all protective tariffs, the British government, as of 1825, had not chosen to be swayed by their demands.

The Spanish quotation reads: "imaginario de unas ventajas, que no
In defending the treaty against the attacks of critics, Garcia rarely attempted to answer any of the objections to it. Instead he declared consistently that the treaty, if ratified, would almost certainly end the threatening uncertainty of invasion by Spain and the Holy Alliance.77 Several times he also stated that by signing the treaty, the United Provinces would obtain:

the friendship of a nation, that from the first moments of our flight, always had occupied itself with the termination of war in America by means honorable to us.78

Garcia knew better than to deny that the treaty gave to Great Britain an inordinate amount of favorable concessions. Instead, he stressed the debt of gratitude owed by the United Provinces, and painted a rosy vista of the great heights of prestige which the United Provinces would attain if the treaty was ratified.

... it was necessary to bear in mind the importance of the treaty not for what it is in itself, but for the character (of it), and the rank to which the nation could be elevated, appearing for the first time before the face of the world ... celebrating a treaty that

podíamos disfrutar, ni habíamos esperanzas de ponerse en estado de obtenerlas en muchos años: que así sería mejor dejar las cosas en su mismo estado, y no obligarnos con un tratado ... que en esto imitáramos la conducta de la misma Inglaterra, que bajo el sistema contrario había prosperado, y sus lecciones de economía debían sernos atenibles."


78 *Ibid.*, Garcia also pointed out that the assistance rendered the United Provinces during the struggle for independence was such that the least the United Provinces could do in return was to provide Britain with economic concessions. Cf., also *Libro de Actas*, Tome VII, p. 135.
had been originated by that nation (Britain) which justly occupied the first place among the nations of the civilized world. 79

After three days of debate, the supporters of the treaty easily crushed their opponents and agreed to pass formally upon the articles of the treaty. 80

The formal deliberations began the morning of February 16. All of these deliberations were held in closed sessions, and thus, the deputies did not hesitate to be a bit more pointed in their comments. 81

Proponents of the treaty, led by the Congressional President, declared that further debate on the articles of the treaty were unnecessary. 82 The treaty opponents made no strenuous objections to any of the proposals voiced, until Deputy Gomez moved that the Congress confirm the fact that Foreign Minister Garcia possessed the power to sign the Commercial Treaty "without limitation." (i.e., reservation) 83

79 The quotation reads: ..., era preciso tener en vista la importancia del Tratado, no por (que) lo que el fuese en si mismo, sino por el caracter, y rango a que era elevada la nacion, apareciendo por la primera vez a la faz del Mundo celebrando un tratado, a que habia sido provocada, por la que con justicia ocupa el primero lugar entre las del mundo civilizado." Ibid., pp. 140-141.

80 Libro de Actas, Tome VII, p. 170. Only in the vote concerning Article VII were the treaty opponents able to secure as many as six votes.

81 Ibid., pp. 170-173, 177.

82 Ibid., p. 171.

83 Ibid., p. 172.
At this point, the opponents of the treaty unleashed their offensive. They challenged the right of the Constitutional Congress to ratify the Treaty. The session broke up in turmoil.

The following day, the Congress moved to consider whether or not the Congress possessed the power to ratify the treaty. Deputies Gorriti and Zenaga led the opposition. Gorriti declared that his objections to the treaty had never been answered, while Zenaga pointed out that:

Almost no province was well represented, the deputies of some being missing, while the Province of Buenos Aires alone had nine deputies, and for this reason, the Congress is not well qualified to deal with such important diplomatic matters.84

Zenaga went on to suggest that the Constitutional Congress should, under the circumstances, follow the example of the United States, where he declared that no state had less than two deputies or more than six.85

Until this moment, there had pervaded in the discussions, an aura which seemed to suggest that the proceedings were being carried on democratically, but a Buenos Aires deputy quickly revealed that his delegation had no intention of relinquishing its advantages.

To Zenaga, the following rebuttal was forwarded:

The Provinces are well represented . . . if the provinces do not have enough deputies, it was due to the fact that the provinces did not wish to send deputies, since some assumed that the deputy residing

84. Libro de Actas, Tome VII, p. 173. The Spanish quotation reads: "Casi no había una Provincia bien representada faltando los Diputados de unas y estando otros sin el numero completo cuando la de Buenos Aires sola tenía nueve Diputados; que por lo mismo el Congreso no estaba en estado de resolveren un asunto de tanta trascendencia . . . ."

85. Ibid.
here (in Buenos Aires) should perform their representation; if it was concluded that the Congress is not a national body, this is not the time or place to bring the matter up... and (if this is not a national body) then a motion should be made by the Deputy (Senaga) to dissolve the Congress. 66

In regard to the large number of Buenos Aires delegates, the spokesman declared:

The number of nine was according to the law (of the land) which provides for one deputy per 15,000 souls, and not according to the law of the United States, which does not hold here, and according to the census of the province (which was the only one well taken) the proportion of deputies to people was accurate, and Buenos Aires should have had even more deputies. 67

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66 Ibid., p. 174: "las Provincias estaban suficientemente representados en el Congreso... que si todos sus Diputados no estaban incorporados, era porque ellas mismas no los habían querido remitir, conformándose algunas con que resumida su representación el Diputado que agui tenían: que si el Senor Procapitán estaba pesquizado, que la representación reunida en Congreso no podía ser la Nacional, no era este el tiempo ni al modo de deducirlo habiéndose conformado a incorporarse... y alla estaba en su advitrio presentar un proyecto para que se declarase disuelto el Congreso."

67 Ibid. The argument presented above is subject to criticism. At none of the three secret sessions were more than twenty-one delegates present. By having nine delegates, Buenos Aires controlled at least 42% of the delegates! The Buenos Aires spokesman declared that the number of deputies allowed to the province was "according to the law of the land." The words "del Pais" in the text are in parentheses. The question arises: What law? The defunct Constitution of 1819 called for one representative for each 25,000 persons, or at least one representative per 16,000 persons. Cf., British and Foreign State Papers, Volume VI, p. 1026. No national government had existed in any fashion since February, 1820. The Fundamental Law of January 23, 1825, says nothing about Congressional representation. Ibid., Volume VII, p. 662. Thus, the law "del Pais" possibly refers to an electoral law and procedure determined by a meeting of ten provinces on December 6, 1824, cf., L. S. Rowe, p. 36.

In regard to the census, the only major census figures to be noted are those of the American agents, Rodney and Graham, (1819) and that of Ignacio Nuñez (1825). Nuñez' census is admittedly (by Nunez) inaccurate, cf., Nuñez, p. 211. The Nuñez census declares that there were roughly 250,000 persons in the United Provinces, ibid., pp. 214, 229, 246, 248, 255, 257, 263, 266, and 268. The Graham-Rodney census puts the figure at 539,000 cf., British and
From this point on, the Buenos Aires steamroller proceeded to stifle the opposition. Senor Zanaga declared that by ratifying the treaty, the United Provinces would be "reduced to the state of British colonies with many disadvantages just as we had been as Spanish colonies."88

Foreign State Papers, Volume VII, p. 699, while Wiron Burgin, p. 115, puts the figure at "less than 600,000."

There is also another census figure of October 24, 1824, which was listed in the Gazeta de Buenos Aires. It states the population of the United Provinces to be 582,000, but only eleven provinces (Buenos Aires, Santa Fe, Entre Rios, Misiones, San Juan, Mendoza, Santiago del Estero, Catamarca, Tucuman, Jujuy, Salta) are listed. Such prominent provinces as Cordoba and Corrientes, among others, are not mentioned. Cf., Ricardo Levene, Un Historia de la Nacion Argentina, Tome VII, (1), p. 56.

If the law mentioned above (1 delegate per 15,000 inhabitants) is invoked, then Buenos Aires (162,000 persons according to Nunez, p. 214, and 105,000 persons according to Rodney and Graham, and 151,000 according to the Gaceta de Buenos Aires) should have had 10, 7, and 9 delegates respectively. But 10 of 43 according to the calculations of Nunez, 7 of 35 delegates according to Rodney and Graham, represent no more than 20 to 25 per cent of the Congress, not the fantastic 43 per cent which Buenos Aires enjoyed and refused to give up.

Accordingly, the 9 of 38 delegates which the Gazeta figures would have allowed seems to be the figure referred to. However, Levene, A History of Argentina, p. 370, notes that sixteen provinces sent delegates to the conference. Five of these are not listed in the Gazeta tally. Thus, it is not likely that they were included in the census seen in the Gazeta. The added population would doubtless have increased the proportion of delegates from the interior to delegates from Buenos Aires. Thus, the nine seats which Buenos Aires continued to hold after the total representation reached twenty-one, was, while legally permissible, morally indefensible.

The translation reads: "Que por lo que respectaba la representación de Buenos Aires, en el número de 9 era conforme la ley (del-Pais), que pedía un Diputado por cada quince mil almas, y no a la de Estados Unidos que acuñ no regía; que según el censo de la provincia (que era cuisa el único bien formado) aun le correspondían mas."

88 Ibid., Tome VII, p. 173. The quotation reads: Sino la de todos reduciendo al estado de Colonos de los Ingléses con muchos desventajas respectivamente a cuando la eramos de la España."
Zenaga also contended that the question of religious tolerance for British subjects in the United Provinces ought to be fully debated. Also Senor Castellanos argued that if the individual provinces were to be considered as the supreme determiners as to whether or not British subjects would be allowed the freedom of religion in their respective territories, then the various deputies ought to write home for specific instructions.89 These proposals were speedily rejected.

Buenos Aires pressure was not to be denied. On February 17, the Anglo-United Provinces Commercial Treaty was ratified by the Constitutional Congress with no revisions or reservations.90

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89Tbid., p. 175. In the public deliberations concerning Article XII (Article concerning religious toleration for British subjects), the majority of the deputies interpreted the article to mean that individual provinces possessed the authority to determine whether they wished to grant religious toleration to British subjects who might settle there.

Even a cursory reading of the article will reveal that no concessions to provincial feeling in regard to religious toleration for British citizens in the United Provinces is written anywhere in the article, cf., Appendix II for Article XII.

90It should not be assumed that the ratification of the treaty was performed by all of the provinces. Approximately seventeen provinces sent delegates to the Constitutional Congress. These provinces were Jujuy, Entre Rios, Misiones, Catamarca, Tucumán, Salta, Santa Fe, Corrientes, San Luis, San Juan, Mendoza, Córdoba, Ríoja, San Diego del Estero, Santa Cruz, Tarija, and Buenos Aires. Cf., Ricardo Levene, A History of Argentina, p. 370. However, as has already been noted, Buenos Aires province supplied nine of the twenty-one delegates present, cf., Section II of Chapter III. This leaves only twelve delegates for the other sixteen provinces.

The great complication in these matters lies in the fact that for the most part, the provinces which the deputies represent are unmentioned. Charges of possible collusion between Buenos Aires and the deputies of Entre Rios and Corrientes was made by the Deputy of Jujuy. Cf., Libro de Actas, Tome VII, p. 179. This charge reveals that these provinces had deputies
At the conclusion of the balloting, sensing that many delegates had misgivings about the passage of the treaty without modifications, a Buenos Aires spokesman observed:

Although it would be best and highly desirable to establish reciprocity in all the articles in which it was missing, the act of not making additions to the treaty, for the sake of making it ... more important, ought to be kept in mind.  

The Buenos Aires spokesman declared that in the future, since the treaty had been passed without modifications, Britain might offer some concessions to the United Provinces.  

The question that remains to be answered is this: What did the Constitutional Congress representatives (led by the Buenos Aires delegations) hope

present. Ignacio Nénez, p. 259, declares that the province of Santa Fe had a deputy present. Ricardo Levene, Un Historia de la Nacion Argentina, Tome IX, p. 200, seemingly takes issue with Nénez concerning the presence of a delegate from Santa Fe. Levene states that the regular delegate from Santa Fe, José de Arenabar, did not arrive in Buenos Aires until April, 1825. Whether a temporary delegate was present during the treaty ratification is unknown.

Levene, Ibid., p. 619, notes that the Province of Santiago del Estero also had a delegate present. Alolfo Saldias, Historia de La Confederacion Argentina, Tome I (Buenos Aires, 1911), p. 125, notes that a priest, Castenada, was the representative of Córdoba. Thus, the nine Buenos Aires delegates, and single deputies from Jujuy, Entre Ríos, Corrientes, Santiago del Estero, Córdoba, and possibly Santa Fe, (a total of 14 to 15 delegates) means that only about six deputies were present to represent approximately ten other provinces. Obviously then at least four provinces were unrepresented at the Congress during the period that the 1825 Commercial Treaty was being considered. Under these circumstances, the Commercial Treaty of 1825 looms more and more as being a Buenos Aires engineered product, rather than a nationally desired agreement.

Libro de Actas, Tome VII, p. 179. The quotation reads: "Aunque sería lo mejor y más de desear que la reciprocidad se estableciese en los artículos todos en que se hicha de menos el no adicionar al tratado por hacerle ... el mayor aire, debía tenerse en vista."

Ibid., the translation reads: "algunos compromisos a nuestro favor."
to gain in signing the 1825 Commercial Treaty with Great Britain. The answer seems to lie in a number of factors.

British Prestige and Economic Preeminence

On May 28, 1810, only three days after the establishment of the Buenos Aires revolutionary Junta, a representative was sent from Buenos Aires to Rio de Janeiro, where an appeal for Buenos Aires British friendship and support was made upon Lord Strangford, British Ambassador to the Portuguese Court.

Britain thus became the first nation from which the rebel forces in Buenos Aires sought friendship and support. During the struggle for independence, the British Navy transported munitions to the revolutionaries, and thwarted several Spanish royalist attempts to blockade Buenos Aires harbor.

When the Tucuman Manifesto of Independence was printed in 1816, the only nation praised for its friendly attitude and assistance was Great Britain. It is to be recalled that the Lanterna Lodge was British in origin, while such prominent Buenos Aires politicians and leaders as San Martin, Alvear, Sarratea,

93 Just as during the public sessions concerning the 1825 Commercial Treaty, at no time did the opposition ever produce more than six votes against any article. This circumstance would seem to indicate that most of the long argumentation and debate was of little consequence, for the proponents of the treaty had made their decisions prior to the balloting. Cf., Libro de Actas, Volume VII, pp. 163-181.

94 Cf. Chapter I of this work.

95 Rodney and Graham, p. 226.
Rivadavia, and Belgrano either were transported to Buenos Aires in British 
men-of-war or spent lengthy periods of time in England.96

The Provincial Bank of Buenos Aires, when opened in 1827, was owned in 
toto by British stockholders.97 When in 1824, the details of the Polignac 
Memorandum were published in Buenos Aires, they were interpreted in Buenos 
Aires circles as evidence that Britain had struck another blow for the pre-
servation of the freedom of the La Plata provinces.98

Late in 1824, Rivadavia managed to negotiate a loan of 5,000,000 gold 
pesos (£1,000,000) from the Baring Brothers of London.99 Thus, in addition 
to the debt of gratitude which the United Provinces appeared to owe Great 
Britain, its richest province was now financially in her debt.

96See Chapter I of this work. Cf., also Ricardo Levene, Un Historia de 
la Nacion Argentina, Tomo V (2), pp. 332-333.

97W. Graham, English Influence in the Argentine (Buenos Aires, 1890), 
p. 31. All capital invested in the bank was free of direct taxation. Ibid.

98Nina Kay-Shuttleworth, p. 290.

99Miron Burgin, p. 55, notes that the loan was negotiated in order to 
obtain sufficient funds to create reasonable harbor facilities for Buenos 
Aires. Woodbine Parish, p. 219, notes that when he landed in Buenos Aires in 
1825, the harbor possessed neither docks nor wharfs for large vessels. Per-
sons wishing to disembark from boats had to make their passage to shore on 
large two-wheeled wagons drawn by horses.

It should be noted that the terms of the loan were none too equitable. 
On the original 5,000,000 gold peso loan, the interest rate was to be 6% per 
annum, and amortization was set at the rate of one-half per cent per year. 
Interest on the loan was paid up to January 12, 1827. These funds were de-
ducted from the loan before the Buenos Aires government ever received the 
money. The net total which the Buenos Aires government probably received was 
about 3,500,000 pesos.
As it has been previously noted, the question of a moral debt of gratitude owed by the United Provinces to Great Britain was stressed quite heavily by Manuel Garcia during the public debates over the treaty.

During the public sessions, in the debate over Article V, opponents of the Treaty bemoaned the fact that the document gave to the British entirely too many economic privileges. Proponents of the treaty insisted, however:

We (United Provinces) gave nothing to the British except what they had, and what their . . . state of wealth and wisdom gave them.100

In essence, the argument presented above is actually a form of excuse, but its potency lies in the reality of the situation. The growth and expansiveness of British economic interest in the United Provinces, from 1810, has been noted in the body of this work. By 1825, British economic interests held the dominant position in regard to trade and commerce.101

British entrenchment was further encouraged by the land policy of Rivadavia. Hoping to stimulate emigration and development of Pampa lands, Rivadavia issued a decree (May 1, 1824) providing for the leasing of the public domain (in Buenos Aires province) by private investors.102 Before the

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100 Libro de Actas, Tome VII, p. 138. The quotation reads: "Nosotros de hecho ganamos con el articulo, quando nada damos a los ingleses, sino lo que tenian, y les dava su mismo estado de opulencia y saber . . ."

101 Cf., Chapter I of this work, and Woodbine Parish, pp. 358, 362-365.

102 Miron Burgin, p. 99. This policy of land-leasing (Emphyteutis) was open only to Buenos Aires provincial citizens, but through native representatives and agents, the leases were obtained by foreigners. Cf., also Emilio Soni, La Verdad Sobre La Enfiteusis de Rivadavia (Buenos Aires, 1927), p. 152. Soni notes that the persons receiving land under this policy number about 85. Ibid.
policy was terminated (September 27, 1824), over 6,500,000 acres had been 
leased, and portions of it had fell into the hands of British agents and 
speculators.103

The disparity of military power between Britain and the United Provinces, 
and the established position of British capital in the United Provinces dras- 
tically limited the freedom of choice which was available to the Congressional 
deputies in regard to the Treaty. Had amendments been successfully intro- 
duced, Britain would have not agreed to the treaty.104 On the other hand, 
effective governmental regulation of British economic enterprises in the 
United Provinces might well have brought on British intervention. Most 
certainly, such actions would have tended to discourage the investment of 
foreign capital which Buenos Aires liberals deemed necessary for the develop- 
ment of the country. Even had there been in the United Provinces a great 
number of believers in radical economic theories, the factors cited would 
have probably ruled out indiscreet or rash actions. Unfortunately, the 
Congress came into existence at a time when British commercial interests were 
already institutions in all but name. Lacking the power to adequately deal 
with such situations and the problems which would have arisen had another 
course been decided upon, many deputies took what must have seemed to be the 
line of least resistance—treaty acceptance.

103Wina May-Shuttleworth, p. 298 and C. K. Webster, Volume I, pp. 112– 
116. See Addenda.

104British intervention for reasons of economic interest in the Rio de 
la Plata are noted by John Gady, Foreign Intervention in the Rio de la Plata
In the final analysis, while some deputies may have felt that the apparent benevolence of Great Britain manifested during the years of revolution should have been rewarded, British naval might and Rio de la Plata economic position were, in the opinion of the writer, the more powerful motivators for the majority of the Congressional delegates.

**National Security and Prestige**

It had been primarily groups of Buenos Aires liberals who had made the revolution of 1810. These liberals had been in the vanguard of the 1816 independence movement, but by 1825, while the United Provinces were free of Spain, (but not yet recognized by her) the United Provinces stood unrecognized by a European nation. The possibility of reinvasion by Holy Alliance forces, while truly remote, seems to have been a kind of phobia for some La Plata statesmen and politicians. It was an established fact that Great Britain controlled the seas and that successful invasion of the United Provinces by European forces must have either British consent or acquiescence. Thus, to some thinkers, the security of the nation necessitated the friendship of the British kingdom.

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105 Ricardo Levene, Un Historia de la Nacion Argentina, Tome VI (1), pp. 457-466. The idea of Holy Alliance assistance to Spain in regard to the reconquest of Spanish America seems to have originated in the suggestion of two Russian diplomats stationed in Madrid.
Concerning the question of prestige, as of the beginning of 1825, only certain South American republics and the United States had extended diplomatic recognition to the United Provinces. If Britain could be convinced that the recognition of the United Provinces was in her interests, then Britain might move to extend diplomatic recognition to the United Provinces. Even her enemies were willing to concede to the fact that as of 1825, Britain was one of the leading powers of the world. If Britain recognized the United Provinces, the other nations of the world must eventually do so.

The great value placed upon British recognition is especially manifested in the activities of Buenos Aires liberals, who never ceased stressing this factor throughout the ratification proceedings. On the day Parish and Garcia signed the 1825 treaty (February 2), Parish declared:

This event placed the new state amongst the recognized nations of the civilized world.106

It has been previously noted that Garcia declared Great Britain to be the "greatest nation of the civilized world."107 Writing on the same subject, Ignacio Nunes declared:

Great Britain is the only nation in Europe whose principles, on the part of her Government, and whose friendship, on the part of the nation itself, have produced in my country an uninterrupted predilection in her favour.108

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106 Nina Kay-Shuttleworth, p. 296.
107 Libro de Actas, Tome VII, pp. 140-141.
108 Ignacio Nunes, p. 141.
Consideration of national prestige is always extremely important to newly established nations. The striving for, the gaining of a "place in the sun," by a fledgling state oftentimes make it perform actions which are justified only in terms of prestige. A treaty with Britain had the double advantage of providing both undeniable repute and possible protection against the Holy Alliance. Therefore, the possibility of resisting those who desired the ratification of the treaty on these grounds became doubly difficult.

In Plata Liberalism and Unitarian Politics

The keystone of Spanish economic policy for many years in its South American possessions had been the practice of mercantilism. Under this policy, the interior La Plata provinces had prospered, while the port city of Buenos Aires had languished.

The commercial interests of Buenos Aires were peculiarly susceptible to the economic theories of Campanazes, Smith, Bentham, etc. This susceptibility was partially due to the fact that the previously mentioned theories were thought to be in keeping with Buenos Aires interests, whereas the economic policies of the Spanish government were not.

The Revolution of 1810 enabled Buenos Aires liberals to destroy utterly the Spanish system, and by adopting at least in part, the laissez-faire theories of Smith, et al, they were able to bring about increased profit and wealth for themselves, and wrest both economic and political control of the United Provinces from the Peninsulares.
The Rodriguez-Rivadavia Administration of 1820-1824 enacted a number of liberal reforms, all of which tended to create a climate favorable to foreign investment and individual freedom.109 These reforms, however, had been enacted in Buenos Aires province only. Attempts by the Buenos Aires liberals to enact similar reforms in all the provinces met with resistance, for these attempts were a part of the program of the political arm of economic liberalism, the Unitarian Party. 1810 thus gave Buenos Aires economic freedom, but efforts to establish political sovereignty through Congresses, Supreme Directors, and the Constitution of 1819 had all failed miserably.

In regard to Great Britain, Buenos Aires liberals looked to that nation as the cradle of economic liberalism, that land which had been made powerful through the adoption of the politics of free enterprise and commerce. It had also been Britain, which, through contraband goods and products, had enriched Buenos Aires commercial interests.

The attitude of the La Plata believers of economic liberalism is perhaps best typified by Ignacio Nunes, when he declared:

> In our country . . . a plan is regularly pursued to establish, on permanent foundation, that blessing which has produced so much prosperity, and is likely to procure greater advantages for the British nation—the exercise of the individual faculties.110

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109 For a review of these measures, see Section II of Chapter III of this work.

110 Ignacio Nunes, pp. 299-300.
In his defense of the Commercial Treaty of 1825, Munes states that the basic principles inherent in the treaty were "the inviolability of property (and) the security of persons . . . either in peace or in war."\textsuperscript{111} A careful observation of the Treaty of 1825 demonstrates that the treaty sought to establish for Englishmen, and at least in part for United Provinces citizens, freedom of worship, inviolability of property, personal liberty and security, and protection against governmental intervention in business activity.\textsuperscript{112} These principles are practically identical with those which Rivadavia had established by decree, in Buenos Aires province. Therefore, being able through its large delegation to dominate the Constitutional Congress, Buenos Aires was able to bring about the ratification of the treaty and thus cause the establishment of the principles of laissez-faire and free trade, so bitterly resisted in the interior provinces.

While the coincidence of the economic ideas of Buenos Aires liberals and British commercial policy played a prominent role in causing the ratification of the 1825 Commercial Treaty, it cannot be stressed too greatly that national political circumstances also played a critical role in bringing about the treaty's ratification.

The Commercial Treaty provided for British economic penetration of the United Provinces. To the Unitarian Party, the economic development and

\textsuperscript{111} Ibid., p. 163. Munes went on to affirm that the stated ideals were also "United Provinces social principles."\textsuperscript{112} Ibid., p. 165.

\textsuperscript{112} Review the 1825 Commercial Treaty, cf., Appendix II. Note especially Articles VI through X, and XII.
integration of the country could be accomplished only in this fashion. British trade entering the United Provinces had to cross the Atlantic Ocean. Therefore, the port of Buenos Aires, a Unitarian stronghold, would become that which the Unitarians had long desired it become: the economic nerve-center and connecting link of the interior provinces with the rest of the world.

Holding such a dominant economic position, Buenos Aires could easily gain political hegemony over the rest of the United Provinces. Centralised political control was necessary, from the Unitary standpoint, in order that liberal economic policies might be maintained, even if the Federalist Parties objected.113

In 1819, Buenos Aires liberals had attempted to promulgate a Unitarian-type of Constitution and failed. In less than one year after the ratification

113During the heated exchange between delegates, opponents of the treaty declared that the treaty was an evil thing, for the United Provinces, for "the provinces, absolutely lacked the means to compete with the foreigners." . . . las Provincias no tenian arbitrio para concurrir y competir con los Extranjeros . . . Libro de Actas, Tome VII, p. 138.

A Buenos Aires spokesman provided the argument which perhaps most competently states the Unitarian position: "It was said that free competition would stimulate the industry and increase the population as it had already in Buenos Aires; and consequently, it would cause in time, the increased prosperity of the country and its inhabitants."

The Spanish reads: "Se contesto, que la libre concurrencia estimularia la industria, y aumentaria la poblacion como ya se observaba en Buenos Aires; y de constante vendria a causar con el tiempo de bienpays y sus mercaderes." Cf., Libro de Actas, Tome VII, pp. 138-140.
of the 1825 Commercial Treaty, the Buenos Aires-dominated Congress broke the **Fundamental Law of January, 1825**, by electing Rivadavia National President without the specific consent of the Provinces.\(^{114}\) Rivadavia then proceeded to force through the Congress a law which made the city of Buenos Aires the federal capital of the United Provinces.\(^{115}\) The Unitarian program was climaxed with the promulgation of the Constitution of 1827, another Unitarian constitution.\(^{116}\)

Viewed from this aspect the Commercial Treaty of 1825 became not only a means by which liberal economic ideas could be disseminated throughout the various provinces, but an extremely important step in the liberal program for the acquisition of political and economic control of all the provinces.

**United Provinces, Brasil and Control of the Banda Oriental**

The presentation of a complete historic background of the Republic of Uruguay (known formerly to Spanish-Argentine adherents as the Province of Banda Oriental or Montevideo; to the Brazilian-Portuguese interests as the Cisplatine Province) would go well beyond the purpose of this paper. It

\(^{114}\text{Cf., British and Foreign State Papers, Volume VII (London, 1857), pp. 862-863, Hiron Burgin, pp. 106-107 and Ricardo Levene, A History of Argentina, p. 371, all demonstrate that the Fundamental Law of January, 1825, forbade the creation of either a national executive (Presidency) or the designation of Buenos Aires as a national capital.}\)

\(^{115}\text{Burgin, pp. 106-107, and Levene, p. 371.}\)

\(^{116}\text{The following historians all agree that the Constitution drawn up by the Constitutional Congress in 1827 was a Unitarian document, both in character and form: Burgin, pp. 144-145, Ricardo Levene, A History of Argentina, p. 372. Elizabeth Wallace, Constitution of the Argentine Republic (Chicago, 1894), p. 8, and L. S. Rowe, The Federal System of the Argentine Republic (Washington, 1921), pp. 19 and 21.}\)
should suffice to cite, for the purposes of explanation, a number of important dates and facts in Uruguayan history.

1680-1713—Portuguese settle at Colonia; this settlement changes hands several times, the Portuguese gaining undisputed possession in 1713.

1726—Spaniards found Montevideo under Governor Zábala of Buenos Aires.

1750—the Banda Oriental (Uruguay) made a provincial government independent of Buenos Aires.

1763—Treaty of Paris; Colonia and all Spanish Banda Oriental surrendered to Portugal.

1777—Treaty of Ildefonso returns all of Banda Oriental to Spain.

1809-1810—Spanish royalists, led by Elío, make Montevideo their stronghold; they defy the Viceroys, Liniers and Cisneros.

February, 1811—Buenos Aires Junta commissions José Artigas to drive the Spaniards out of the Banda Oriental.

May, 1811—Banda Oriental declared a province of the United Provinces.


June, 1814—Montevideo captured by Buenos Aires forces.

January, 1815—Independent Republic (Banda Oriental de Uruguay) declared by Artigas; United Provinces gave their assent to this assertion.

October, 1816—January, 1817—Banda Oriental invasion by the Portuguese; Artigas defeated in battle; January 20, 1817, Montevideo surrenders.

April, 1821—Banda Oriental annexed by Brazil.
May, 1824—Banda Oriental is incorporated into Brazil as the Guipatine Province. 117

For many years, there had been a constant struggle between Spanish and Portuguese interests, each side hoping to gain control of the northern shore of the Río de la Plata. Finally, with establishment of the Vice-Royalty of the La Plata, (1776), the province once again came directly under Spanish jurisdiction.

The interests of the Banda Oriental had never been harmonious with those of the provinces on the south shore of the Río de la Plata. In 1764 and 1799, Banda merchants and officials even requested separation of the provinces from the oppressive acts of the Buenos Aires Consulado.

Beginning in the fall of 1806, the Banda Oriental became the stronghold of the Spanish Royalist forces, who after 1810, attempted to blockade Buenos Aires harbor. 118 In February, 1811, Artigas was commissioned by the Saavedra government to smash the royalists. Artigas defeated the royalists and besieged Montevideo, but the Spaniards called for Portuguese intervention.

Finally, on January 26, 1812, Buenos Aires and Portuguese interests signed a truce over the Banda Oriental. 119


118 See Chapter I of this work.

119 British and Foreign State Papers, Volume VI, pp. 697-698.
Meanwhile Artigas had become virtually an independent force in the Banda Oriental, and after the Assembly of 1813 expelled his delegates, relations steadily worsened. In February, 1814, National Director Posadas declared him an outlaw.\(^{120}\) Artigas soon increased his strength, and after inciting rebellion, gained control of Entre Ríos and Corrientes. By January 10, 1815, the new director, Alvear, had no choice but to recognize the independence of Artigas in the Banda Oriental.\(^{121}\)

The Portuguese had no intention of allowing an inciter to rebellion such as Artigas to remain at large so near to their multi-racial empire. Campaigns beginning in the spring of 1816 soon drove Artigas out of the Banda Oriental.

Deeming Artigas a menace, the Buenos Aires Director Pueyrredon had favored Portuguese intervention in the Banda Oriental, but shortly after the invasion began, his attitude hardened considerably. In a dispatch issued in September, 1816, the Buenos Aires government took its stand, and warned against Portuguese invasion:

> The peace between the territories (Brasil and United Provinces) is perhaps guaranteed by our mutual respect for the British nation; but if abusing this security, the Foreign expedition should dare to

\(^{120}\)Ibid., p. 290.

\(^{121}\)In April, 1815, the insurrection by which Alvear was forced from office began among those of his armies which were marching to give battle to Artigas. Alvear never had any intention of allowing Banda Oriental independence. Cf., Kirkpatrick, p. 129.
profane our Territory (i.e., Banda Oriental), it is ... (i.e., it will be) necessary to make that Monarch (Portuguese Emperor) feel our anger.\textsuperscript{122}

Men and weapons are the two necessary supports of strong language. At the time of the Portuguese invasion of the Banda Oriental, Buenos Aires was faced with a shortage of each. In due time, the head of the Portuguese invasion force, General Lecor, answered Ruayredon. The military condition of the United Provinces still did not allow for a sufficient offensive against him, and Lecor knew it:

I can assure your excellency that my marches have for their sole object the removal of a germ of disorder (Artigas) from the frontier of the Kingdom of Brazil ... This wise and necessary measure ought in no respect excite uneasiness ... since it has been executed in a territory which had declared itself independent (i.e., Alvear's recognition of January, 1815).\textsuperscript{123}

Buenos Aires governmental officials smarted under this act of affront by, but bided their time. In 1821, the desire for vengeance erupted anew, when the Portuguese Emperor, far from evacuating the Banda Oriental, annexed the territory, renaming it the Cisplatine Province.\textsuperscript{124}

Rivadavia in Buenos Aires demanded redress of grievances, and after a long exchange of diplomatic notes, forwarded a demand for return of the territory to the United Provinces (September 15, 1825). Rivadavia declared:

\textsuperscript{122}British Foreign and State Papers, Volume IV, pp. 1031-1033.
\textsuperscript{123}British Foreign and State Papers, Volume VI, pp. 697-698.
\textsuperscript{124}Ricardo Levene, A History of Argentina, p. 380.
I can assure your excellency, the State of Montevideo has declared her sentiments to be hostile to the incorporation with the Brazilian Empire and with the Kingdom of Brazil. 125

The Brazilian reply (received in Buenos Aires on February 6, 1824) rejected Rivadavia’s thesis completely:

Although a party may exist in the Cisplatine State in favor of Buenos Aires . . . seeing that discrepancies will ever exist in political opinions . . . it is certain that . . . the (these) parties have arisen, fomented by the enemies of the Empire. 126

After receiving the reply, the Argentine ambassador asked for his passport and returned to Buenos Aires. On May 9, 1824, the Emperor of Brazil declared the Cisplatine Province to be a coequal unit of the Brazilian Empire. Buenos Aires officials were determined not to accept this state of affairs as permanent.

On August 27, 1824, Rivadavia, acting as Plenipotentiary Minister and Envoy Extraordinary, embarked for Great Britain and France. Arriving in England, Rivadavia was confronted by Canning who declared that, due to the nature of Rivadavia’s commission, he could not see the King nor would he be extended official recognition. 127 It was not until Canning officially signed the Commercial Treaty of 1826 (May 12, 1825), that Rivadavia and Canning actually were able to begin official high-level diplomatic negotiations.

125 Ignacio Funes, p. 95.

126 Ibid., pp. 105-107.

127 Ricardo Levene, Un Historia de la Nacion Argentina, Volume VI (2), p. 566, Canning pointed out that since Rivadavia’s instructions applied to both France and Britain co-equaly, he (Rivadavia) could not be trusted with confidences, as French and British diplomatic aims were on many Latin-American
Meanwhile in Río de la Plata, a group of perhaps thirty-three volunteers, led by Colonel Juan Lavalle, set out from Buenos Aires harbor, crossed the Río de la Plata in the dead of night, and after landing in the Cisplatine Province, swiftly proceeded to raise the banner of revolt. A "volunteer army" was raised, the Portuguese were speedily defeated at Rysandu, Sarandi and Rincon, and finally on August 25, 1825, a Congress was held in Montevideo which decreed that the ex-Cisplatine Province wished to be a part of the United Provinces.

Meanwhile, in Britain, difficulties were developing. Rivadavia attempted to persuade Canning to intervene on behalf of the United Provinces in the Banda Oriental. Canning's attitude is perhaps best expressed in a dispatch to Woodbine Parish on September 18, 1825:

It is not our (British) intention to throw off lightly the question of intervention on our part, to prevent hostilities between Brasil and Buenos Aires, but we wish to put that interference ..., on its right footing; as a gratuitous act of friendship to both parties.

issues, antagonistic. Furthermore, Britain had not as yet granted diplomatic relations with the United Provinces. Ibid.

128 Russell Fitgibbon, Uruguay, A Portrait of Democracy (New Brunswick, New Jersey, 1859), p. 18, declares that the thirty-three volunteers were all "Uruguayan exiles in Buenos Aires."

Ricardo Levene, A History of Argentina, p. 350, notes the leadership of the group by a Buenos Aires army officer, and labels the rebels as Buenos Aires troops or agents.

129 Ricardo Levene, Un Historia de la Nacion Argentina, Vol. VI (2), p. 566

130 G. K. Webster, Volume I, p. 128. For the record, Canning told Rivadavia that interference on the part of Britain in behalf of Buenos Aires cause
Thus, Rivadavia could not persuade Britain to openly support the Buenos Aires position in the Banda Oriental. Indeed as time passed, friction between the two men steadily increased until Rivadavia departed for the United Provinces in October, 1825.

The connection between Rivadavia's seemingly imprudent mission to Britain, and the question of the future disposition of the Banda Oriental becomes more intelligible when Rivadavia's diplomatic instructions are examined:

The government of Buenos Aires had instructed him to attend to the ratification of the treaty, and also to "promote the liberation of the Province of Montevideo in whatever way possible, in view of the circumstances of the British Cabinet's relation with Brazil."133

would provide a precedent for other nations to follow whenever they wished to interfere in South American disputes. Cf., Levene, Un Historia de la Nación Argentina, Tome VI (2), p. 566.

Having failed to solicit English aid, Rivadavia then insisted that Lord Strangford, British Minister at Rio de Janeiro, had given to him (at the time of the Portuguese-United Provinces-Banda Oriental Truce) a verbal guarantee of the Banda Oriental (January, 1812). Now, more than thirteen years later, Rivadavia told Canning that he expected the British government to respect the guarantee. Evidence of the guarantee, and Rivadavia's contention that a verbal guarantee was given is to be found in Ignacio Núñez, pp. 309-311.

Canning speedily dismissed Rivadavia's contention that verbal guarantees were of any validity. Writing to Woodbine Parish (October 19, 1825), Canning declared: "Rivadavia ought to know that there is nothing in the whole circle of diplomatic engagements so solemn as one of guarantee . . . I confess that I cannot much regret that the gentlemen who could bring forward such a claim . . . upon this country . . . is not continued here as the accredited Minister of Buenos Aires." Cf., Webster, I, p. 132.


Ricardo Levene, Un Historia de la Nación Argentina, Tome VI (2),
The implications of the instructions are plain. The Banda Oriental was not to be ceded to Brazil without a struggle. Since Don Pedro, the Brazilian Emperor, had no intention of relinquishing the territory, war between Brazil and Buenos Aires was imminent. From the Buenos Aires viewpoint, British support was desired if the war was to be carried to a successful conclusion. If this was not possible, then British neutrality was required.

Again the reality of the situation must be grasped before the problem can be fully understood. Economically, war between Brazil and Buenos Aires (and the rest of the United Provinces) meant strife between two of Britain's best customers. Furthermore, the creation of the independent Empire of Brazil seems to have been a special project near to Canning's heart. 134

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p. 566. The quotation reads: "El Gobierno le encomendo presentar la ratificación del tratado y también promover la libertad de la provincia de Montevideo del modo que puede hacerse en Europa y en las circunstancias originales en que se halla el gabinete Británico para con el Brasil."

Rivadavia's position as Plenipotentiary Minister and Envoy Extraordinary would indicate that if necessary, he had the power to negotiate new agreements with Britain, or possibly modify the Commercial Treaty of 1825, if and when it arrived in Britain. Whatever was necessary to the accomplishment of his mission apparently was to be done.

The instructions seen above were issued to Rivadavia prior to his embarkation on August 27, 1824. These instructions seem to indicate that the proposed Anglo-United Provinces Commercial Treaty (signed on February 2, 1825) was known of in Buenos Aires "unofficially." The power to proceed in the negotiation of a commercial treaty was forwarded from Canning to Parish. These instructions arrived on August 23, 1824. Thus, Rivadavia easily could have been informed of the British treaty intention before he departed. Cf., C. K. Webster, Volume I, pp. 116-117.

134, Canning declared in a letter to Lord Grenville that he was happy to see Brazil "independent and monarchical." Cf., Harold Temperley, The Foreign Policy of Castlereagh (London, 1908), pp. 220-222.
Canning also feared that war between Brazil and Buenos Aires might cause an attack on the Brazilian monarchy by such republican states as Colombia, Chile or Peru. 135

Indeed, Buenos Aires elements had every reason to wonder about Britain's attitude in case of war with Brazil. Throughout the time that Rivadavia was in Britain, that nation was acting as the mediator in the dispute between members of the Braganza Family over the question of Brazilian independence. On August 29, 1825, the last documents regarding Brazilian independence were signed in London, where the entire course of negotiations had been held. 136

Less than ten days after the Portuguese recognition of Brazilian independence, Sir Charles Stuart was dispatched to Rio de Janeiro. His intention: the negotiation of a commercial treaty with Brazil. 137 In November, 1825, Britain formally extended diplomatic recognition to Brazil. 138

In case of military action, Brazil could always seek European assistance through Portugal. Thus, diplomatic recognition by at least one European state was imperative for Buenos Aires. Secondly, unless Britain was neutralized or persuaded to support the United Provinces, she might well come to the assistance of Brazil. This last possibility had to be avoided at all costs.


136 The courts of Brazil and Portugal held the British government in high esteem. Portugal already held a commercial treaty with Britain and thus it seemed natural for Britain to do the same. Cf., Edward Stapleton, Volume I, pp. 323-324, Volume II, pp. 18-19, and Helen Keller, Volume II, p. 724.


138 Ibid., Volume I, pp. 322-323.
Reflections

It is relatively impossible to delegate to any one particular motive the causation for the ratification of the 1825 Commercial Treaty by the United Provinces delegates to the Constitutional Congress. The desire of the Unitarian Party for eventual political domination of all the United Provinces, fear of British retaliation or intervention if stringent measures were taken to regulate British commercial interests in Rio de la Plata, belief on the part of some individuals in the principles of economic liberalism, the desire on the part of all for national recognition and prestige, the hope of reoccupying the Banda Oriental: All of these factors (with the exception of the last) is observable in the record of the 1825 Constitutional Congress. 139

Thus, it may be assumed that each of these was of marked importance to one or the other of the delegates. 140

Consideration of economic and commercial agreements between nations often takes weeks, months, perhaps even years. In six days (February 12-18), under the pressure of a demand for immediate consideration made by Las Heras and Garcia (Buenos Aires Executive Officers), the constitutional deputies ratified a commercial treaty which would affect the development of their country for at least the rest of the century. That the delegates fully realized the extent of their actions, in terms of the economic future of their country, is unlikely, and this factor makes the situation all the more tragic.


140 The Banda Oriental issue was important, at least to Buenos Aires. Cf. pp. 130-138 of Chapter III, Part II.
Whether or not the congressional deputies ever had any choice in the question of ratifying the document is a question which must be considered. Noting the fact that the opposition was unable to win any concessions and that the treaty was ratified without amendments would tend to indicate bribery or coercion was used in order to force the delegates into line. Actual proof of such an arrangement is lacking, and without it one must assume that, theoretically at least, some delegates possessed freedom of choice in the matter. 141

The group of critical importance was the Buenos Aires delegation. Consisting of over forty per cent of the Congress' number, the passage or rejection of the treaty was, practically speaking, dependent upon their decision. One wonders: Could not the leaders of Buenos Aires (who controlled the delegation) have realized that once the British were given legal sanction for what they had already achieved, they would attempt to gain more and more power, thus eventually making it virtually impossible to dislodge them?

There are no books, records, or materials available which provide an adequate answer to this question. 142 It is the opinion of the writer that

141 Only the letter written by Parish to La Plata (February 18, 1825) tends to indicate that pressure or illicit measures were used in order to achieve a favorable decision. Cf., Chapter III, Part I.

142 In the case of Rivadavia, his treatment at the hands of Canning seems to have caused him second thoughts in regard to Britain's real intentions in the Río de la Plata. Parish noted that upon his return to Buenos Aires in November, 1825, his manner was noticeably colder. Nina Kay-Shuttleworth, p. 299.

A review of the book, *Rivadavia y La Economica-Argentina* by Hogdee C. Frissi is found in the *Hispanic American Review, XV* (February, 1934),
such men as Garcia, Rivadavia, and in general, the Unitarian Party eventually realized that each favor received from Britain would be paid for. However, these men believed that eventually, economic integration and national development would come through the exploitation of natural resources by foreign interests. All that would be really necessary in this regard was that the nation's resources be as rich and diversified as they hoped. Secondly, the Unitarian interests were determined to gain control of the nation both politically and economically. To these interests, the great value of the 1825 Treaty lay in the fact that it became a means whereby the liberal economic principles and program espoused by the Unitarian interests could be imposed in those provinces where the Unitarians previously had been unable to do so. If these principles (free trade, etc.) were adopted, then the Unitarians would have no trouble gaining and maintaining themselves in political power. If only the British would be mercifully benevolent in the years to come!

But Britain would not be benevolent, and the Unitarians would eventually alienate themselves from the mass of the population. Ironically enough, the

p. 66. The reviewer concludes that Rivadavia did not care much for England, but viewed that nation as a means for causing the economic development of his own nation. British success would serve to strengthen his own political power in the United Provinces. Copies of this book were unavailable at either Newberry or Harper (University of Chicago Library).
interests which led the battle for the political separation from Spain, led
the nation into economic dominion under Britain. When one recalls British
military failure in 1806-1808, and the ratification of the 1825 Commercial
Treaty, once again the point is demonstrated: You can catch more flies with
honey than you can with a hickory stick.

III. CONCLUSIONS

Mariano Moreno had favored a commercial treaty with Great Britain in the
hope that that nation could provide the United Provinces with the manufactured
products it needed. During the treaty ratification proceedings in
February, 1825, a liberal spokesman

... said that free competition would stimulate the industry
and increase the population as it had already in Buenos Aires;
and consequently it would cause in time, the increased prosperity
of the country and its inhabitants.

The liberal proponents of the treaty realized that British interests
would come to acquire large holdings in Argentina. However, to proponents of
economic liberalism, this method was the only means whereby the Argentine
would undergo true economic development.

In granting economic concessions to England in the 1825 Commercial
Treaty, Argentina liberal adherents assumed that in regard to Latin American

143Cf., Chapter III, Part I, p. 82 of this thesis.
144Cf., Chapter III, Part II, footnote 113.
affairs, the aims and designs of the British Foreign Office and Argentina foreign aspirations, while not necessarily having the same objectives, would not be antagonistic.

The United Provinces-Brazil conflict swiftly demonstrated the basic error of this line of thinking. No one originally asked Britain to mediate the dispute. However, once Britain intervened, her main interests immediately became the preservation of peace in order that her commercial and maritime interests might prosper. 145

Despite the fact that exclusive commercial privileges had been granted to Britain by the United Provinces, Argentine claims and ambitions in regard to the Banda Oriental received neither sympathy nor support from the British, who while originally supporting a policy of independence for the Banda Oriental, were quite willing to make an abrupt change of policy when Manuel Garcia signed a treaty (May 21, 1827) recognizing Brazil's protectorate over the disputed territory. The British concern for peace in the Rio de la Plata apparently outweighed all other considerations. If the war demonstrated anything to liberal thinkers in Argentina, it was that in South America, Argentine aspirations and British foreign policy could indeed be antagonistic.

The Falkland Islands coup was a triumph of British diplomatic policy brought about by their overwhelming naval superiority. The 1825 Commercial

Treaty had, in Article I, pledged "perpetual amity" between the two nations. The activities of the British government in regard to the Falklands could not be described as amiable. It may even be argued that British activities in this affair demonstrated that Britain, as the stronger of the two nations, simply took it upon itself to interpret what "amity" meant. Once again, the aims of British foreign policy and the claims and aspirations of the Argentine state were demonstrated to be antagonistic, and the Falklands affair served only to aggravate feelings already ruffled during the Argentine-Brasil conflict.

In regard to the Argentine dictator, Manuel Rosas, historical interpretation in the future may undergo drastic revision. During the period of the French and British blockades (1839-1841 and 1845-1850), Rosas managed to reawaken the spirit of 1806-1807, and solidified much of the nation behind him. Once again in the Banda Oriental, British policy and Argentine national aspirations once again came into conflict. Rather than acquiesce or register vain protest, as had been done in the past, Rosas chose to fight. The Royal Navy had no great success against a continental land mass or against a people whose occupation was primarily agricultural.


147 To many historians and political authors, Rosas was an evil tyrant and nothing else. The general attitude demonstrated by Domingo Sarmiento seems to have become that generally adopted in the works of Argentine history. In his Contra Rosas, 3rd Edition (Buenos Aires, 1930), Sarmiento heaps abuse
Since the signing of the 1825 Commercial Treaty, Britain had sought the maintenance of peace in order that her commercial interests in the La Plata would prosper. Argentine aspirations and aims had run afoul of British plans and designs during the Brazilian war, and during the Falkland Islands conflict. Immediately prior to the commencement of the French blockade, Britain had sought to have Rosas grant to the French the concessions they desired. During the heat of the blockade, Britain had exerted pressure upon the harrised Rosas in order to gain a new slave trade agreement and commercial concessions.

upon Rosas as a tyrant, dictator, etc. His Life in the Argentine Republic in the Days of Tyrants, 3rd Edition (New York, 1868) gives a much better understanding of his thought and interpretation of Argentine history. Sarmiento denounces all Federalists as "barbarians," (p. 126); Rosas represents "the climax of barbarianism" (p. 127). The blockades of 1838-1840, and 1845-49 were "provoked by his (Rosas') brutalities," (p. 127). Sarmiento fails to comment on the British and French conduct in the Rio de la Plata, apparently analyzing these as blameless.

Sarmiento sees nothing wrong with the cooperation of the members of the Argentine Commission with Argentina's enemies (p. 130). Sarmiento praises the Unitarians often (pp. 118, 128, and 129). Speaking of the Unitarians, Sarmiento commented: "Many of these men (Old Unitarians) are still among us. They are what remains of the republic; the Unitarians of 1825 form a distinct class of men, recognised by their manners . . . bearing . . . their religion is the future of the republic . . ." Ibid., p. 128.

Possibly Rosas might have even drowned in the blood of his victims, but the writer questions the wisdom, the righteousness and the patriotism of the Unitarians and the Argentine Commission. Rosas was indeed tyrannical, but the Unitarian thinkers and sympathizers display no qualities which would tend to have made them better conductors of their nation's affairs.

Cf., Herslet's Commercial Treaties, Volume VI, pp. 123-124, for a copy of the new slave treaty. This treaty is perhaps more important for what it implies than what it declares. Few, if any, Argentine vessels would ever be on the African slave patrol. Thus, the granting of reciprocal rights to the
Lastly, Britain had joined with the French in an attempt to force Argentine compliance with British desires. If the British and Argentine aims and designs were to consistently clash, why then should Britain be allowed to enjoy extra commercial privileges in Argentina? This type of reasoning doubtless influenced Rosas, for in 1850, he told Southern, British governmental representative in Buenos Aires, that he intended to cancel the 1825 Commercial Treaty.\(^{119}\)

Rosas' defeat in 1852, and exile ended all danger to Britain, however. Civil strife, national debt, etc., kept Argentina internally disorganized. Moreover protected by treaty, Royal Navy and limitless financial backing, British economic interests continued to solidify themselves, many becoming in time (example, railroads) national institutions.

The 1825 Commercial Treaty cannot thus be judged as an obscure economic agreement. Ignacio Núñez, Bernadino Rivas's secretary, writing of the principles of liberalism embodied in the treaty, hailed it as

> the legal preliminary of that new order (i.e., liberal) of social and commercial relations . . . In it (i.e., the treaty) are included the fundamental principles—the inviolability of property, and the security of persons, whatever the origin of either, in peace and/or in war . . .\(^{150}\)

United Provinces was in reality, a matter of courtesy.

Rosas had previously declined to sign this treaty, for he had hoped to obtain in return, concessions from Britain, in regard to the 1825 Commercial Treaty. The need for support during the height of the blockade forced his hand. Cf., Cady, p. 64.

\(^{119}\) Cf., John Cady, pp. 261-264.

Entering into agreement providing concessions to a more powerful nation is always a dangerous move. Once disagreement arose, or unfavorable conditions presented themselves, Argentina lacked the power to cancel either the treaty or bring about negotiations for the purpose of revision. The nation could only look on while British interests moved to thrust it deeper into economic bondage.

V. THE GROWTH OF BRITISH INTERESTS IN THE ARGENTINE—1852-1900

With the return of peace and the signing of the Southern–Arana Agreement, British exports to the River Plate skyrocketed to £1,399,575 for the year 1849. From that time, their privileges guaranteed by treaty, British interests began to pour money into the development of Argentina. By 1900, much of the wealth of the nation was in their hands.

State Debt and Finance

The various governments which have ruled in Argentina since at least 1822 have been issuing new series of paper money, and borrowing foreign gold, in order to meet expenses have been common financial procedure for both Caudillos and presidents. Not until 1883, was Argentina placed on a practical financial footing.


152 Leland Jenkins, The Migration of British Capital to 1875 (London, 1927), p. 333. Jenkins points out primarily between 1850 and 1873, about one-half billion pounds were invested by Englishmen in various enterprises around the world.

153 John H. Williams, Argentine International Trade under Inconvertible
With British investors believing in the future development of the Argentine, and both national and provincial officials determined to have new railroads, port facilities and buildings, a situation was created whereby the exchange of state bonds for English gold became a means by which the Argentine government could build new facilities, and meet expenses.\textsuperscript{154} British loans to Buenos Aires and federal governments from 1827 to 1875 totaled:

\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
Year & Loan & Interest \\
\hline
1822 & £1,000,000 & 6,000,000 \\
1857 & 1,621,000 & 63,720,000 \\
1865 & 3,500,000 & 12,600,000 \\
1870 & 1,038,700 & 13,014,008 \\
1871 & 6,122,400 & 30,266,896 \\
1872-1873 & 2,040,800 & 10,264,632 \\
\hline
Total & £11,332,900 & £72,216,976 \textsuperscript{155} \\
\hline
\end{tabular}

New loans, interest, amortization, claims for damages during revolutionary uprisings, etc., pushed the total debt of both national and provincial governments to British investors and interests as of 1900 to £125,082,710.\textsuperscript{156}

\textsuperscript{154}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 35. Dr. Williams notes that in the interior of Argentina, as late as 1890, persons paying for goods with gold coins were looked upon with suspicion. \textit{Ibid.}, p. 34. Previous to 1883, each province, in addition to various independent banks, issued their own types of currency.

\textsuperscript{155}Pedro Agote, \textit{Finances of the Argentine Republic}. Translated by B. Trant. (Buenos Aires, 1887), p. 17.

This figure becomes all the more enlightening when compared to the total national debt figure of £152,326,160. In effect, about 81% of the total national and provincial debt was owed to British subjects.

The estimated value of foreign (this figure includes Germany, France, the United States, Britain and Belgium) investments in Argentina as of 1897 was £326,000,000. Estimates on the British share of this amount ran from £175,000,000 to £250,000,000.

This preponderance of British investment was looked upon as being both extremely advantageous and extremely dangerous. Accordingly the view of one sage, "English capital since the dawn of the Argentine has been the great propulsive agent in all national progress.

On the other hand, he who has his hand astride the purse possesses great leverage. The predominance of British capital in Argentina and especially in regard to the great sums owed to British interests by Argentine governments made favorable consideration of British interests inescapable, whether they be in the national interest or not.

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157 Ibid. These figures are verified by Lewandowski and Martinez, The Argentine in the Twentieth Century. Translated by Bernard Miall (London, 1911), p. 3143.

158 Ibid.


160 Lewandowski and Rodriguez, p. 316.
With the termination of the Crimean War, the British shipped to Buenos Aires (1857), a locomotive, several coaches, and six miles of track, all of which had been originally intended for the Crimea. With about 160 workmen, William Brogee went to Argentina and built a short road—the backbone of British railway control in Argentina. The Argentine railways developed almost overnight.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Kilometers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1857</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1865</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>732</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1875</td>
<td>1,956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>2,516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1885</td>
<td>4,502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>9,432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1895</td>
<td>11,116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>16,563</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As of 1891, the value of the railroads stood at:

(a) Belonging to the Nation $31,919,719
(b) Belonging to the Provinces $18,233,597
(c) Belonging to Foreign Companies $266,777,758

162 W. Watson, p. 22.
Of the total miles of railroad laid as of 1890, 65% was British owned, about 18% was government owned, and 17% was owned by France and other countries. The five major lines, the Buenos Aires Southern, Buenos Aires Western, the Buenos Aires and Pacific, the Central Argentine, and the Buenos Aires and Rosario railways are all British owned, and the principal directors of these lines were non-residents of Argentina.

The Argentine government, in an effort to stimulate railway building, passed a law declaring that:

... on the capital invested in the construction of private lines, a guaranty of six per cent is given by the Federal (Argentine) government, with the obligation on the part of the railroads to refund the amount received when the line becomes self-supporting.

The exact figure as to profits made by the British-owned railways is unknown, but in May, 1892, President Pelligrini stated before the Argentine Congress:

The railroad lines should have returned to the Government, which guaranteed their capital, a certain percentage of their total profits. Nothing has been returned, and although the net profits of several lines have greatly exceeded the interest guaranteed, none of these lines have returned the surplus, as the law requires.

164William Graham, English Influence in the Argentine (Buenos Aires, 1890), p. 32.

165Watson, p. 111, points out that the directors of these railroads were in London, not Buenos Aires, cf., also First, p. 42.

166Argentine Republic, pp. 107-108.
The nation has paid $16,000,000 in gold without demanding the fulfillment of the above obligations. 167

Unfortunately, as of 1900, the British interests had made no more than token payments on the debt owed to the government, but the Argentine government knew better than to press the British railroad owners for the money owed. In 1890, British interests bought the Eastern Argentine Railroad from the Argentine Government. In May, 1891, the Argentine government suspended the six per cent guarantee which had been offered to the other railroads. 168

Shortly thereafter, the London Stock Exchange decided to boycott Argentine gold bonds, government bonds and national bank (Banco Nacional) shares. 169

The Argentine government quickly realized the error of its ways, and began to pay the six per cent guarantee to the Eastern Argentine Railway.

The campaigns of Rosas and Roca against the unspecified Indians in the territories of southern and central Argentina had made new areas available for exploitation and development. Reaching these areas made railway building an absolute necessity. By building railways, the British gained the support of cattle and sheep estanciero owners, and precipitated the development of new wheat and corn acreage in the interior. 170 Before the beginning of the

167 Ibid., p. 109.
168 Graham, p. 25.
169 Ibid.
170 An example of the changes brought about in Argentina by the railroads can be seen in the example of Jujuy province. Previously much corn, at the end of the harvest season was burned, because there was no way to ship the excess corn to a market. With the advent of the railway, not only was there now a market for the corn, but new and increased acreage was needed to meet
twentieth century, an open alliance between the British railway and the
estanciero owners, the \textit{Sociedad Rural}, was formed.\footnote{172} The full implications
of the operation of this organization was not to be realized until the twen-
tieth century.

\textbf{Banks}

The first bank opened in Argentina was the Bank of Buenos Aires in 1822,
formed exclusively of British stockholders.\footnote{172} This bank, despite several
reorganizations, changes in functions, and bankruptcies, survived the nine-
teenth century.\footnote{173} In 1862, the second bank ever established in Argentina,
the London and River Plate Bank, opened its doors in Buenos Aires. Complete

the demand. Under such circumstances, the value of the land increased

\footnote{171} \textit{Boswell McCrea and Thurman Van Metre, "International Competition for
the Trade of Argentina," Studies in World Economy, Volume IV (June, 1931),
p. 47.}

\footnote{172} \textit{Boswell McCrea and Thurman Van Metre, "International Competition for
the Trade of Argentina," Studies in World Economy, Volume IV (June, 1931),
p. 47.}

\footnote{173} \textit{Boswell McCrea and Thurman Van Metre, "International Competition for
the Trade of Argentina," Studies in World Economy, Volume IV (June, 1931),
p. 47.}

\footnote{173} The English railways made it possible for cattle and sheep estanci-
eros to get their herds to saladeros, and thus meet products to European
markets. In return, the \textit{estanciero} owners were expected to buy British products
exclusively. Thus, a loose alliance between British and \textit{estancieros} was
gradually developed, with the \textit{Sociedad Rural} providing the visual evidence of
such a creation.

\footnote{171} \textit{Rudolf and Julio Irazusta in vehement polemics, paint the Argentine
cattlemen (oligarcas) as traitors, \textit{In La Argentina y El Imperialismo Britanico
1806-1933} (Buenos Aires, 1933), pp. 35-36. Mark Jefferson, "Peopling the
Argentine Pampa," American Geographical Research, \textbf{XVI} (Worchester, Mass.,
1926), pp. 172-178, discusses the estanciero owners and states that their
alliance with the British beef interests was "their (estancieros) only alli-
ance." \textit{Ibid.}, p. 171.}

\footnote{172} \textit{William Graham, p. 31.}

\footnote{173} \textit{John Williams, p. 34.} The bank closed temporarily during the panic
of 1889-1891.
banking control rested in the hands of British bond holders until 1873, when German firms set up their own banking houses. 174

By 1900, several other British banking firms had begun doing business in Buenos Aires. Chief among these were the Anglo-South American Bank, the British Bank of South America, and various branches of the London and Brazil Bank.

The assets of these banks as of 1890 were: (1) Anglo-South American—£2,250,000; (2) British Bank of South America—£1,000,000; (3) London and Brazil Bank—£1,250,000; 175 (4) London and River Plate (1886) total—£9,550,000. 176

The tremendous strength of British banking interests is demonstrated by the fact that the only bank to avoid insolvency, suspension of payment or closure during the 1889-1891 financial collapse, was the London and River Plate. 177

Utilities

British investors found innumerable means to invest in Argentina. In Buenos Aires, ninety per cent of the Tramways were British-owned. 178 The

174 Pedro Agote, p. 117.

175 William Graham, p. 31. These figures may seem rather low, but it must be remembered that most likely they were determined during the 1889-1891 depression period.

176 Pedro Agote, p. 261.


178 Graham, p. 39. These include the Anglo-Argentine, Buenos Aires,
tramways of Rosario were also owned by British interests.179

In 1871, a yellow fever epidemic broke out in Buenos Aires. Following this epidemic, efforts were begun to install in the city a sewage and sanitary system, and a water purification plant. Eventually, the contract for the building of waterworks systems in both Buenos Aires and Rosario went to British companies.180 In addition, the Province of Buenos Aires Waterworks Company (which provided water in several provincial towns including the new capital, La Plata) was British owned, as was the Consolidated Waterworks Company in Rosario.181

The following gas and light companies are also British owned:

- Old and New Buenos Aires
- New Argentine
- Belgrano
- South Barracas
- Bahia Blanca
- Primitiva

Besides gas and light, British interests provided for the building of docks and harbors. The wharves at Rosario, San Nicolás, and Concepción were built by means of British financing.183 The new Madero Docks of Buenos

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180 Graham, p. 30.
181 Ibid.
182 Benton, p. 39. The Primitiva was Argentina's largest. Ibid.
183 Graham, p. 27.
Aires, opened in 1889, were built through British investments.\textsuperscript{184} Almost the entire city and port of Bahia Blanca were built by the Buenos Aires and Southern Railway Company.\textsuperscript{185}

If the above stated facts and figures demonstrate nothing else, they indicate that even had there been no railroads, no banks owned by Britain and Argentina, through the ownership and direction of utilities, British investors would have held a great deal of control over the basic requisites for reasonable existence on the part of Argentine inhabitants.

Meats

Probably the oldest British interests doing business in the Argentine were the meat preparation and preserving companies.\textsuperscript{186} Among the leading companies in the business of meat packing and export were the Kemmerich Company, the Argentine Estates of Bovil, Ltd., Nelson's River Plate, Highland Scot Canning, River Plate, Argentine Preserving, and the Lemco and Oxo Company.\textsuperscript{187} These companies also controlled the meat-extract business.

\textsuperscript{184} Argentine Republic, p. 107.
\textsuperscript{185} Graham, p. 27.
\textsuperscript{186} Refer to Chapter I of this work.
\textsuperscript{187} Hirst, pp. 204-205 and William Graham, p. 39. The Kemmerich Company in 1884, bought 438,000 acres of land on which to raise its own sheep and cattle. The Kemmerich Company was eventually acquired by Argentine Estates of Bovil, Ltd., \textit{ibid.}, p. 205.

As of 1910, the Lemco and Oxo Company controlled some 1,527,720 acres in Argentina, \textit{ibid.}, pp. 206-207.
The English taste rejected the meat of the small, lean, half-wild animals of the Pampa. In 1870, estancio owners began bringing in English stock. John Miller imported the first short horn bull; Richard Newton introduced wire fencing, while Thomas Halsey was the founder of the sheep-breeding industry in Argentina.

The first frozen meat shipped from Argentina to Britain was dispatched in 1877. By 1900, the amount of frozen meat exported exceeded that amount canned, salted, smoked, or dried. The major companies involved in the frozen meat industry were River Plate Frozen Meat, Smithfield and Argentine, and Union Cold Storage.

The importance of the British-owned Argentine beef and mutton industry is shown by the statistics. In 1890, of the total value of Argentine exports to Britain, beef and mutton products made up $66,897,000 of the $100,618,993 total. In the year 1891, beef and cattle exports made up $90,000,000 of the $103,219,000 total value of all exports to Britain.

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188 Alfred Hosbrook, "Some British Activities and Influences in Argentina, Argentina, Brazil and Chile and Independence (St. Louis, 1935), p. 439.
189 Ibid., pp. 439-440. Miller, Halsey and Newton were all Englishmen.
191 W. Watson, p. 58.
192 Ibid., and Mary Benton, pp. 32-33.
193 Argentine Republic, p. 135.
194 Ibid. Both 1890 and 1891 were years of depression. In 1892, when the depression ended and the nation recovered, meat products dropped to 25% of the total value of Argentine exports to Britain. Ibid.
Shipping

For the year 1890, ocean shipping arriving in Buenos Aires was thus listed:195

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steam Leaders</th>
<th>Sail Leaders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ships</td>
<td>Tonnage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>250,873</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>395,456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>199,998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U. S.</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>800,155</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, the Platanean River Company, which enjoyed a monopoly over River Plate local shipping was British owned.196

As of 1890, the numbers and tonnage of British ships in Argentine waters, or involved in Argentine trade outnumbered that of all other nations put together.197 During the years 1894-1898, the tonnage of ships involved in Argentine trade totaled for the leading three nations:198

- United States: 5,260,000 tons
- Germany: 9,153,000 tons
- Great Britain: 26,201,000 tons

Clearly in regard to the transport of both Argentine exports and imports, a monstrous majority of all goods sailed in British bottoms.

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195Ibid., pp. 116-117.
Other Monopolies

In 1883, Argentina decreed its first protective tariff. A duty of 50% was placed on arms, alcohol, cards, perfume, etc., and a 40% tariff on other clothing, shoes, hats, harness and furniture. However, such items as coal, of which British dealers supplied upwards of 80%, went duty free. Such items as railway equipment, electrical machinery, both of which Britain supplied the foremost quantities, were admitted duty free.

Even where attempts were made to protect national products and exclude others, British interests prospered. The tariff of 1883 contained several sections which tended to encourage the creation of monopolies. In regard to sugar, for example, a 90% duty was placed on all lower grades. Imported sugar was practically driven from the market, while the native sugar industry concentrated in Tucuman province, stood practically without competition in the production of sugar for the Argentine market.

Lawyers deserted their profession, workers their tools . . . to throw themselves into an occupation so full of promise . . .

199First, pp. 220-221, and Lincoln Hutchinson, p. 40.

200The 1889 statistics show that in that year, Argentina imported 658,051.486 tons of coal for all purposes. 582,067,667 tons were supplied by Britain, cf., Mary Benton, p. 40.

201Ibid., First, pp. 220-221.

202Watson, p. 49.

203Pennington, p. 311.
In 1895, a group of sugar companies, formerly independent, were consolidated, and one big sugar trust emerged. As perhaps was to be expected, the control of the Tucuman sugar firms, and the trust, were in British hands.204

The concentration of economic power and potential in the hands of British interests had a marked effect upon both British and Argentine observers. The case for nineteenth century British imperialism and predominance in Argentina is best stated by Sir Horace Humbold, diplomat and proponent of British schemes for empire expansion, who while in Argentina, observed:

The English of the River Plate need no favorable mention ... to their enterprise and industry the land of their temporary adoption owes no small share of its steadily rising prosperity ... But for Whitelocke's craven surrender, we might have permanently conquered (what) is even now held in great part by our capital.205

While Sir Horace is entitled to his opinions, one may perhaps tend to sympathize with the anonymous Argentine professor, who after musing over the economic predicament of his nation at the turn of the century, reflected:

All the individual, commercial, agricultural, and mining statistics bear the foreign mark Limited, so that one easily may gain the impression that one is studying a purely English Colony, for one finds Limited upon all species of manufacture, Limited

204 Ibid. Pennington names the company possessing the controlling interest in the Sugar Trust in Tucuman as Leake's Argentine Estates. This company also produced butter for English markets.

205 Sir Horace Humbold, Further Recollections of a Diplomatist (London, 1903), p. 213. In the breast of many an imperialist, the defeats of 1806-08 still rankled.
upon the statement of capitals; all undertakings are \underline{limited};
insurance is \underline{limited}; circulation and distribution \underline{limited};
However, the exertion of English power, which the word \underline{limited}
signifies would not be checked—especially if one or another
force really attempted to limit the (English) influence or
control of English profits.206

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206 Martinez and Lewandowski, pp. 359, 360. Underlining of the word
"limited" is the student's emphasis.
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**C. UNPUBLISHED MATERIALS**


APPENDIX I

SOME ANGLO-ARGENTINE TRADE STATISTICS

I. 1825 Argentine Imports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Britain</td>
<td>£ 800,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>110,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>180,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>190,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All other nations</td>
<td>295,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>£1,575,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

II. British Exports to River Plate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1831</td>
<td>£ 339,870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1832</td>
<td>660,152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1833</td>
<td>515,362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1834</td>
<td>831,564</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1835</td>
<td>658,525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1836</td>
<td>697,334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1837</td>
<td>696,104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1838</td>
<td>680,345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1839</td>
<td>710,524</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1840</td>
<td>614,007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1841</td>
<td>989,362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1842</td>
<td>969,791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1843</td>
<td>700,916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1844</td>
<td>784,564</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1845</td>
<td>592,279</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Miron Burgin, Economic Aspects of Argentine Federalism (Cambridge, Mass., 1946), p. 80, denies that any commercial statistics taken between 1818-1830 are more than approximates.

2Woodbine Parish, p. 369.
### III. Some Figures Concerning Anglo-Argentine Trade 1864-1900

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Argentine Exports to Britain</th>
<th>Argentine Imports from Britain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1864</td>
<td>11,666,618</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1865</td>
<td>10,074,489</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1866</td>
<td>11,973,013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1867</td>
<td>911,861</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1868</td>
<td>1,496,136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1869</td>
<td>1,267,583</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>1,486,425</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>1,908,679</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1872</td>
<td>1,502,889</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1873</td>
<td>2,604,043</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1874</td>
<td>1,271,415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1875</td>
<td>1,359,783</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1876</td>
<td>1,664,029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1877</td>
<td>1,699,376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1878</td>
<td>1,099,928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1879</td>
<td>828,365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>886,620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>588,618</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

³*Statesman's Year Book*, 1868 (London, 1868).
1882 1,234,249 1882 4,166,717
1883 945,708 1883 4,904,082
1884 1,158,793 1884 5,610,711
1885 1,878,921 1885 4,660,460
1886 1,646,336 1886 5,190,557
1887 2,176,758 1887 5,229,666
1888 2,658,659 1888 7,656,709
1889 2,016,182 1889 10,681,879
1890 4,129,802 1890 8,416,112
1891 3,451,228 1891 4,216,700
1892 4,504,358 1892 5,651,605
1893 4,836,662 1893 5,535,754
1894 6,168,624 1894 4,514,563
1895 9,084,477 1895 5,319,091
1896 8,974,164 1896 6,620,993
1897 5,753,916 1897 4,801,125
1898 7,706,322 1898 5,586,276
1899 10,912,349 1899 6,210,729
1900 13,080,466 1900 7,142,78

8Ibid., 1885, p. 524.
9Ibid., 1890, p. 319.
10Ibid., 1893, p. 329.
11Ibid., 1896, p. 327.
12Ibid., 1900, p. 352.
13Ibid., 1901, p. 383.
14Ibid., 1902, p. 384.
APPENDIX II

TREATY OF AMITY, COMMERCE AND NAVIGATION BETWEEN HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY
AND THE UNITED PROVINCES OF RIO DE LA PLATA

Article I

There shall be perpetual amity between the dominions and subjects of His Majesty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and the United Provinces of Rio de la Plata and their inhabitants.

Article II

There shall be, between all the territories of his Britannic Majesty in Europe, and the territories of the United Provinces of Rio de la Plata, a reciprocal freedom of commerce: the inhabitants of the two countries, respectively, shall have liberty, freely and securely to come, with their ships and cargoes, to all such places, ports, and rivers, in the territories of aforesaid, to which other foreigners are or may be permitted to come, to enter into the same, and to remain and reside in any part of the said territories respectively; also to live and occupy houses and warehouses for the purposes of their commerce; and, generally, the merchants and traders of each nation, respectively, shall enjoy the most complete protection and security for their commerce, subject always to the laws and statutes of the countries respectively.
**Article III**

His Majesty, the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland engages further, that in all his dominions situated out of Europe, the inhabitants of the United Provinces of Rio de la Plata shall have the like liberty of commerce and navigation stipulated for in the preceding article, to the full extent in which the same is permitted at present, or shall be permitted hereafter, to any other nation.

**Article IV**

No higher or other duties shall be imposed on the importation into the territories of his Britannic Majesty of any articles of the growth, produce, or manufacture of the United Provinces of Rio de la Plata, and no higher or other duties shall be imposed on the importation into the said United Provinces of any articles of the growth, produce or manufacture of his Britannic Majesty's dominions, than one, or shall be payable on the like articles, being the growth, produce, or manufacture of any other foreign country; so shall any other or higher duties or charges be imposed in the territories or dominions of either of the contracting parties on the exportation of any articles to the territories or dominions of the other, than such as are, or may be payable on the exportation of the like articles to any other foreign country; nor shall any prohibition be imposed upon the exportation or importation of any articles the growth, produce, or manufacture of his Britannic Majesty's dominions, or of the said United Provinces, which shall not equally extend to all other nations.
Article V

No higher or other duties or charges on account of tonnage, light or harbor dues, pilotage, salvage, in case of damage or shipwreck, or any other local charges, shall be imposed, in any of the ports of the said United Provinces, or British vessels of the burthen of above one hundred and twenty tons, than those payable in the same ports by vessels of the said United Provinces of the same burthen; nor in the ports of any of his Britannic Majesty's territories, on vessels of the United Provinces of above one hundred and twenty tons, those shall be payable in the same ports, on British vessels of the same burthen.

Article VI

The same duties shall be paid on the importation into the said United Provinces of any article the growth, produce or manufacture of his Britannic Majesty's dominions, whether such importation shall be in vessels of the said United Provinces, or in British vessels; and the same duties shall be paid on the importation into the dominions of his Britannic Majesty of any article the growth, produce, or manufacture of the said United Provinces, whether such importation shall be in British vessels, or in the vessels of the said United Provinces. The same duties shall be paid, and the same drawbacks and bounties allowed, on the exportation of any articles the growth, produce, or manufacture of the said United Provinces to his Britannic Majesty's dominions, whether such exportation shall be in British vessels, or in vessels of the said United Provinces.
Article VII

In order to avoid any misunderstanding with respect to the regulation which may respectively constitute a British vessel, or a vessel of the said United Provinces, it is hereby agreed that all vessels built in the dominions of his Britannic Majesty, and owned, navigated, or registered according to the laws of Great Britain, shall be considered British vessels; and that all vessels built in the territories of the said United Provinces, properly registered, and owned by the citizens thereof, or any of them, and whereof the masters of three-fourths of the mariners, at least, one citizen of the said United Provinces, shall be considered as vessels of the said United Provinces.

Article VIII

All merchants, commanders of ships and others, the subjects of his Britannic Majesty shall have the same liberty, in all the territories of the said United Provinces, as the natives thereof, to manage their own affairs themselves, or to commit them to the management of whomsoever they please, as broker, factor, agent or interpreter; nor to pay them any salary or remuneration, unless they shall choose to employ them; and absolute freedom shall be allowed, in all cases, to the buyer and seller to bargain and fix the price of any goods, wares, or merchandise imported into, or exported from, the said United Provinces, as they shall see good.

Article IX

In whatever relates to the loading and unloading of ships, the safety of merchandise, goods, and effects, the disposal of property of every sort and denomination, by sale, donation or exchange, or in any other manner whatsoever,
as also the administration of justice, the subjects and citizens of the two contracting parties shall enjoy, in their respective dominions, the same privileges, liberties, and rights, as the most favoured nation, and shall not be charged, in any of these respects, with any higher duties or imports than those which are paid, or may be paid, by the native subjects or citizens of the power in whose dominions they may be resident. They shall be exempted from all compulsory military service whatsoever, whether by sea or land, and from all forced loans, or military exactions or requisitions; neither shall they be compelled to pay any ordinary taxes, under any pretext whatsoever, greater than those that are paid by native subjects or citizens.

Article X

It shall be free for each of the two contracting parties to appoint consuls for the protection of trade, to reside in the dominions and territories of the other party; but before any consul shall act as such, he shall, in the usual form, be approved and admitted by the government to which he is sent, and either of the contracting parties may except from the residence of consuls such particular places as either of them may judge fit to be so excepted.

Article XI

For the better security of commerce between the subjects of his Britannic Majesty and the inhabitants of the United Provinces of Rio de la Plata, it is agreed, that if at any time any interruption of friendly commercial intercourse, or any rupture, should unfortunately take place between the two contracting parties; the subjects or citizens of either of the two
contracting parties residing in the dominions of the other shall have the
privilege of remaining and continuing trade therein, without any manner of
interruption, so long as they behave peaceably, and commit no offense against
the laws; and their effects and property whether intrusted to individuals or
to the state, shall not be liable to seizure or requesartion, or to any other
demands than those which may be made upon the like effects or property belonging
to the native inhabitants of the state in which such subjects or citizens
may reside.

Article XII

The subjects of his Britannic Majesty residing in the United Provinces
of Rio de la Plata shall not be disturbed, persecuted, or annoyed on account
of their religion, but they shall have perfect liberty of conscience therein,
and to celebrate divine service either within their own private houses, or in
their own particular churches or chapels, which they shall be at liberty to
build and maintain in convenient places, approved of by the Government of the
said United Provinces. Liberty shall also be granted to bury the subjects of
his Britannic Majesty who may die in the territories of the said United Pro-
vinces, in their own burial places, which, in the same manner, they may freely
establish and maintain. In the like manner, the citizens of the said United
Provinces shall enjoy, within all the dominions of his Britannic Majesty, a
perfect and unrestrained liberty of conscience, and of exercising their reli-
gion, publicly or privately, within their own dwelling houses, or in the
chapels and places of worship appointed for their purpose, agreeably to the
system of toleration established in the dominions of his said Majesty.
Article XIII

It shall be free for the subjects of his Britannic Majesty residing in the United Provinces of Rio de la Plata to dispose of their property, of every description by will or testament, as they may judge fit; and in the event of any British subject dying without such will or testament in the territories of the said United Provinces, the British consul-general, or in his absence, his representative, shall have the right to nominate curators to take charge of the property of the deceased, for the benefit of his lawful heirs and creditors, without interference, giving convenient notice thereof to the authorities of the country; and reciprocally.

Article XIV

His Britannic Majesty being extremely desirous of totally abolishing the slave trade, the United Provinces of Rio de la Plata engages to cooperate with his Britannic Majesty for the completion of so beneficent a work, and to prohibit all persons inhabiting within the said United Provinces, or subject to their jurisdiction, in the most effectual manner, and by the most solemn laws, from taking any share in such trade.
APPROVAL SHEET

The thesis submitted by Leslie B. Rout, Jr. has been read and approved by a board of three members of the Department of History.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated, and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content, form, and mechanical accuracy.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts.

May 1940

Date

Signature of Adviser