

## GOVERNMENT NOTIFICATION.—No. 309.

The following Circular Despatch, accompanying a copy of a Parliamentary Paper containing the Convention between the Governments of Great Britain and Spain respecting the commercial relations of the two countries, is published for general information.

By Command,

FREDERICK STEWART,  
*Acting Colonial Secretary.*

Colonial Secretary's Office, Hongkong, 14th August, 1886.

CIRCULAR (2).

DOWNING STREET,  
10th June, 1886.

SIR,—I have the honour to transmit to you, for information and publication in the Colony under your Government, a copy of a Parliamentary Paper containing the Convention between the Governments of Great Britain and Spain respecting the commercial relations of the two countries, signed at Madrid on the 26th of April last.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

GRANVILLE.

*The Officer Administering the Government of*

HONGKONG.

Convention between the Governments of Great Britain and Spain respecting the Commercial Relations of the two Countries.

*Signed at Madrid, April 26, 1886.*

THE Government of Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and the Government of Her Majesty the Queen-Regent of Spain, being desirous of facilitating the commercial relations of their respective countries, have named as their Representatives for that purpose:

The Government of Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Sir F. Clare Ford, Her Britannic Majesty's Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary at Madrid, &c., &c.;

The Government of Her Majesty the Queen-Regent of Spain, his Excellency Señor Don Segismundo Moret y Prendergast, Minister of State, &c., &c.;

Who, being duly authorized by their respective Governments, have agreed upon the following Articles:—

## ARTICLE I.

The Government of Her Majesty the Queen-Regent of Spain will grant to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and to Her Britannic Majesty's Colonies and foreign possessions, most-favoured-nation treatment in all that concerns commerce, navigation, and Consular rights and privileges in Spain, and in the Spanish Colonies and foreign possessions, co-extensive in amount of benefit with that accorded to France and Germany under the Treaties of the 6th February, 1882, and the 12th July, 1883.

The provisions of this Convention shall come into operation on the 1st July next, unless by mutual consent any other date may be fixed, and on condition that on that date the alcoholic scale, according to which duties are levied on Spanish wines on their introduction into the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, is modified in accordance with the terms of the following Article.

## ARTICLE II.

The Government of Her Britannic Majesty will continue to grant to Spain, her Colonies and foreign possessions, most-favoured-nation treatment in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and in Her Britannic Majesty's Colonies and foreign possessions, in all that concerns commerce, navigation, and Consular rights and privileges.

They will, in addition, apply to Parliament for the necessary authority to provide that the limit of the lower half of the alcoholic scale shall extend up to but not exceed 30 degrees of proof spirit.

## ARTICLE III.

The present Convention has been drawn up subject to the sanction of the Legislatures of United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and of Spain respectively. When approved, it shall remain in force until the 30th June, 1892, and in case neither of the High Contracting Parties shall have notified, twelve months before the said date, the intention of terminating it, the present Convention shall remain binding until the expiration of one year from the day on which either of the two High Contracting Parties shall have denounced it.

Done in duplicate at Madrid, this 26th day of April, 1886.

(L.S.) F. CLARE FORD.

*Sir Clare Ford to Señor Moret.*

M. le Ministre,

*Madrid, April 26, 1886.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that I have received the authorization of the Earl of Rosebery, Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, to sign with your Excellency the Convention which we had agreed to draw up for facilitating the commercial relations between Great Britain and Spain, and a copy of which I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Excellency.

I shall feel obliged if your Excellency will name a day when I can proceed to the Ministry of State in order to sign the Convention in question.

Before doing so, however, I have been instructed to place on record the following points, on which we are also agreed, but which it has not been thought necessary to insert in the body of the instrument which I propose to sign with your Excellency.

The first point refers to wines in bottle, which it is understood may be excluded at the option of Her Majesty's Government, from the stipulations of Article II of the Convention.

The second point refers to a possible future division of the lower half of the alcoholic scale. It is understood that nothing in the Convention shall preclude Her Majesty's Government from dividing, at some future time it shall be found desirable to do so, the present lower half of the alcoholic scale at a point not above 15 degrees, and treating wines below that point differently from wines above it.

It is further agreed that it shall be open to any British Colony to withdraw from the present Convention on notice to this effect being given by Her Majesty's Minister at Madrid to the Spanish Minister for Foreign Affairs within a year after the date of its signature.

The agreement on the part of the Government of Her Majesty the Queen-Regent of Spain on the above points shall be deemed to be recorded by the reply which I have the honour to solicit your Excellency to be so good as address to me in a note on the subject.

I avail, &c.

(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

*Señor Moret to Sir Clare Ford.*

Excellency,

*Ministry of State, the Palace, April 26, 1886.*

IN acknowledging the receipt of your note of to-day, I have the honour to state that I agree with its contents, as, also, with the draft of Convention which it incloses.

The Convention and the note faithfully represent the agreement to which we have happily come, being the result of the discussion which was entered into since your arrival at this Court, with a view to facilitate the commercial relations between Great Britain and Spain.

It is my duty to inform your Excellency that the Spanish Government agree with the three points contained in your note, and consider that Her Britannic Majesty's Government are authorized to exclude from the reduction which is to be made in the alcoholic scale the wines which arrive in bottle into the United Kingdom.

They agree, also, that the Convention which we are about to sign will not hinder Her Britannic Majesty's Government from dividing into two parts the lower half of the alcoholic scale, that is to say that part which terminates at 30 degrees, in such a way that the wines below 15 degrees may be treated differently from those above it.

With regard to Her Britannic Majesty's Colonies, it is understood that if, within a year after the date of this Convention, and reckoned from the day on which it is signed, any of the said Colonies declare their intention to withdraw from the present Convention, the said Colony will be excluded from the stipulations contained therein.

I trust that this reply will meet the wishes which were expressed in the concluding portion of your Excellency's note, and that, therefore, we may sign the Convention, a translation of which I enclose that you may examine it and compare it with the English text.

In concluding my reply to the note which your Excellency transmitted to me to-day, and considering as satisfactorily terminated for both countries the negotiations which have occupied your Excellency since the commencement of your mission, I fulfil a pleasing duty in conveying to your Excellency the expression of my most sincere gratitude for the frankness and loyalty with which you have conducted these negotiations, and for the sincere interest with which, acting within the instructions you had received from your Government, you have treated the representations which, in the name of Spain, I have had the honour to make to you, thanks to which the commercial relations between Spain and England will henceforth rest on a solid and just basis, thus strengthening, in a firm and lasting manner, the friendship which from of old exists between the two nations.

I avail, &c.

(Signed) S. MORET.

*Sir Clare Ford to Señor Moret.*

*Madrid, May 9, 1886.*

M. le Ministre,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that on the 26th ultimo I transmitted to the Earl of Rosebery a copy of the Convention which we had signed in duplicate on that day, for facilitating the commercial relations between Great Britain and Spain.

Her Majesty's Government had not previously seen the whole of the Spanish rendering of the English text of that Convention, and now that they have done so they have called my attention to one case in it which occurs at the end of Article II. The English text runs as follows:—

"They will, in addition, apply to Parliament for the necessary authority to provide that the limit of the lower half of the alcoholic scale shall extend up to, but not exceed, 30 degrees of proof spirit."

The Spanish translation is as follows:—

"Pedirá además al Parlamento la autorización necesaria para extender el límite inferior de la escala alcohólica de los vinos desde los 26 á los 30 grados inclusive."

Her Majesty's Government consider that the Spanish translation with regard to the portion of the Convention above quoted is not a correct version of the English, and I have been instructed by the Earl of Rosebery to inquire of your Excellency whether the Spanish Government understand the Spanish text to convey precisely the same meaning as the English expression, "shall extend up to but not exceed 30 degrees."

I shall feel obliged to your Excellency if you would kindly inform me whether that is so, and if you would be so good as to record the fact, and assure me that the Spanish words used in translating the English text do not cover the fractions of a degree between 30 and 31 degrees of the alcoholic scale.

I have, &c.

(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

*Señor Moret to Sir Clare Ford.*

*Ministry of State, the Palace, May 10, 1886.*

Excellency,

I HAVE the honour to state to your Excellency, in reply to your note of yesterday, that there is no difference whatever between the sense of the Spanish translation of the last paragraph of the II<sup>nd</sup> Article of the Convention of the 26th April and the English text.

The literal translation of the words which your Excellency mentions would be this:—

"Que el límite inferior de la escala alcohólica se extienda hasta, pero sin exceder, los 30 grados de fuerza alcohólica."

Considering that the literal rendering of those words did not, in my judgment, read well in Spanish, I had the honour to propose to your Excellency the present translation, which is as follows:—

"El límite inferior de la escala alcohólica de los vinos desde los 26 hasta los 30 grados inclusive,"

which words do not appear to your Excellency to clearly convey the idea. In order, therefore, to fully dispel the doubts which appear to have arisen in the British Chancery, it is enough for me to ratify the meaning of the words above referred to, and I repeat that they have the same as those of the British text, and that the Spanish Government consider that the alcoholic scale mentioned in the II<sup>nd</sup> Article will extend to but is not to exceed 30 degrees.

I avail, &c.

(Signed) S. MORET.