

Uncle Sam's Slaves and Where They Come From

(Copyrighted, 1900, by Frank G. Carpenter.)
 DAVAO, Island of Mindanao, April 26, 1900.—(Special Correspondence of The Bee.)—I was offered four slaves here today for fifty gold dollars. They were owned by a woman who claims she is a Christian and not by one of the Mohammedan Moros. I went into the woman's house and chatted with her for some time about the human flesh on sale and later on persuaded her to bring the slaves out in the yard that I might make a photograph of them. Three of them were boys, ranging in age from

the men captives and to make slaves of the women and children. In four tribes which inhabit the mountains near here slaves are said to be used for human sacrifices. These tribes are the Bagobas, Aetas, Guingnas and Tagacilas, who live on or near the slopes of Mount Apo. I have seen much of the Bagobas and the Guingnas in Davao and will describe them more fully hereafter. The Chinese merchants who do the most of the business of the smaller towns of the Philippines usually own one or more women



TWO NEGRITO SLAVES.

16 to 6. The other was a girl of 12, the age at which girls are sometimes married down here on the edge of the equator. The smallest boy had nothing on but a shirt, which barely reached to his waist, and the other two wore only coarse pantaloons extending from the waist to the knees. The girl was half naked, her only garment being a wide strip of dirty cotton cloth wrapped about her waist and fastened there in a knot. I had a photograph made with myself standing beside her and she reached just to my shoulder. As I stood thus the slave owner evidently thought I wanted the girl and said "Mucho bueno," or very good, and told me that if I bought only her she would have to charge me more in proportion than she asked for the job lot. She said the little girl should be worth at least \$15, and seemed surprised when I did not jump at the bargain. I asked her where the slaves came from. She replied that they had been brought in from the mountains, having been captured by one of the savage tribes in a recent war with its neighbors. She said they were Aetas, or Mindanao Negritos, and as I looked at their black skins, thick noses and sensuous eyes I could see traces of African blood. I talked with the slaves, through an interpreter, but could not get any evidence of their having been ill-used, but they seemed indifferent as to whether they were to be sold or not, and evidently had no idea that they could possibly object. Had I bought them I am told I would have had, according to the custom which prevails in the country about here, power of life and death over them, and that I could have killed them without risk of a criminal investigation.

A Land of Slaves.
 Slavery is common among the people of Mindanao and the Sulu archipelago, and I am led to believe that there is a form of debt slavery in some of the islands farther north. Here in Mindanao there are not only debt slaves, but slaves by birth and by conquest. I have been told at every place I have stopped that slavery is common and that women especially are bought and sold. All of the Moro dattos have numerous slaves and the richer of their subjects have as many as they can support.

The Visayans of this island, at least, have slaves, although it is nominally against the Spanish law. Still human beings are bought and sold, and even the officials have been accustomed to own them. I met this afternoon the ex-president of the town of Davao. He is a rich Visayan, who has a large farm not far from here. He owns a number of slaves and keeps several in his family for servants. I have been told that the Christians seldom sell slaves, although they buy them, and that it is common for a man to purchase children to bring them up for work about the house. Nearly all of the savages, of whom there are many, have their slaves captured in war. It is not an uncommon thing to kill

whom they have bought. They do not marry them, but treat them well as wives, taking good care of their children.

Slavery Among the Moros.
 The chief slave owners, however, are the Moros. They have the right to slaves by their religion and have held them for centuries. In the past they have carried on a great business in kidnaping men, women and children and taking them to Borneo and elsewhere for sale. There are white men still living who have been Moro slaves, having been captured by the Moros in their wars with the Spaniards. According to the Moro laws the father has the right to sell his children. He can sell his wife and if he gets into debt he sells himself to pay it. The debts of fathers entail the slavery of the children, who agree to work for their creditors until the debt is paid.

Dean Worcester, one of the commissioners sent by the president to examine into the Philippines, quotes the prices of Moro slaves in the island of Tawi Tawi at fifteen bushels of rice, and states that he was offered a girl of 15 for \$3. My investigations are that these prices are too low. Some of the slaves I see here are estimated as high as \$20 in gold and \$10 is thought to be very little for a grown-up woman.

Captain Hagadorn told me that he bought a slave girl for twenty Mexican dollars and gave her her freedom. It was a case of sentiment on the part of the captain. It is said that "all the world loves a lover," and this is especially so when the lover is of the feminine gender. This slave girl was in love with a young man of the village, but the man was poor and as her master was needing money he was about to sell

the girl to a hated rival, an old Moro. The girl said she would rather die than serve him. Captain Hagadorn's heart was touched. He bought her and made her free, and she has since married the lover of her choice.

Died for Love.

The idea that love does not exist among the slaves of the Moros is a mistake. Cupid does not restrict his darts to any race, color or condition of servitude, and even the sultan of Sulu is powerless to restrain him. The sultan has, you know, the right of life and death over all his subjects. They are really his slaves. He commands them and they obey. He has the right to seize any of the women and he has a goodly number of slave girls in his harem. Not long ago a female slave connected with his household fell in love with one of his warriors. She was neither wife nor concubine, but merely a servant of the harem, and the warrior asked his majesty that she be given him as a wife. The sultan refused and the two ran away and got married. They were captured and brought back, and the sultan then said that the man must die. The girl thereupon threw herself at the feet of the sultan and begged that she be allowed to die with her lover. The sultan consented and the same campman sliced off the two heads.

According to our treaty, as I understand it, any slave in the islands ruled by the sultan of Sulu can be freed upon payment of \$20 by him to his master. I doubt if this covers the island of Mindanao, which is now a part of our country, and, therefore, subject to the thirteenth amendment of the constitution, which provides that slavery shall not exist in any place subject to the jurisdiction of the United States.

Laws Regulating Slavery.

At present the Spanish laws are in force, and they will continue so until congress adopts others. It was more than 300 years ago that Spain decreed that slavery should be abolished in the Philippines. King Philip II then made a decree that all slaves over

(Continued on Eighth Page.)



FOUR SLAVES OFFERED TO FRANK G. CARPENTER FOR FIFTY GOLD DOLLARS.

THE OFFICIAL ORDER.

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No. 55

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