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# Guiana Question.

1887

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## LETTER

FROM

FRANCISCO A. DE SILVA,

*Consul General,*

NEW YORK CITY,

TO

GEO. W. GIBBONS, Esq.

*Pres. of the American Annexation League.*

*Mr.*

*Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores,  
Fco. Ant. Silva*

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*Canceros*

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## LETTER FROM MR. SILVA TO MR. GIBBONS.

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### **Diplomatic History of the Guiana Question.**

NEW YORK, October 17th, 1887.

FRANCISCO A. DE SILVA, Consul General in this city, has the honor of presenting his compliments to the Hon. Mr. GEO. W. GIBBONS, President of the Monroe Doctrine League, and of forwarding him, at the request of Gen. GUZMAN BLANCO, ex-President of Venezuela and her Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary at Paris and other capitals of Europe, a copy of the two pamphlets published in English by the government of the Republic, regarding the boundaries of the British and Venezuelan Guianas.

The undersigned, in virtue of the interest and transcendence which said matter has for his country at the present moment, in complying, as he does to-day, with the above-mentioned request, takes the liberty of calling the attention of the Hon. Mr. GIBBONS regarding what follows.

Not being well informed, or not having studied the subject, many here, including the *New York Times*, as it has stated in an article of the 24th or 26th ult., believes the Guiana affair to be an old question, prior to the Monroe Doctrine, and that its application to the case is obscure.

Notwithstanding this, *The New York Herald*, *The Sun*, *The Daily Graphic* of this city, and *The American* of Baltimore have

discussed this question favorable to Venezuela and referring to the Monroe Doctrine.

As is known and will be seen in the two mentioned pamphlets, Venezuela separated in 1830 from the Republic called Colombia, which comprised, besides the above, New Granada and Equador; it was in 1842 that the first question, that is to say, regarding that part of the Essequibo River which must belong to Venezuela and the part belonging to Great Britain, was first treated; and it was Mr. FORTIQUE, E. E. and M. P. from Venezuela to London, who initiated the subject with Lord ABERDEEN, then Minister of State to H. B. M. Venezuela understood at that time, and holds to-day, that the Essequibo alone was referred to.

The new advances of the English to the Pomaron, reaching as far as Barima Point and the Amacuro, commenced in 1884, without the knowledge of Venezuela, constituted the second or a new question. Thus, both are comparatively new.

As is known, Spain preceded all nations in the discovery, colonization and the dominion of South America, and consequently, of Guiana, which was discovered by VICENTE YANES PINZON, a Spanish navigator.

The Spaniards settled in said region early in the sixteenth century, before any other European nations, among whom the Dutch, who settled there much later, did not succeed in obtaining a footing on the Essequibo until 1602.

Spain, in recognizing the independence of Holland in 1648 by the Munster Treaty, granted to the latter the colonies of Saint Eustace, Curacao, Essequibo, Demerara, Berbice and Surinam.

The Dutch advanced towards the Pomaron several times, but were driven out by the Spaniards, the legitimate owners of this river.

Of these mentioned colonies granted by Spain to Holland, the latter granted to Great Britain, by the London Treaty of 1814, those of Essequibo, Demerara and Berbice. Hence the English have no other title in Guiana than that transferred to them by Holland.

In 1810, before the independence of Venezuela, the Essequibo was the boundary between Spanish and Dutch Guiana.

Venezuela becoming independent, she inherited Spanish Guiana from Spain.

In 1822, Colombia, constituted since 1819, and comprising Venezuela, New Granada and Equador, claimed the Essequibo as its boundary.

In 1836, Sir ROBERT KER PORTER, English Minister, urged by the merchants of Ciudad Bolivar, requested the Venezuelan Government to erect a lighthouse at Barima Point, recognizing thus the sovereignty of Venezuela over that place.

In 1840, SCHOMBURGK, a German traveler and engineer, visited Guiana, and, guided by nature, (he says), and not by International right, put up posts and other signs of British dominion, without authority to do so.

In December of this same year, Lord ABERDEEN, owing to the alarm of Venezuela, answered Mr. FORTIQUE, her E. E. and M. P., that the marks placed by Mr. SCHOMBURGK at some points of the country which he had surveyed, were simply a preliminary step subject to future discussion between the two governments, and not, as the Government of Venezuela seemed to fear, *with the intention of indicating dominion of empire on the part of Great Britain.*

In 1842, Lord ABERDEEN ordered the removal of said marks, with the object of putting an end to the misunderstanding existing in Venezuela in regard to Mr. SCHOMBURGK's survey, and in compliance with the new representations of Mr. FORTIQUE.

Attention must here be called to the fact that Venezuela never understood that the dominion of the places situated on this side of the mouth of the Pomaron was disputed, but only that of the places lying between that river and the Essequibo.

In 1844, Lord ABERDEEN proposed the Moroco River as boundary, thus, as he states, leaving to Venezuela the free ownership of the Orinoco. The Republic did not accept this line, which deprived her of the territory lying between the Essequibo and Moroco Rivers, and to which the English could present no title whatsoever.

In 1850, Great Britain and Venezuela agreed, by exchange of notes with Mr. WILSON, English Minister, at his own request, and in pursuance of the definite instructions of his Government, not to occupy any of the mentioned territory. He next declared

that Great Britain would not occupy nor encroach upon the territory in dispute, neither would she order such occupation or encroachment, nor sanction it on the part of her authorities; and he requested and obtained a similar declaration from Venezuela.

In 1876, Venezuela, never losing sight of the question, urged a settlement.

In 1881, Lord GRANVILLE presented a new demarcation, which commenced at a place on the sea coast at a longitude of 29 miles to the east of the right shore of River Barima, adding that in this manner he satisfied *the reasonable pretensions and claims of Venezuela and conceded to her the so-called Dardanelles of the Orinoco, and the complete dominion of its mouths.*

The Republic did not accept this line either, which for known reasons is still more damaging to her than that proposed by Lord ABERDEEN.

In 1883, the British Government joined together the three questions—of boundaries, the additional duty of 30 per cent. on merchandises coming from the Antilles, and the pecuniary claims—and urged an amicable and simultaneous settlement of the same. In consequence of this, Gen. GUZMAN BLANCO proceeded to London with full power in his character of E. E. and M. P., to settle these questions, and earnestly devoted himself to the same.

Gen. GUZMAN BLANCO obtained of H. M.'s Government a written promise to submit all disputes arising between the two countries to arbitration, the boundary question included. But before the convention was signed, a change of ministry took place. Lord SALISBURY, Lord GRANVILLE's successor, while fulfilling all the promises made by his predecessor to other States, refused to keep the one made to Venezuela.

In regard to this arbitrary and indefensible act of Lord GRANVILLE's successor, be it observed what Sir ROBERT PEEL answered Lord PALMERSTON—apropos of the good faith of nations in keeping their treaties—at the discussion of the Quadruple Alliance Treaty, of August 18th, 1834: “She (the Queen of Spain) had been recognized, no matter by what ministry, because the first principle of a nation—principle inculcated by the honor and the interests of the country—is, that the obligations of any ministry be respected by its successor, though of an opposite party.”

In 1886, Lord ROSEBURY presented a frontier, which commenced west of the Waini, and was considered unacceptable for several reasons, one of them being that it was accompanied by a demand for the free navigation of the Orinoco.

While negotiations were being carried on in Europe, several agents of the Demerara Government invaded Venezuelan Guiana as late as in 1884, reached once more the Amacuro and Barima Point, and put up marks and posted notices, declaring these places to be British territory.

The remonstrances of Venezuela have not been regarded. It seems, on the contrary, that they have been taken as a pretext for the aggravation of the offences. As it is seen, Great Britain has violated Venezuelan territory, entering the same through prohibited places; by appointing constables; by establishing government offices over which flies the English flag; by carrying away, trying and punishing a Venezuelan officer; by sending thither, accompanied by an armed police force, a magistrate, who has proclaimed these places to be English; by prohibiting commerce; and by having a revenue cutter to cruise in the space which lies between the Amacuro and Barima Rivers.

The last settlement proposed by Venezuela to the British Government, is, that the English should evacuate all the territory which they have usurped, namely, all the territory extending from the mouths of the Orinoco to the Pomaron River; leaving the question of the dominion of the territory extending from this last river to the Essequibo to be settled by arbitration.

Great Britain not having accepted this proposal, the Government of Venezuela, represented by Gen. GUZMAN BLANCO, President, has broken its relations with Great Britain, protesting before the civilized world against the violent usurpation of a great portion of the territory of the Republic, consummated by Great Britain, in spite of International right, and of the treaty of 1850, which obliged her not to occupy the Pomaron, Moroco, Waini and Amacuro Rivers, nor Barima Point, as she has done since 1884.

What has been stated, which is authentic and recent history, controverts the assertion of *The New York Times*, that the Guiana question is an old one, of three generations, and therefore that the application of the Monroe Doctrine to its case is obscure.



If the author of the article in the *Times* is learned in the science expounded by JOHN STUART MILL, he will agree with the undersigned that the Monroe Doctrine is applicable to Venezuela's case.

### Mr. Schomburgk's Theory.

The diplomatic history of the Guiana question having been disposed of, let us examine Mr. SCHOMBURGK's claim.

Great Britain has taken possession of the mouth of the Orinoco River by force, which, be it well understood, is the key to all South America, as she knows, SCHOMBURGK having told her, that by placing a cannon at Barima Point, the control of the Orinoco will be secured, and with this that of the Amazonas and Plata rivers—commanding an area of more than 18,000,000 of square kilometers, or almost double the territory of the United States.

But the strategical importance of the Orinoco, before it was seen by SCHOMBURGK in 1845, was known to BOLIVAR in 1816, as may be seen in what has been called his "Dream of Casacoima."

It was the year 1816. The Spaniards had vanquished all Venezuela. Margarita Island alone fought for its independence and liberty. BOLIVAR, defeated and a fugitive, found himself with a few companions near Hayti. One night he left his hammock, and, calling to his companions, who thought him crazy, said: "Hear me, friends and countrymen. I have been thinking that with the aid which the President of Hayti will give me, I will go to the Island of Margarita, where liberty's friends yet struggle for their independence like heroes. From Margarita, which must be called 'The New Sparta,' I will go to Angostura, the Queen of the Orinoco, and once in possession of that river, I will free all South America. Yes, friends and companions, I have dreamed that before long we will hoist the Iris, Venezuela's colors, on the summit of the Cuzco or Potosí."

In 1824 the cannon of the battle of Ayacucho, in Peru, resounding throughout all South America, from the Aconcagua to the Avila, announced to the astonished world that the dream of the hero had been accomplished—South America was free.

As a reason or title for this usurpation, Great Britain has not had in view International right, nor treaties, nor geography, nor

history, but solely the opinion of the German traveller, SCHOMBURGK.

“According to Mr. SCHOMBURGK’S theory or opinion, no country which is bounded by great rivers is secure,” as Mr. MICHELENA Y ROJAS, a universal traveler, says in his work treating this subject, published at Brussels in 1867.

Let us see what an English authority says about English Guiana limits—Chambers’s Encyclopædia, last revised edition, Vol. V., 1886 :

“The limits of the British possessions have never been accurately determined. If we adopt the view of Sir ROBERT SCHOMBURGK, and assume the natural indications to be the proper guide to the geographical boundaries, we shall include all the regions drained by the waters falling into the River Essequibo ; and taking the River Corentyn as the acknowledged line of demarcation between British and Dutch Guiana, we arrive at an area of 76,000 square miles, a territory much larger than England and Wales. If, on the other hand, the claims of the Venezuelan and Brazilian Governments respectively are to be admitted, the British portion will be reduced to something above 12,000 miles, and become the smallest of the European colonies in this region.”

The same adds :

“When the Dutch began to establish themselves on the banks of the Pomaron and other rivers, they were speedily driven out by the Spaniards, nor was it until 1602 that they succeeded in obtaining a footing on the River Essequibo.”

The above quotations clearly show what Venezuela claims, to wit: that the territory occupied by England since 1884 was, to say the least, in dispute between this nation and Venezuela, and also that if the Dutch advanced towards the Pomaron they were speedily driven out by the Spaniards, as Venezuela has affirmed.

Let it be also observed that the last quotation copied strengthens Venezuela’s argument, that, though the Dutch invaded the Pomaron, they were driven out by the Spaniards.

And be it well understood that we refer to an English publication.

Are the following views of SCHOMBURGK reasonable or logical?

“That all regions drained by the waters falling into the Essequibo are English: views or reasonings, adopted by England in

order to appropriate all the lands from the Essequibo to the Amacuro and Point Barima?"

Does this conform to the theory of her illustrious son, STUART MILL, that is to say, to the proof of reasoning? Did England find that proof in the thinking machine, invented by her, as says her no less illustrious son, HERBERT SPENCER? Or has her calculating machine, also invented by her, according to the same SPENCER, facilitated it to her?

Those who understand England well, believe that the proof of SCHOMBURGK'S reasoning was found in the latter.

Or may not SCHOMBURGK have made a mistake, and taken the mouth of the Orinoco to be that of the Essequibo? This seems to have been the case, if we only take a glance at the map of the country; or he may have thought that the Essequibo had two mouths—its own proper one, and that of the Orinoco.

SCHOMBURGK says he followed the limits marked out by nature. Has he done so? The limits marked by nature are the centres of rivers, summits of mountains, etc. SCHOMBURGK has not only not done this, but he has actually crossed all rivers he met on his course until he struck the Amacuro, a river of very short length, but which served his purpose of striking the mouth of the Orinoco.

#### **Mr. Watt's Theory.**

And what may be the theory or reasoning of Mr. WATT, M. P., who, a short time ago in a conference, asked the English government to appoint a commission of gentlemen to determine the Guiana limits and include in them the mines of the Yuruari? SCHOMBURGK, to attain his object, crosses many rivers, but Mr. WATT, to attain his object (gold), follows the Cuyuni and reaches the Yuruari, which he follows to the Caratal mines.

#### **Mr. Bluntschli's Theory.**

It is worthy of being observed here that, although International law speaks sometimes of nature in reference to boundaries, it is the former that fixes the rules in the matter.

One of these rules is: "When a river forms a boundary and said river has not arrived to be the exclusive property of one of

the rival states, in case of doubt, the boundary line takes the centre of the river."

The German "Thalwelg" of navigable rivers is in case of doubt considered as its middle or centre. (BLUNTSCHLI.)

### **Light on the Question.**

As some think, who have treated this subject lightly, that there is some obscurity in its origin, that is to say, in the Treaty of Munster of 1648, on account of the limits not being accurately fixed, the first article of the Extradition Treaty of 1791 throws enough light to show that the Essequibo is not English but Venezuelan, at least, as boundary:

"ART. I. The reciprocal restitution of the fugitives, black or white, between all the Spanish possessions in America and the Dutch colonies is established, particularly between those in which the complaints of desertion have been the most frequent, to wit: between Porto Rico and Saint Eustace, Coro and Curacao, the Spanish settlements on the Orinoco and Essequibo rivers, Demerara, Berbice, and Surinam." (CALVO.)

This goes to prove that the conjunction "and" separates the Spanish from the Dutch colonies—that is to say, that Porto Rico is Spanish and Saint Eustace Dutch, that Coro is Spanish and Curacao Dutch, that the settlements on the Orinoco and Essequibo rivers are Spanish and that Demerara, Berbice, and Surinam are Dutch.

The article copied and the last observation in respect to the conjunction "and," the general use of which is to unite, and in this case to divide or to separate, being determined by the preposition "between," shows this, that the Colony of Essequibo belonged to Spain in 1791, and as Venezuela inherited it from the latter by the Treaty of Peace and Recognition of 1845, belongs to the former to-day, to say the least, as limit. On this account old Colombia claimed it as hers in 1822 and Venezuela from 1842.

### **Monroe Doctrine.**

If we penetrate the spirit of WASHINGTON'S advices to his compatriots—not to interfere in Europe—based on this religious maxim: "Do not do unto others as you do not wish to be done by," it will be seen that from these maxims start the Monroe

Doctrine, as important to America as for Europe, since by it the latter has her actual possessions in America guaranteed

Said doctrine is MONROE'S as well as JOHN Q. ADAMS'.

MONROE, aided by the latter in the time known as the era of good feelings, and with the boldness characteristic of him, only formulated and proclaimed it frankly and loyally in his celebrated Message of December 2, 1823, brought about by the project of the Sacred Allegiance against Spanish Independent America.

This doctrine is reduced to this: That the United States, respecting the acquisitions of Europe in America prior to 1823, will regard as a peril to its future peace and security, and as a hostile measure against it, all European intervention leading in any way to changing the form of government of free America—all new acquisition of territory—and the embarrassment of the destiny of the new republics. (WHEATON.)

By it, the President, JOHN Q. ADAMS, opposed, in 1828, the desire of Colombia and Mexico, allied, to invade or free the Island of Cuba. See note of Mr. HENRY CLAY, his Minister of State, to the representative of the United States at the Panama Congress, and penetrate its spirit. Although Mr. CLAY does not mention said Doctrine, he refers to it tacitly. Believing that Cuba, on becoming independent, without the elements to sustain its independence, could give occasion to the intervention of any European power, being as it is a coveted position, Mr. CLAY points out clearly the risk that the United States runs in case of war.

By it, President POLK, advised by his Minister BUCHANAN, in his first message in 1845, opposed Great Britain in her desire to put a footing in California, then a Mexican province.

By it, two years later, when the war of the United States and Mexico was finished, the same POLK, newly instigated by Mr. BUCHANAN, gave all his attention to prevent England from making new acquisition of territory in Central America, with the Protectorate of the Mosquito Indian Kingdom.

By it, the famous Mr. LINCOLN, inspired and urged by the able and foreseeing Mr. SEWARD, his Minister of State, opposed the change of form of government made in Mexico by NAPOLEON III., then the most powerful sovereign of Europe—until he drove him from that part of America.

And by it, it is generally believed, that the honest Mr. CLEVELAND, counselled by the prudent and learned Mr. BAYARD, should oppose Great Britain in wresting from Venezuela a great part of her territory, thus violating the treaty of 1850, by which she promised not to occupy any of the territory disputed from 1842.

Would the Mexican Province of California in 1845, or the kingdom of the Mosquito Indians in 1847, be of more importance for the security of the United States than the Orinoco, the key to all South America?

What reason had Mr. SEWARD for driving NAPOLEON III. from Mexico? The change of form of Government? Well, in the present case of Venezuela and Great Britain, Mr. BAYARD has the same reason for driving the English from the Orinoco and Punta Barima as Mr. SEWARD, that is, the change of form of government; because England, in taking possession of Venezuelan Guiana, has imposed her monarchical form of government on its inhabitants; and besides, that of the acquisition of new territory, which two facts constitute the two principal precepts of the Monroe Doctrine.

### **Continental System, or American Equilibrium.**

“Venezuela, owing to her possessing the Orinoco, stands before the world as the understood depository of the avenues to nearly all of South America.

Even where Venezuela is unknown, the Orinoco is well known.

Many of the Republics, our continental sisters, should rest in the confidence inspired by that nation in whose charge Providence has placed entrances, through which, if allowed to remain unprotected, they may be badly hurt, in spite of distance.

This is more than a question of territorial integrity.

The security of the ‘mouths of the Orinoco’ to America may be claimed as a continental right—Venezuela is only the keeper of this intangible and religious trust, of which she should always be prepared and ready to render a good account.

The danger to the Orinoco will not come from the Exterior, that is to say, from a great distance, because the peril would become known by the military and naval preparations made for it. The danger will come from the Interior, although prepared by the Exterior. Owing to the great distance and to the lack of population of Guiana, the news of its invasion would reach the capital—Caracas—after it had taken place.”

So said a learned Venezuelan in 1850, when charged by the government of Venezuela to make an excursion in Venezuelan Guiana. Who would have told him, that, thirty-four years later, in 1884, his prophetic fears of the invasion of Venezuelan Guiana would be fulfilled!

The same as the great European powers, in order to provide for their security and their political and commercial interests, have established what has been called "The European Equilibrium," which has sometimes been broken by themselves, but still exists, and in accordance with which all their affairs are settled without the intervention of America; so should the principal states of this continent, with the same object and to the same end, establish "The American Equilibrium," or, to be more clear, they should systematize their Public and International Right, with the same right and motives as Europe.

Even more, it is the duty of the United States to secure for the future her political existence, and it is also necessary for her that she may secure the natural fields which her commercial activity demands.

The basis of this "American Equilibrium," or Continental political system, should be the Monroe Doctrine, which respects all the acquisitions of Europe in America before 1823, but is opposed to all new acquisitions of territory or change of form of government. And this is the just right of this Doctrine, as the republican form of government is unsympathetic to Europe, which, composed of old nations, insists in preserving the monarchy and fears the American influence.

Let the Powers of the "Saint Alliance" (the cause of this Doctrine) and the recognition of the belligerence of the South by France and England in the war of secession, say it. This recognition had no other object than to contribute to the destruction of the great American Republic.

The same Queen who has just greeted the centenary of the American Constitution, sanctioned, with the said recognition, the destruction of this great nation, the hope of all the friends of freedom, no matter from what country, and the refuge of all the earth's oppressed.

Let all North Americans think of this, and let them not confide in their actual power and prosperity, believing that the future

has no perils for them. Let them realize that Canada is very near, and that already England has more territory in America than the United States.

The object of the above is to show the United States, that they, being the most powerful nation in America, are called upon to found for once and forever the "American Equilibrium," in accord with the other new republics, and based on the wise and sacred Monroe Doctrine.

The Guiana question presents the opportunity to lay the foundation of this great political edifice.

Though Venezuela, possessing the Orinoco, holds the key to the continent, or is the depository of this great strategical treasure, in time of international war (as says Mr. LEVEL DE GODA), if England wrests it from her now, it is not to Venezuela—who perhaps has not sufficient power, though more than enough valor and heroism to defend it,—that the future American generations will come to demand an account. No, not to her, but to the United States, who does not close this entrance, through which the most powerful enemy to her form of republican institutions, and to her marvellous progress, may some day wound her.

### **Commercial Facts of Interest to America.**

Why should not the United States have reciprocal commercial treaties with the Republics of South America? Why have the Americans allowed the English to monopolize their natural markets, especially those of the Brazil, Argentine Republic and Chili, and even the Peru? Do they not know that actually an English company is trying to monopolize the richer Incas country by a contract, in spite of Chili's opposition? Do they not recollect that thus an English company took possession of the India?

Are they blinded?

Let us see how the English have monopolized all the commerce of Brazil, Argentine Republic and Chili?

Although we cannot at this moment determine the amount of Brazil's English importation and exportation, because we only know that her exterior commerce is transported by 3,307 foreign vessels, with 3,121,967 tons, and her exportation by 2,734 vessels—all English, perhaps—with 2,072,920 tons, we know that Brazil



imports from the United States only 7,000,000 of dollars and exports 50,000,000, almost all that amount being coffee.

The Argentine Republic imports from England \$35,375,000 and exports \$11,227,000.

The same Republic imports from the United States only \$7,007,000 and exports \$5,564,000.

Chili imports from England \$20,528,000 and exports \$49,528,000.

The same country imports from the United States \$4,160,000 and exports \$1,564,000.

Total importation of the two latter countries:

From England, . . . . .	\$55,903,000
From United States, . . . . .	11,167,000
Difference in favor of England,	\$44,736,000

Total exportation of the two countries:

To England, . . . . .	\$60,755,000
To United States, . . . . .	7,128,000
Difference in favor of England,	\$53,627,000

### **England's Colossal Power if She Controls the Orinoco, the Amazon and the Plate Rivers.**

Great Britain, if she does not aspire to the dominion of the Universal Political Empire, aspires to the dominion of the Commercial Empire of the World, as she knows, as one of her great thinkers has said not long since, that the Universal Empire would not belong in the future to the nation having the largest squadron, nor to the one having the largest army, but to the nation which knows how and can produce the cheapest and best, in order to be able to sell the cheapest.

Great Britain, at the head of modern science, with more steamers and vessels than the rest of the world; with almost all the money of the latter in her banks; with her great capitals, unequalled in the universe; with a footing in every important place of the world; with 310,000,000 of inhabitants; and, as a basis of her policy and greatness, her commercial and political interest, without doubt believes herself to be the only one who can accomplish this colossal scheme.

Besides, let it be observed, that she has and always has had great statesmen and thinkers who work silently not for to-day only, but also for the future.

The English take possession of the Orinoco to-day; to-morrow, with some pretext or other, of the Amazonas; and afterwards, of the Plate.

Within fifty or one hundred years, the English, whose character is essentially commercial, will enter Rio Negro through the Casiquiare, from there they will go to the Amazonas, and afterwards to the Plate; that is to say, they will go from Venezuela to New Granada, Ecuador, Brazil, Peru and Bolivia until they reach the Argentine Republic and Chili.

With this new acquisition of more than 18,000,000 square kilometers added to more than 23,000,000 which they already possess in different parts of the world, and besides, with their actual 310,000,000 inhabitants, and nearly 40,000,000 which those Spanish countries may contain, what empire will compare with it?

Does not this immense power constitute an immense colossus?

The United States has yet the time and opportunity to hold and detain it.

### **Three Great Confederations.**

The idea of three great confederations, political, international and commercial, comes to my mind at this moment.

1st. That of all Spanish America, including Brazil, Mexico and St. Domingo:

2d. That of all these countries, Spain and Portugal, with their colonies in America, Africa, Asia and Oceanica:

3d. That of all republican Spanish America, including the Empire of Brazil and the United States.

The first would have in extent more than 18,000,000 square kil., and in population nearly 40,000,000 of inhabitants.

The second would have in extent more than 24,000,000 of square kil., and more than 76,000,000 of inhabitants.

The third more than 30,000,000 square kil. in extent, and more than 100,000,000 inhabitants.

In either of these three great confederations, each State would preserve its own form of government and respective independence.

Political relations of each of the three-named confederations:

Reciprocal citizenship.

International relations:

An offensive and defensive alliance.

Commercial relations:

Financial League, based on free trade or reciprocal commerce.

A Federal Tribunal, charged by each State to decide by arbitration, and not by war, all questions between said States.

The first project is BOLIVAR'S; the second, of an illustrious Captain of the Spanish Navy; the third, of a great American statesman.

The undersigned, in his name, only calls attention to these projects, which may be realized separately by each of the races referred to.

### War Possible.

But what will be the result of our rupture with England? War? Time will tell.

In the state which this question has reached, war seems probable, unless the United States interferes, invoking and upholding vigorously the Monroe Doctrine, it being a question of new acquisition of territory and change of form of government in America by a European nation.

So *The New York Herald*, *The Sun*, *The Daily Graphic*, as well as several South American and European papers, believe.

It is well worth mentioning here what, apropos of this, *The New York Herald* has said on this subject and, more or less, *The Sun*, and what even *The Times* would say, if convinced or proved that the Guiana affair is not an old but a new one, of the present generation, and that the application of the Monroe Doctrine to it is not obscure, as it thinks.

"France (said *The Herald* in its editorial article, 'Monroe Doctrine in South America') knew twenty years ago that the Monroe Doctrine was alive, and this (Venezuela's case) is the opportunity for our diplomats abroad to let Europe know that it has lost none of its activities."

Just as with one or more diplomatic notes, without cannons or noise, Mr. SEWARD drove France from Mexico, Mr. BAYARD, with two notes, if not with one, without cannons or noise, may, perhaps, induce Great Britain to listen to the voice of reason and of right; for neither is Great Britain more powerful to-day than was France at that time, nor will Mr. BAYARD be less able than was then Mr. SEWARD.

Be this as it may, Venezuela, as the cited papers believe, is obliged, on account of her own dignity, to make war.

If the Venezuelans have no great cannons like "The Inflexible," with shots of 1700 pounds, they have steel breasts to receive the same without flinching, or they can fly to the mountains and make balls out of its stones, with which to wound their enemies, as was once done, even without mountains, in a similar case, by the so-called "New Spartans," countrymen of the undersigned, in whose country even the women and children, in time of war, on being asked "Who command you?" answer "Ourselves."

Venezuela has no boats with which to cross her rivers, which are as seas, to defend herself, but she has sons who know how to swim said rivers, and how to capture enemy's fleets even on horseback—the lances in their mouths—as did one who is buried in New York City, the hero of "El Paso del Diamante" or of "Las Queseras del Medio." As the alligators appear in countless numbers on the Apure and Orinoco rivers, so will the soil of Venezuela yield innumerable hosts of noble heroes.

On land or water, the Venezuelans will be helped in their defence by the ardent sun of their territory, which, if it does not burn, prostrates; by the fevers of their clime, which, if they do not kill, disable forever; by the denseness of their forests, where they can keep themselves; by the serpents of their soil, and even by their mosquitos, which allow no life to the stranger.

And lastly, if Fortune be against Reason and Right, in any case, the Venezuelans can blow themselves up as did Ricaute at San Mateo, or they will know how to die throwing themselves into the flames, as did their progenitors at Sagunto, for neither are the English more valiant than the Carthaginians, nor the Venezuelans less determined than the Saguntines.

Let it be recalled that Mr. SEWARD, the great American, visiting Havana some time ago, at a banquet given in his honor, said, assuming that Spain was yet a European colonial Power, "Let it be known that the Spaniards know how to fight, and how to fight well."

#### **General Guzman Blanco's Letter.**

In conclusion, I would say that I have just received a letter from General GUZMAN BLANCO, in which there are some matters which I consider worthy of insertion here.

"I have received the *Herald*, the *Sun*, the *Daily Graphic* and *The New York Times*, which treat the Guiana question.

In regard to the *Times* saying, that the Guiana question is an old one, and therefore that the application of the Monroe Doctrine to it is obscure; it will be very easy for you to answer that it is a new one, dating from 1842.

Venezuela does not ask the United States to settle her boundary question with England, but only not to allow that European power to acquire any new American territory. She has taken possession not only of what was in dispute, but also of territory which Venezuela never understood to be in dispute, that is to say, from the Pomarom to the Amacuro rivers and Barima Point, giving as the only reason, *that England claims it*. This is a barefaced appropriation, which the English government acknowledged in a later declaration, saying that the concessions for working mines were left to the decision of the question of the boundaries. The question is an acquisition of territory in America by violence, for which reason the Monroe Doctrine applies to this case."

This letter, which should have been short, although hurriedly written, has been prolonged, for which fault the undersigned begs Mr. GIBBONS' pardon, in view of the patriotic feelings which have inspired it.

The undersigned takes advantage of this opportunity to offer Mr. GIBBONS the assurance of his highest consideration.

FRANCISCO ANTONIO SILVA.

To MR. GEO. W. GIBBONS,

PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN ANNEXATION LEAGUE.

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