

*Leut. Commander
Richard Rush, U.S.N.,
with Compts of S.H.W.
Feb 26, 1896 -*

THE VENEZUELA DISPUTE.

Prof. McMaster's History of the
Monroe Doctrine.

The President's Message and the Other
Official Documents. With Map.

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HISTORY OF THE MONROE DOCTRINE.

By Prof. John Bach McMaster.

From The New-York Times of January 2, 1896.

The flat denial by Lord Salisbury that the Monroe doctrine is alive to-day and his positive assertion that it never applied to anything but the acts of the Holy Allies have produced three views which are current among those of our countrymen who differ with the President.

Some agree with the noble Coroner and declare that the doctrine perished in early infancy. Some believe it to be still alive, but not applicable to a territorial project which does not involve colonization or the erecting of a monarchy on a spot where a republic once stood. Others believe that nothing dangerous to our peace and safety is under way in Venezuela.

An examination of these views in the light of our past history may not be untimely. Nor may it be unwise to attempt to tell, by way of preface, who the Holy Allies were, what they did, and why their conduct called out the famous doctrine of Monroe.

The Holy Alliance.

As all the world knows, the overthrow of the French at Waterloo was followed by a second abdication of Napoleon, by a second restoration of Louis XVIII. to the throne of France, and by a gathering of the allied Kings or their representatives at Paris. On one of the sovereigns there assembled these events seem to have made a deep impression. To Alexander of Russia the second fall of the Man of Destiny was but another illustration of the way in which God, in His own good time, confounds the councils of the wicked and lifts up those who put their trust in Him, and, grateful for this signal lesson, Alexander determined

henceforth to rule, and, if possible, induce his fellow-monarchs to rule, in accordance with the principles of the Christian religion.

To accomplish this end the more easily he persuaded Frederick William of Prussia and Francis of Austria to join with him in a league which he called "The Holy Alliance," and to sign a treaty which is commonly supposed to have bound the Holy Allies to pull down constitutional government and stamp out liberal ideas. It was, in truth, a meaningless pledge, framed in a moment of religious excitement, and well described in its own words, which assert "that the present act has no other aim than to manifest to the world their unchangeable determination to adopt no other rule of conduct either in the government of their respective countries or in their political relations with other Governments than the precepts of that holy religion, the precepts of justice, charity, and peace."

That this little society of Christian monarchs should have any interest for us of to-day is due solely to the fact that their treaty contains the words "Holy Alliance," and that to it have wrongfully been attributed results which sprang from the quadruple treaty signed two months later by Russia, Prussia, Austria, and Great Britain; a new alliance which bound the four powers to do four things—exclude Napoleon forever from power; maintain the Government they had just set up in France; resist with all their might any attack on the army of occupation, and meet in 1818 to consult concerning their common interests, and to take such measures as should then seem

to be best fitted to serve the peace and happiness of Europe. Each pledge was faithfully kept, and in the Autumn of 1818 the four powers met at Aix-la-Chapelle, and reviewed the events of the past three years. Monarchy was so firmly established in France that the army of occupation was withdrawn and Louis XVIII. was suffered to have a voice in the affairs of Europe. But in Spain matters had gone from bad to worse. For ten years past her South American colonies had been in rebellion, first against Joseph Bonaparte, then against the Cortes of Cadiz, and since the restoration of 1814 against the King. That Ferdinand, single-handed, could never reduce them to subjection was apparent. He had built his last ship, had sent regiment after regiment to perish of fever 'n the tropics, had spent his last dollar, and had even appealed to England and to Russia for aid. Yet the rebels were as unconquerable as ever.

Russia sold him a fleet so rotten that he dared not send it to sea. England would gladly have interfered if he had agreed not to stop the trade she was then carrying on with his South American colonies. This he would not do, and at the conference at Aix-la-Chapelle Russia brought the matter before the powers in a paper which described the dangers to which the monarchies of Europe would be exposed if a federation of republics were allowed to grow up in America, and asked that Wellington preside over a conference of Ambassadors at Madrid to decide what terms Spain should offer her colonies. Against this England stood out, and Spain was left to go on with the struggle in her own way.

Her way was to gather a rabble at Cadiz in the Summer of 1819, call it an army, and send it to America. But yellow fever broke out, and before the troops could be shipped a conspiracy was hatched, a revolution was started, and on the 9th of March, 1820, Ferdinand was forced to re-establish the Constitution of 1812 and swear to support it. As tidings of this outbreak spread over Europe the friends of Liberalism took heart, and in July, 1820, the people of Naples forced their King, Ferdinand, to

proclaim the Spanish Constitution and swear to uphold it. The men of Portugal were next to awake, and in September, 1820, they deposed the Regency which ruled in the name of the absent King, set up a Junta, and elected a Cortes to frame a Constitution. For a moment it seemed not unlikely that France might be the next nation to throw off the yoke of absolutism. But Louis cried out for another meeting of the powers, and in October, 1820, the Emperor of Austria met the Czar and the King of Prussia in the little town of Troppau, in Moravia. England sent an Ambassador, but he was instructed to look on and do nothing. France sent two envoys, but they took opposite sides, and her influence counted for nothing. The three founders of the Holy Alliance were thus for the moment baffled, and the congress was adjourned to meet the next year at Laybach.

Congress of Verona.

When the congress at Laybach adjourned, in 1821, it did so with the understanding that it should meet in 1822 and take up the affairs of Spain, which both in the Old World and the New were now far beyond her control. The place of meeting was Vienna, but the congress soon adjourned to Verona, where, in October, 1822, the question of "restoring order," which, being interpreted, meant "re-establishing absolute monarchy" in Spain, was long debated. At length it was decided that no joint action should be taken, but that certain charges in the Spanish Constitution should be demanded, and, if not granted, a French army should enter Spain. The demands were made and refused. The Ambassadors of the Holy Allies then left Madrid, and on April 7, 1823, a French army crossed the frontier and occupied Madrid in May and Cadiz in August.

That moment Canning, who, in 1823, held the place now filled by Lord Salisbury, began to act. He knew, as everybody knew, that when the allies had once settled the affairs of Spain they would go on and settle the affairs of her former colonies, now recognized as republics by the United States. Turning to Richard Rush, who represented our country at London, he proposed that the United

States should join with England in a declaration that, while neither power desired the colonies of Spain for herself, it was impossible to look with indifference on European intervention in their affairs or to see them acquired by a third power. Hardly had the request been made, when Canning received a formal notice that later in the year a congress would be called to consider the affairs of Spanish America, and again pressed Rush for an answer. Rush had no instructions, but with a courage that did him honor, he replied that "we should regard as highly unjust and as fruitful of disastrous consequences any attempt on the part of any European power to take possession of them by conquest, by cession, or on any other ground or pretext whatsoever," and promised to join in the declaration if England would first acknowledge the independence of the little republics. This she would not do, and the joint declaration was never made.

Not a Temporary Policy.

One of the arguments which Canning used is given in Rush's letter to Secretary Adams, and shows that he at least had no temporary policy in mind. "They," [the United States,] he said, "were the first power established on that continent, and now confessedly the leading power. They were connected with South America by their position and with Europe by their relations. Was it possible they could see with indifference their fate decided upon by Europe? Had not a new epoch arrived in the relative position of the United States toward Europe which Europe must acknowledge? Were the great political and commercial interests which hung upon the destiny of the new continent to be canvassed and adjusted on this hemisphere without the co-operation or even knowledge of the United States?"

Monroe Seeks Advice.

When Monroe received the letters of Rush he seems to have been greatly puzzled how to act. The suggestion of England that the time had come to make a declaration of some sort admitted of no dispute. But how was it to be made? If he joined with Great Britain would he not be forming one of the "political connections" Washington had denounced in

his "Farewell Address"; one of the "entangling alliances" which Jefferson had given warning in his first inaugural speech? Should he make it alone, would he not be violating that policy of non-interference in the affairs of the colonies which he had himself advised in six messages and two inaugural speeches? Uncertain what to do, he turned to Jefferson for advice, and sent the letters of Rush to Monticello, and late in October received a reply.

"The question presented by the letters you have sent me is the most momentous which has ever been offered to my contemplation since that of Independence. That made us a nation; this sets our compass and points the course which we are to steer through the ocean of time opening on us. And never could we embark upon it under circumstances more auspicious. Our first and fundamental maxim should be, never to entangle ourselves in the broils of Europe; our second, never to suffer Europe to intermeddle with cisatlantic affairs. America, North and South, has a set of interests distinct from those of Europe, and peculiarly her own. She should, therefore, have a system of her own, separate and apart from that of Europe. While the last is laboring to become the domicile of despotism, our endeavor should surely be to make our hemisphere that of freedom."

The Doctrine Announced.

Thus encouraged, not simply to meet an emergency, but to "point the course which we are to steer through the ocean of time opening on us," Monroe consulted his Secretaries, and, with their approval, announced the new policy of our country and applied it in these words:

"The political system of the allied powers is essentially different in this respect from that of America. This difference proceeds from that which exists in their respective Governments. And to the defense of our own, which has been achieved by the loss of so much blood and treasure, and matured by the wisdom of their most enlightened citizens, and under which we have enjoyed unexampled felicity, this whole Nation is devoted. We owe it, therefore, to candor and to the amicable relations existing between the United States and those powers to declare that we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety. With the existing colonies or dependencies of any European power we have not interfered, and shall not interfere. But with the Governments who have declared their independence and maintained it, and whose independence we have, on great consideration and on just

principles, acknowledged, we could not view any interposition for the purpose of oppressing them, or controlling in any other manner their destiny, by any European power, in any other light than as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States.

"Our policy in regard to Europe, which was adopted at an early stage of the wars which have so long agitated that quarter of the globe, nevertheless remains the same, which is not to interfere in the internal concerns of any of its powers; to consider the Government *de facto* as the legitimate Government for us; to cultivate friendly relations with it, and to preserve those relations by a frank, firm, and manly policy; meeting in all instances the just claims of every power, submitting to injuries from none. But, in regard to these continents, circumstances are eminently and conspicuously different. It is impossible that the allied powers should extend their political system to any portion of either continent without endangering our peace and happiness; nor can any one believe that our southern brethren, if left to themselves would adopt it of their own accord. It is equally impossible, therefore, that we should behold such interposition, in any form, with indifference."

The doctrine was for all time, and, put in plain language, was this:

1. The United States will "not interfere in the internal concerns" of any European power.

2. "But in regard to these continents [North and South America] circumstances are eminently and conspicuously different," and if any European power attempts at any future time to extend its political system to any part of this hemisphere "for the purpose of oppressing" the nations or "CONTROLLING IN ANY OTHER MANNER THEIR DESTINY" the United States will interfere.

Of this doctrine an immediate application was made to the Holy Allies. It might have been conveyed to each of them under cover of an official note. But Monroe preferred to announce it before the world, and in his message warned them that any attempt on their part to violate the doctrine would be "dangerous to our peace and safety" and a "manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States."

The Doctrine Applied to the American Republics.

Having thus announced that we would not meddle in European affairs nor suffer the nations of the Old World to interfere with the domestic concerns of the nations of the New, it soon became necessary to define our own attitude toward the young republics of South America. Indeed, two years had not elapsed when the United States was formally invited by Colombia and Mexico to be represent-

ed in a congress of republics at Panama, at which it was officially stated the delegates would be expected "to take into consideration the means of making effectual the declaration of the President of the United States respecting any ulterior design of a foreign power to colonize any portion of this continent, and also the means of resisting all interference from abroad with the domestic concerns of the American Governments."

To cite the debate which in the Senate and the House followed the request of the President that Commissioners be sent to Panama is idle. Adams, as President, and Clay, as Secretary of State, approved, and that was reason enough why Hayne of South Carolina and Woodbury of New-Hampshire, White of Tennessee, Van Buren, Buchanan, Polk, Berrien, and Rives should oppose it. The discussion was partisan throughout. But the resolution which the House spread in its Journal is worth citing:

"It is therefore the opinion of this House that the Government of the United States ought not to be represented at the Congress of Panama except in a diplomatic character, nor ought they to form any alliance, offensive or defensive, or negotiate respecting such an alliance, with all or any of the South American republics; nor ought they to become parties with them, or either of them, to any joint declaration for the purpose of preventing the interference of any of the European powers with their independence or form of government, or to any compact for the purpose of preventing colonization upon the continents of America, but that the people of the United States should be left free to act, in any crisis, in such a manner as their feelings of friendship toward these republics and as their own honor and policy may at the time dictate."

Thus was affirmed two parts of the Monroe doctrine:

1. Not to form any alliance with any foreign nation, nor join with it in any declaration concerning the interference of any European power in its affairs.

2. To act toward them "in any crisis" as our "honor and policy may at the time dictate."

Thus was our true attitude towards the nations of the New World defined and the Monroe doctrine completed.

Of the men who took part in that famous debate two are of especial interest to us, for in the course of time each was called on to apply the doctrine he opposed, and each in turn abandoned the position he held in 1826. One is James K. Polk; the other is James Buchanan.

Polk in 1826.

In 1826 Polk in his speech said:

"When the message of the late President of the United States was communicated to Congress in 1823, it was viewed,

as it should have been, as the mere expression of opinion of the Executive, submitted to the consideration and deliberation of Congress; and designed probably to produce an effect upon the councils of the Holy Alliance, in relation to their supposed intention, to interfere in the war between Spain and her former colonies. That effect it probably had an agency in producing; and, if so, it has performed its office. The President had no power to bind the Nation by such a pledge."

Polk in 1845 and 1848.

When Polk uttered these words he was a member of Congress from Tennessee. But when our country was next called on to apply the doctrine Polk was President of the United States, and had been elected by a party whose cry was "Give us Texas or divide the spoons!" "The whole of Oregon or none; fifty-four, forty, or fight!" and saw before him a war with Mexico and serious trouble with England. In 1826 the Monroe doctrine, he thought, had been "designed to produce an effect on the councils of the Holy Alliance" and "had performed its office." Now he found it had still an office to perform, gave his "cordial concurrence in its wisdom and sound policy," and sent this message to Congress:

"It is well known to the American people and to all nations that this Government has never interfered with the relations subsisting between other Governments. We have never made ourselves parties to their wars or their alliances; we have not sought their territories by conquest; we have not mingled with parties in their domestic struggles; and, believing our own form of government to be the best, we have never attempted to propagate it by intrigues, by diplomacy, or by force. We may claim on this continent a like exemption from European interference. The nations of America are equally sovereign and independent with those of Europe. They possess the same rights, independent of all foreign interposition, to make war, to conclude peace, and to regulate their internal affairs. The people of the United States cannot, therefore, view with indifference attempts of European powers to interfere with the independent action of nations on this continent."

The cause of these remarks was the dispute—in which we were then engaged with England—regarding the ownership of the Oregon country. She claimed as far south as the Columbia River. We claimed as far north as 54 degrees 40 minutes. It was as much a territorial dispute as that now going on with Venezuela. Yet Polk did not hesitate to apply the Monroe doctrine and to assert that "in the existing circumstances of the world, the present is deemed a proper occasion to reiterate and reaffirm the

principle avowed by Mr. Monroe, and to state my cordial concurrence in its wisdom and sound policy. The reassertion of this principle, especially in reference to North America, is, at this day, but the promulgation of a policy which no European power should cherish the disposition to resist. Existing rights of every European nation should be respected, but it is due alike to our safety and our interests that the efficient protection of our laws should be extended over our whole territorial limits, and that it should be distinctly announced to the world as our settled policy, that no future European colony or dominion shall, with our consent, be planted or established on any part of the North American Continent."

Again a little while and Polk applied the doctrine to the purely territorial case of Yucatan. A war had broken out between the Indians and the whites who, driven to desperation, appealed for help to England, Spain, and the United States, offering in return the dominion and sovereignty of the Peninsula. This was not a case of interference by any foreign power. No effort was being made by any European nation to "extend its system." Two such powers had been invited by a hard-pressed people struggling for life to defend them and take in return their country. But Polk, taking the broad ground that any European people who by any means gained on our continents one foot of territory more than they had in 1823, even with the consent and at the request of the owners of it, were "extending their system," sent this message to Congress in 1848:

"While it is not my purpose to recommend the adoption of any measure with a view to the acquisition of the 'dominion and sovereignty' over Yucatan, yet, according to our established policy, we could not consent to a transfer of this 'dominion and sovereignty' to either Spain, Great Britain, or any other European power. In the language of President Monroe, in his message of December, 1823, 'we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety.'"

It would be controlling "the destiny" of the people concerned.

Buchanan and Mexico.

Precisely the same view was taken by Cass when Secretary of State under Buchanan, in the case of Mexico. The political condition of Mexico was frightful. Since the day Spain acknowledged her independence in 1821 there had never been a moment of quiet. In thirty-three years thirty-six Governments had been set up and pulled down, and of them all the worst were those of Miramon and Juarez, by whom such enormities were committed that England, France, and

Spain decided on armed intervention in Mexican affairs. Against this, in 1860, both Cass and Buchanan protested.

"While," said the Secretary, "we do not deny the right of any other power to carry on hostile operations against Mexico, for the redress of its grievances, we firmly object to its holding possession of any part of that country, or endeavoring by force to control its political destiny. * * *

"I deemed it my duty," said the President in his message in December, 1860, "to recommend to Congress, in my last annual message, the employment of a sufficient military force to penetrate into the interior. * * * European Governments would have been deprived of all pretext to interfere in the territorial and domestic concerns of Mexico. We should thus have been relieved from the obligation of resisting, even by force should this become necessary, any attempt by these Governments to deprive our neighboring republic of portions of her territory—a duty from which we could not shrink without abandoning the traditional and established policy of the American people."

Three statements are contained in this exposition of the doctrine:

1. That we have a duty resting on us which we cannot shirk without abandoning the traditional and established policy of the American people.

2. This duty is to resist any attempt by a European Government to deprive our neighboring republic of portions of her territory.

3. That, if necessary, resistance must go even to the use of force.

This exposition by Buchanan is sound and good and is exactly the position taken by Mr. Cleveland. Great Britain is to-day attempting to take from Venezuela, not 30,000 square miles, as is commonly stated, but 109,000 square miles,

to which she has no just claim whatever; an area as large as Nevada and exceeded by no States in the Union save Texas, California, and Montana; an area ninety times as large as Rhode Island, fifty-four times as large as Delaware, thirteen times as large as Massachusetts, and 40,000 square miles larger than the six New-England States! When a European power rightfully or wrongfully attempts to acquire so immense an area as this, she does, in the words of Monroe, "spread her system"; she does attempt to "control the destiny" of Venezuela; she does, in the language of Polk, "interfere with the independent action of nations on this continent"; she is, as Cass expressed it, "holding possession of that country" and endeavoring "to control its political destiny," and the Monroe doctrine does apply. We are bound, as Buchanan asserted, to resist this attempt "to deprive our neighboring republic of her territory," and we should in duty to a sound American policy use force if necessary.

From 1783 until 1842 we had a dispute with England over the boundary of Maine. Had she during that time extended her claims till they included all of New-England and seven-eighths of New-York, would she not have been extending her system? Of all the nations of the world she is the most progressive and the most aggressive. Take a map of the world and mark on it her possessions in 1800, in 1825, in 1850, in 1896, and see what she has been doing. Then take Mr. Gignilliat's map of the British claims in Venezuela and see that history repeated. For fifty-six years she has slowly but surely been spreading her claims from the Essequibo to the Orinoco River till they now touch its mouth. Are we to consider this of no moment?

JOHN BACH McMASTER.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

President Cleveland sent to Congress Dec. 17, 1895, the following message:
To the Congress:

In my annual message addressed to the Congress on the 3d inst. I called attention to the pending boundary controversy between Great Britain and the Republic of Venezuela, and recited the substance of a representation made by this Government to her Britannic Majesty's Government suggesting reasons why such dispute should be submitted to arbitration for settlement, and inquiring whether it would be so submitted.

The answer of the British Government, which was then awaited, has since been received, and, together with the dispatch to which it is a reply, is hereto appended.

Such reply is embodied in two communications addressed by the British Prime Minister to Sir Julian Pauncefote, the British Ambassador at this capital. It will be seen that one of these communications is devoted exclusively to observations upon the Monroe doctrine, and claims that in the present instance a new and strange extension and development of this doctrine is insisted on by the United States, that the reasons justifying an appeal to the doctrine enunciated by President Monroe are generally inapplicable "to the state of things in which we live at the present day," and especially inapplicable to a controversy involving the boundary line between Great Britain and Venezuela.

Without attempting extended argument in reply to these positions, it may not be amiss to suggest that the doctrine upon which we stand is strong and sound because its enforcement is important to our peace and safety as a nation, and is essential to the integrity of our free institutions and the tranquil maintenance of our distinctive form of government. It was intended to apply to every stage of our National life, and cannot become obsolete while our Republic endures. If the balance of power is justly a cause for jealous anxiety among the Governments of the Old World and a subject for our absolute non-interference, none the less is an observance of the Monroe doctrine of vital concern to our people and their Government.

Assuming, therefore, that we may properly insist upon this doctrine without regard to "the state of things in which we live," or any changed conditions here or elsewhere, it is not apparent why its application may not be invoked in the present controversy.

If a European power, by an extension of its boundaries, takes possession of the

territory of one of our neighboring republics against its will and in derogation of its rights it is difficult to see why, to that extent, such European power does not thereby attempt to extend its system of government to that portion of this continent which is thus taken. This is the precise action which President Monroe declared to be "dangerous to our peace and safety," and it can make no difference whether the European system is extended by an advance of frontier or otherwise.

It is also suggested in the British reply that we should not seek to apply the Monroe doctrine to the pending dispute because it does not embody any principle of international law which "is founded on the general consent of nations," and that "no statesman, however eminent, and no nation, however powerful, are competent to insert into the code of international law a novel principle, which was never recognized before, and which has not since been accepted by the Government of any other country."

Practically the principle for which we contend has peculiar, if not exclusive, relation to the United States. It may not have been admitted in so many words to the code of international law, but since in international councils every nation is entitled to the rights belonging to it, if the enforcement of the Monroe doctrine is something we may justly claim, it has its place in the code of international law as certainly and as securely as if it were specifically mentioned, and when the United States is a suitor before the high tribunal that administers international law the question to be determined is whether or not we present claims which the justice of that code of law can find to be right and valid.

The Monroe doctrine finds its recognition in those principles of international law which are based upon the theory that every nation shall have its rights protected and its just claims enforced.

Of course, this Government is entirely confident that under the sanction of this doctrine we have clear rights and undoubted claims. Nor is this ignored in the British reply. The Prime Minister, while not admitting that the Monroe doctrine is applicable to present conditions, states: "In declaring that the United States would resist any such enterprise if it was contemplated President Monroe adopted a policy which received the entire sympathy of the English Government of that date." He further declares: "Though the language of President Monroe is directed to the attainment of objects which most Englishmen would agree to be salutary, it is impossible to admit that they have been inscribed by any adequate authority in the code of international law."

'Again he says: "They (her Majesty's Government) fully concur with the view which President Monroe apparently entertained, that any disturbance of the existing territorial distribution in that hemisphere by any fresh acquisitions on the part of any European State would be a highly inexpedient change."

In the belief that the doctrine for which we contend was clear and definite, that it was founded upon substantial considerations and involved our safety and welfare, that it was fully applicable to our present conditions and to the state of the world's progress, and that it was directly related to the pending controversy, and without any conviction as to the final merits of the dispute, but anxious to learn in a satisfactory and conclusive manner whether Great Britain sought, under a claim of boundary, to extend her possessions on this continent without right, or whether she merely sought possession of territory fairly included within her lines of ownership, this Government proposed to the Government of Great Britain a resort to arbitration as the proper means of settling the question, to the end that a vexatious boundary dispute between the two contestants might be determined, and our exact standing and relation in respect to the controversy might be made clear.

It will be seen from the correspondence herewith submitted that this proposition has been declined by the British Government upon grounds which, in the circumstances, seem to me to be far from satisfactory. It is deeply disappointing that such an appeal, actuated by the most friendly feelings toward both nations directly concerned, addressed to the sense of justice and to the magnanimity of one of the great powers of the world and touching its relations to one comparatively weak and small, should have produced no better results.

The course to be pursued by this Government, in view of the present condition, does not appear to admit of serious doubt. Having labored faithfully for many years to induce Great Britain to submit this dispute to impartial arbitration, and having been now finally apprised of her refusal to do so, nothing remains but to accept the situation, to recognize its plain requirements, and deal with it accordingly. Great

Britain's present proposition has never thus far been regarded as admissible by Venezuela, though any adjustment of the boundary which that country may deem for her advantage and may enter into of her own free will cannot, of course, be objected to by the United States.

Assuming, however, that the attitude of Venezuela will remain unchanged, the dispute has reached such a stage as to make it now incumbent upon the United States to take measures to determine with sufficient certainty for its justification what is the true divisional line between the Republic of Venezuela and British Guiana. The inquiry to that end should, of course, be conducted carefully and judicially, and due weight should be given to all available evidence, records, and facts in support of the claims of both parties.

In order that such an examination should be prosecuted in a thorough and satisfactory manner, I suggest that the Congress make an adequate appropriation for the expenses of a commission, to be appointed by the Executive, who shall make the necessary investigation and report upon the matter with the least possible delay. When such report is made and accepted it will, in my opinion, be the duty of the United States to resist, by every means in its power, as a willful aggression upon its rights and interests, the appropriation by Great Britain of any lands or the exercise of governmental jurisdiction over any territory which, after investigation, we have determined of right belongs to Venezuela.

In making these recommendations I am fully alive to the responsibility incurred, and keenly realize all the consequences that may follow.

I am, nevertheless, firm in my conviction that, while it is a grievous thing to contemplate the two great English-speaking peoples of the world as being otherwise than friendly competitors in the onward march of civilization and strenuous and worthy rivals in all the arts of peace, there is no calamity which a great nation can invite which equals that which follows a supine submission to wrong and injustice and the consequent loss of national self-respect and honor, beneath which are shielded and defended a people's safety, and greatness. GROVER CLEVELAND.

EXECUTIVE MANSION, Dec. 17, 1895.

THE CORRESPONDENCE.

The following are the documents accompanying the message of the President:

Mr. Olney to Mr. Bayard.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE, }
WASHINGTON, July 20, 1895. }

[No. 804.]

His Excellency Thomas F. Bayard, &c., &c.,
&c., London:

Sir: I am directed by the President to communicate to you his views upon a subject to which he has given much anxious thought, and respecting which he has not reached a conclusion without a lively sense of its great importance, as well as of the serious responsibility involved in any action now to be taken.

It is not proposed, and for the present purposes is not necessary, to enter into any detailed account of the controversy between Great Britain and Venezuela respecting the western frontier of the Colony of British Guiana. The dispute is of ancient date, and began at least as early as the time when Great Britain acquired by the treaty with the Netherlands of 1814 "the establishments of Demerara, Essequibo, and Berbice." From that time to the present the dividing line between these "establishments" (now called British Guiana) and Venezuela has never ceased to be a subject of contention. The claims of both parties, it must be conceded, are of a somewhat indefinite nature. On the one hand, Venezuela, in every Constitution of Government since she became an independent State, has declared her territorial limits to be those of the Captaincy General of Venezuela in 1810. Yet, out of "moderation and prudence," it is said, she has contented herself with claiming the Essequibo line—the line of the Essequibo River, that is—to be the true boundary between Venezuela and British Guiana. On the other hand, at least an equal degree of indefiniteness distinguishes the claim of Great Britain.

It does not seem to be asserted, for instance, that in 1814 the "establishments" then acquired by Great Britain had any clearly defined western limits which can now be identified, and which are either the limits insisted upon to-day, or, being the original limits, have been the basis of legitimate territorial extensions. On the contrary, having the actual possession of a district called the Pomaron district, she apparently remained indifferent as to the exact area of the colony until 1840, when she commissioned an engineer, Sir Robert Schomburgk, to examine and lay down its boundaries. The result was the Schomburgk line, which was fixed by metes and bounds, was delineated on maps, and was at first indicated on the face of the country

itself by posts, monograms, and other like symbols.

If it was expected that Venezuela would acquiesce in this line, the expectation was doomed to speedy disappointment. Venezuela at once protested, and with such vigor and to such purpose that the line was explained to be only tentative—part of a general boundary scheme concerning Brazil and the Netherlands as well as Venezuela—and the monuments of the line set up by Schomburgk were removed by the express order of Lord Aberdeen. Under these circumstances it seems impossible to treat the Schomburgk line as being the boundary claimed by Great Britain as matter of right, or as anything but a line originating in considerations of convenience and expediency. Since 1840 various other boundary lines have from time to time been indicated by Great Britain, but all as conventional lines—lines to which Venezuela's assent has been desired, but which in no instance, it is believed, have been demanded as matter of right. Thus neither of the parties is to-day standing for the boundary line predicated upon strict legal right—Great Britain having formulated no such claim at all, while Venezuela insists upon the Essequibo line only as a liberal concession to her antagonist.

Several other features of the situation remain to be briefly noticed—the continuous growth of the undefined British claim, the fate of the various attempts at arbitration of the controversy, and the part in the matter heretofore taken by the United States. As already seen, the exploitation of the Schomburgk line in 1840 was at once followed by the protest of Venezuela and by proceedings on the part of Great Britain which could fairly be interpreted only as a disavowal of that line. Indeed, in addition to the facts already noticed, Lord Aberdeen himself in 1844 proposed a line beginning at the River Morocco, a distinct abandonment of the Schomburgk line.

Notwithstanding this, however, every change in the British claim since that time has moved the frontier of British Guiana farther and farther to the westward of the line thus proposed. The Granville line of 1881 placed the starting point at a distance of twenty-nine miles from the Morocco in the direction of Punta Barima. The Rosebery line of 1885 placed it west of the Guaima River, and about that time, if the British authority known as the Statesman's Year Book is to be relied upon, the area of British Guiana was suddenly enlarged by some 33,000 square miles—being stated as 76,000 square miles in 1885, and 109,000 square miles in 1887. The Salisbury line of 1890 fixed the starting point of the line in the mouth of the Amacuro west of

the Punta Barima on the Orinoco. And finally, in 1893, a second Rosebery line carried the boundary from a point to the west of the Amacuro as far as the source of the Cumano River and the Sierra of Usupamo. Nor have the various claims thus enumerated been claims on paper merely. An exercise of jurisdiction corresponding more or less to such claims has accompanied or followed closely upon each, and has been the more irritating and unjustifiable if, as is alleged, an agreement made in the year 1850 bound both parties to refrain from such occupation pending the settlement of the dispute.

While the British claim has been developing in the manner above described, Venezuela has made earnest and repeated efforts to have the question of boundary settled. Indeed, allowance being made for the distractions of a war of independence, and for frequent internal revolutions, it may be fairly said that Venezuela has never ceased to strive for its adjustment. It could, of course, do so only through peaceful methods, any resort to force as against its powerful adversary being out of the question. Accordingly, shortly after the drawing of the Schomburgk line, an effort was made to settle the boundary by treaty, and was apparently progressing toward a successful issue when the negotiations were brought to an end in 1844 by the death of the Venezuela plenipotentiary.

In 1848 Venezuela entered upon a period of civil commotions which lasted for more than a quarter of a century, and the negotiations thus interrupted in 1844 were not resumed until 1870. In that year Venezuela offered to close the dispute by accepting the Morocco line proposed by Lord Aberdeen. But, without giving reasons for his refusal, Lord Granville rejected the proposal, and suggested a new line comprehending a large tract of territory, all pretension to which seemed to have been abandoned by the previous action of Lord Aberdeen. Venezuela refused to assent to it, and negotiations dragged along without result until 1882, when Venezuela concluded that the only course open to her was arbitration of the controversy. Before she had made any definite proposition, however, Great Britain took the initiative by suggesting the making of a treaty which should determine various other questions as well as that of the disputed boundary. The result was that a treaty was practically agreed upon with the Gladstone Government in 1886 containing a general arbitration clause under which the parties might have submitted the boundary dispute to the decision of a third power or of several.

Before the actual signing of the treaty, however, the Administration of Mr. Gladstone was superseded by that of Lord Salisbury, which declined to accede to the arbitration clause of the treaty, notwithstanding the reasonable expectations of Venezuela to the contrary, based upon the Premier's emphatic declaration in the House of Lords that no serious Government would think of not respecting the engagements of its predecessor. Since then Venezuela on the one side has been offering and calling for arbitration, while Great Britain on the other has responded by insisting upon the condition that any arbitration should relate only to such of the disputed territory as lies west of a line designated by herself. As this condition seemed inadmissible to Venezuela, and as, while the negotiations

were pending, new appropriations of what is claimed to be Venezuelan territory continued to be made, Venezuela in 1887 suspended diplomatic relations with Great Britain, protesting "before her British Majesty's Government, before all civilized nations, and before the world in general, against the acts of spoliation committed to her detriment by the Government of Great Britain, which she at no time and on no account will recognize as capable of altering in the least the rights which she has inherited from Spain and respecting which she will ever be willing to submit to the decision of a third power."

Diplomatic relations have not since been restored, though what is claimed to be new and flagrant British aggressions forced Venezuela to resume negotiations on the boundary question—in 1893, through its Minister in Paris and a special envoy on that subject, and in 1893, through a confidential agent, Señor Michelena. These negotiations, however, met with the fate of other like previous negotiations, Great Britain refusing to arbitrate except as to territory west of an arbitrary line drawn by herself. All attempts in that direction definitely terminated in October, 1893, when Señor Michelena filed with the Foreign Office the following declaration:

"I perform a most strict duty in raising again, in the name of the Government of Venezuela, a most solemn protest against the proceedings of the Colony of British Guiana, constituting encroachments upon the territory of the republic, and against the declaration contained in your Excellency's communication that her Britannic Majesty's Government considers that part of the territory as pertaining to British Guiana, and admits no claim to it on the part of Venezuela. In support of this protest I reproduce all the arguments presented to your Excellency in my note of the 20th of last September and those which have been exhibited by the Government of Venezuela on the various occasions they have raised the same protest.

"I lay on her Britannic Majesty's Government the entire responsibility of the incidents that may arise in the future from the necessity to which Venezuela has been driven to oppose by all possible means the dispossession of a part of her territory, for by disregarding her just representation to put an end to this violent state of affairs through the decision of arbiters her Majesty's Government ignores her rights and imposes upon her the painful though peremptory duty of providing for her own legitimate defense."

To the territorial controversy between Great Britain and the Republic of Venezuela, thus briefly outlined, the United States has not been, and, indeed, in view of its traditional policy, could not be indifferent. The note to the British Foreign Office by which Venezuela opened negotiations in 1876 was at once communicated to this Government. In January, 1881, a letter of the Venezuelan Minister at Washington, respecting certain alleged demonstrations at the mouth of the Orinoco, was thus answered by Mr. Evarts, then Secretary of State:

"In reply I have to inform you that in view of the deep interest which the Government of the United States takes in all transactions tending to attempted encroachments of foreign powers upon the territory of any of the republics of this continent, this Government could not look with in-

difference to the forcible acquisition of such territory by England if the mission of the vessels now at the mouth of the Orinoco should be found to be for that end. This Government awaits, therefore, with natural concern the more particular statements promised by the Government of Venezuela, which it hopes will not be long delayed."

In the February following Mr. Evarts wrote again on the same subject, as follows:

"Referring to your note of the 21st of December last, touching the operations of certain British war vessels in and near the mouth of the Orinoco River, and to my reply thereto, of the 31st ult., as well as to the recent occasions in which the subject has been mentioned in our conferences concerning the business of your mission, I take it to be fitting now at the close of my incumbency of the office I hold to advert to the interest with which the Government of the United States cannot fail to regard any such purpose with respect to the control of American territory as is stated to be contemplated by the Government of Great Britain, and to express my regret that the further information promised in your note with regard to such designs had not reached me in season to receive the attention which, notwithstanding the severe pressure of public business at the end of an administrative term, I should have taken pleasure in bestowing upon it. I doubt not, however, that your representations in fulfillment of the awaited additional orders of your Government will have like earnest and solicitous consideration at the hands of my successor."

In November, 1882, the then state of negotiations with Great Britain together with a copy of an intended note suggesting recourse to arbitration, was communicated to the Secretary of State by the President of Venezuela with the expression of the hope that the United States would give him its opinion and advice and such support as it deemed possible to offer Venezuela in order that justice should be done her. Mr. Frelinghuysen replied in a dispatch to the United States Minister at Caracas as follows:

"This Government has already expressed its view that arbitration of such disputes is a convenient resort in the case of failure to come to a mutual understanding, and intimated its willingness, if Venezuela should so desire, to propose to Great Britain such a mode of settlement. It is felt that the tender of good offices would not be so profitable if the United States were to approach Great Britain as the advocate of any prejudiced solution in favor of Venezuela. So far as the United States can counsel and assist Venezuela it believes it best to confine its reply to the renewal of the suggestion of arbitration and the offer of all its good offices in that direction. This suggestion is the more easily made, since it appears, from the instruction sent by Señor Seijas to the Venezuelan Minister in London on the same 15th of July, 1882, that the President of Venezuela proposed to the British Government the submission of the dispute to arbitration by a third power.

"You will take an early occasion to present the foregoing considerations to Señor Seijas, saying to him that, while trusting that the direct proposal for arbitration already made to Great Britain may bear good fruit, (if, indeed, it has not already done so by its acceptance in principle,) the Govern-

ment of the United States will cheerfully lend any needful aid to press upon Great Britain in a friendly way the proposition so made, and at the same time you will say to Señor Seijas (in personal confidence, and not with the formality of a written communication) that the United States, while advocating strongly the recourse of arbitration for the adjustment of international disputes affecting the States of America, does not seek to put itself forward as their arbiter; that, viewing all such questions impartially and with no intent or desire to prejudice their merits, the United States will not refuse its arbitration if asked by both parties, and that, regarding all such questions as essentially and distinctively American, the United States would always prefer to see such contentions adjusted through the arbitrament of an American rather than an European power."

In 1884 Gen. Guzman Blanco, the Venezuelan Minister to England, appointed with special reference to pending negotiations for a general treaty with Great Britain, visited Washington on his way to London, and, after several conferences with the Secretary of State respecting the objects of his mission, was thus commended to the good offices of Mr. Lowell, our Minister at St. James's:

"It will necessarily be somewhat within your discretion how far your good offices may be profitably employed with her Majesty's Government to these ends, and at any rate you may take proper occasion to let Lord Granville know that we are not without concern as to whatever may affect the interests of a sister republic of the American continent and its position in the family of nations.

"If Gen. Blanco should apply to you for advice or assistance in realizing the purposes of his mission you will show him proper consideration, and, without committing the United States to any determinate political solution, you will endeavor to carry out the views of this instruction."

The progress of Gen. Guzman's negotiations did not fail to be observed by this Government, and in December, 1886, with a view to preventing the rupture of diplomatic relations—which actually took place in February following—the then Secretary of State, Mr. Bayard, instructed our Minister to Great Britain to tender the arbitration of the United States, in the following terms:

"It does not appear that at any time heretofore the good offices of this Government have been actually tendered to avert a rupture between Great Britain and Venezuela. As intimated in my No. 53, our inaction in this regard would seem to be due to the reluctance of Venezuela to have the Government of the United States take any steps having relation to the action of the British Government which might, in appearance even, prejudice the resort to further arbitration or mediation which Venezuela desired. Nevertheless, the records abundantly testify our friendly concern in the adjustment of the dispute, and the intelligence now received warrants me in tendering through you to her Majesty's Government the good offices of the United States to promote an amicable settlement of the respective claims of Great Britain and Venezuela in the premises.

"As proof of the impartiality with which we view the question, we offer our arbitration, if acceptable to both countries. We

do this with the less hesitancy as the dispute turns upon simple and readily ascertainable historical facts.

"Her Majesty's Government will readily understand that this attitude of friendly neutrality and entire impartiality touching the merits of the controversy, consisting wholly in a difference of facts between our friends and neighbors, is entirely consistent and compatible with the sense of responsibility that rests upon the United States in relation to the South American republics. The doctrines we announced two generations ago, at the instance and with the moral support and approval of the British Government, have lost none of their force or importance in the progress of time, and the Governments of Great Britain and the United States are equally interested in conserving a status the wisdom of which has been demonstrated by the experience of more than half a century.

"It is proper therefore that you should convey to Lord Iddesleigh, in such sufficiently guarded terms as your discretion may dictate, the satisfaction that would be felt by the Government of the United States in perceiving that its wishes in this regard were permitted to have influence with her Majesty's Government."

This offer of mediation was declined by Great Britain, with the statement that a similar offer had already been received from another quarter, and that the Queen's Government were still not without hope of a settlement by direct diplomatic negotiations. In February, 1888, having been informed that the Governor of British Guiana had by formal decree laid claim to the territory traversed by the route of a proposed railway from Ciudad Bolivar to Guacipati, Mr. Bayard addressed a note to our Minister to England, from which the following extracts are taken:

"The claim now stated to have been put forth by the authorities of British Guiana necessarily gives rise to grave disquietude, and creates an apprehension that the territorial claim does not follow historical traditions or evidence, but is apparently indefinite. At no time hitherto does it appear that the district of which Guacipati is the centre has been claimed as British territory, or that such jurisdiction has ever been asserted over its inhabitants, and if the reported decree of the Governor of British Guiana be indeed genuine it is not apparent how any line of railway from Ciudad Bolivar to Guacipati could enter or traverse territory within the control of Great Britain.

"It is true that the line claimed by Great Britain as the western boundary of British Guiana is uncertain and vague. It is only necessary to examine the British Colonial Office List for a few years back to perceive this. In the issue for 1877, for instance, the line runs nearly southwardly from the mouth of the Amacuro to the junction of the Cotinga and Takutu Rivers. In the issue of 1887, ten years later, it makes a wide détour to the westward, following the Yuruari. Guacipati lies considerably to the westward of the line officially claimed in 1887, and it may perhaps be instructive to compare with it the map which doubtless will be found in the Colonial Office List for the present year.

"It may be well for you to express anew to Lord Salisbury the great gratification it would afford this Government to see the Venezuelan dispute amicably and honorably settled by arbitration or otherwise, and our

readiness to do anything we properly can to assist to that end.

"In the course of your conversation you may refer to the publication in The London Financier of Jan. 24, (a copy of which you can procure and exhibit to Lord Salisbury,) and express apprehension lest the widening pretensions of British Guiana to possess territory over which Venezuela's jurisdiction has never heretofore been disputed may not diminish the chances for a practical settlement.

"If, indeed, it should appear that there is no fixed limit to the British boundary claim, our good disposition to aid in a settlement might not only be defeated, but be obliged to give place to a feeling of grave concern."

In 1889, information having been received that Barima, at the mouth of the Orinoco, had been declared a British port, Mr. Blaine, then Secretary of State, authorized Mr. White to confer with Lord Salisbury for the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between Great Britain and Venezuela on the basis of a temporary restoration of the status quo, and May 1 and May 6, 1890, sent the following telegrams to our Minister to England, Mr. Lincoln: (May 1, 1890:)

"Mr. Lincoln is instructed to use his good offices with Lord Salisbury to bring about the resumption of diplomatic intercourse between Great Britain and Venezuela as a preliminary step toward the settlement of the boundary dispute by arbitration. The joint proposals of Great Britain and the United States toward Portugal, which have just been brought about, would seem to make the present time propitious for submitting this question to an international arbitration. He is requested to propose to Lord Salisbury, with a view to an accommodation, that an informal conference be had in Washington or in London of representatives of the three powers. In such conference the position of the United States is one solely of impartial friendship toward both litigants."

(May 6, 1890:)

"It is nevertheless desired that you shall do all you can consistently with our attitude of impartial friendship to induce some accord between the contestants by which the merits of the controversy may be fairly ascertained and the rights of each party justly confirmed. The neutral position of this Government does not comport with any expression of opinion on the part of this department as to what these rights are, but it is confident that the shifting footing on which the British boundary question has rested for several years past is an obstacle to such a correct appreciation of the nature and grounds of her claim as would alone warrant the formation of any opinion."

In the course of the same year, 1890, Venezuela sent to London a special envoy to bring about the resumption of diplomatic relations with Great Britain through the good offices of the United States Minister. But the mission failed because a condition of such resumption, steadily adhered to by Venezuela, was the reference of the boundary dispute to arbitration. Since the close of the negotiations initiated by Señor Michelena in 1893 Venezuela has repeatedly brought the controversy to the notice of the United States, has insisted upon its importance to the United States as well as to Venezuela, has represented it to have reached an acute stage—making definite

action by the United States imperative—and has not ceased to solicit the services and support of the United States in aid of its final adjustment. These appeals have not been received with indifference, and our Ambassador to Great Britain has been uniformly instructed to exert all his influence in the direction of the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between Great Britain and Venezuela and in favor of arbitration of the boundary controversy. The Secretary of State in a communication to Mr. Bayard, bearing date July 13, 1894, used the following language:

"The President is inspired by a desire for a peaceable and honorable settlement of the existing difficulties between an American State and a powerful transatlantic nation, and would be glad to see the re-establishment of such diplomatic relations between them as would promote that end.

"I can discern but two equitable solutions of the present controversy. One is the arbitral determination of the rights of the disputants as the respective successors to the historical rights of Holland and Spain over the region in question. The other is to create a new boundary line in accordance with the dictates of mutual expediency and consideration. The two Governments having so far been unable to agree on a conventional line, the consistent and conspicuous advocacy by the United States and England of the principle of arbitration and their recourse thereto in settlement of important questions arising between them, makes such a mode of adjustment especially appropriate in the present instance, and this Government will gladly do what it can to further a determination in that sense."

Subsequent communications to Mr. Bayard direct him to ascertain whether a Minister from Venezuela would be received by Great Britain. In the annual message to Congress, of Dec. 3 last, the President used the following language:

"The boundary of British Guiana still remains in dispute between Great Britain and Venezuela. Believing that its early settlement, on some just basis alike honorable to both parties, is in the line of our established policy to remove from this hemisphere all causes of difference with powers beyond the sea, I shall renew the efforts heretofore made to bring about a restoration of diplomatic relations between the disputants, and to induce a reference to arbitration, a resort which Great Britain so conspicuously favors in principle and respects in practice, and which is earnestly sought by her weaker adversary."

And Feb. 22, 1895, a joint resolution of Congress declared:

"That the President's suggestion * * * that Great Britain and Venezuela refer their dispute as to boundaries to friendly arbitration be earnestly recommended to the favorable consideration of both parties in interest."

The important features of the existing situation, as shown by the foregoing recital, may be briefly stated.

1. The title to territory of indefinite but confessedly very large extent is in dispute between Great Britain on the one hand and the South American Republic of Venezuela on the other.

2. The disparity in the strength of the claimants is such that Venezuela can hope to establish her claim only through peaceful methods—through an agreement with

her adversary either upon the subject itself or upon an arbitration.

3. The controversy, with varying claims on the part of Great Britain, has existed for more than half a century, during which period many earnest and persistent efforts of Venezuela to establish a boundary by agreement have proved unsuccessful.

4. The futility of the endeavor to obtain a conventional line being recognized, Venezuela for a quarter of a century has asked and striven for arbitration.

5. Great Britain, however, has always and continuously refused to arbitrate, except upon the condition of a renunciation of a large part of the Venezuelan claim and of a concession to herself of a large share of the territory in controversy.

6. By the frequent interposition of its good offices at the instance of Venezuela, by constantly urging and promoting the restoration of diplomatic relations between the two countries, by pressing for arbitration of the disputed boundary, by offering to act as arbitrator, by expressing its grave concern whenever new alleged instances of British aggression upon Venezuelan territory have been brought to its notice, the Government of the United States has made it clear to Great Britain and to the world that the controversy is one in which both its honor and its interests are involved and the continuance of which it cannot regard with indifference.

The accuracy of the foregoing analysis of the existing status cannot, it is believed, be challenged. It shows that status to be such that those charged with the interests of the United States are now forced to determine exactly what those interests are and what course of action they require. It compels them to decide to what extent, if any, the United States may and should intervene in a controversy between and primarily concerning only Great Britain and Venezuela, and to decide how far it is bound to see that the integrity of Venezuelan territory is not impaired by the pretensions of its powerful antagonist. Are any such right and duty devolved upon the United States? If not, the United States has already done all, if not more than all, that a purely sentimental interest in the affairs of the two countries justifies, and to push its interposition further would be unbecoming and undignified, and might well subject it to the charge of impertinent intermeddling with affairs with which it has no rightful concern. On the other hand, if any such right and duty exist, their due exercise and discharge will not permit of any action that shall not be efficient and that, if the power of the United States is adequate, shall not result in the accomplishment of the end in view. The question thus presented as a matter of principle, and regard being had to the settled National policy, does not seem difficult of solution. Yet the momentous practical consequences dependent upon its determination require that it should be carefully considered and that the grounds of the conclusion arrived at should be fully and frankly stated.

That there are circumstances under which a nation may justly interpose in a controversy to which two or more other nations are the direct and immediate parties is an admitted canon of international law. The doctrine is ordinarily expressed in terms of the most general character, and is perhaps incapable of more specific statement. It is declared in substance that a nation may avail itself of this right whenever what

is done or proposed by any of the parties primarily concerned is a serious and direct menace to its own integrity, tranquillity, or welfare. The propriety of the rule, when applied in good faith, will not be questioned in any quarter. On the other hand, it is an inevitable, though unfortunate, consequence of the wide scope of the rule that it has only too often been made a cloak for schemes of wanton spoliation and aggrandizement. We are concerned at this time, however, not so much with the general rule as with a form of it which is peculiarly and distinctively American. Washington, in the solemn admonitions of the farewell address, explicitly warned his countrymen against entanglements with the politics or the controversies of European powers.

"Europe," he said, "has a set of primary interests which to us have none or a very remote relation. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. Hence, therefore, it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves by artificial ties in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics or the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships or enmities. Our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course."

During the Administration of President Monroe this doctrine of the farewell address was first considered in all its aspects and with a view to all its practical consequences. The farewell address, while it took America out of the field of European politics, was silent as to the part Europe might be permitted to play in America. Doubtless it was thought the latest addition to the family of nations should not make haste to prescribe rules for the guidance of its older members, and the expediency and propriety of serving the powers of Europe with notice of a complete and distinctive American policy excluding them from interference with American political affairs might well seem dubious to a generation to whom the French alliance, with its manifold advantages to the cause of American independence, was fresh in mind.

Twenty years later, however, the situation had changed. The lately born nation had greatly increased in power and resources, had demonstrated its strength on land and sea, and as well in the conflicts of arms as in the pursuits of peace, and had begun to realize the commanding position on this Continent, which the character of its people, their free institutions, and their remoteness from the chief scene of European contentions combined to give to it. The Monroe Administration therefore did not hesitate to accept and apply the logic of the farewell address by declaring, in effect, that American nonintervention in European affairs necessarily implied and meant European nonintervention in American affairs. Conceiving unquestionably that complete European noninterference in American concerns would be cheaply purchased by complete American noninterference in European concerns, President Monroe, in the celebrated message of Dec. 2, 1823, used the following language:

"In the wars of the European powers in matters relating to themselves we have never taken any part, nor does it comport with our policy to do so. It is only when our rights are invaded or seriously menaced that we resent injuries or make preparations for our defense. With the move-

ments in this hemisphere we are, of necessity, more immediately connected, and by causes which must be obvious to all enlightened and impartial observers. The political system of the allied powers is essentially different in this respect from that of America. This difference proceeds from that which exists in their respective Governments. And to the defense of our own, which has been achieved by the loss of so much blood and treasure, and matured by the wisdom of our most enlightened citizens, and under which we have enjoyed unexampled felicity, this whole Nation is devoted. We owe it, therefore, to candor and to the amicable relations existing between the United States and those powers to declare that we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety.

"With the existing colonies or dependencies of any European power we have not interfered and shall not interfere. But with the Governments who have declared their independence and maintained it, and whose independence we have, on great consideration and on just principles, acknowledged, we could not view any interposition for the purpose of oppressing them, or controlling in any other manner their destiny, by any European power, in any other light than as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States. * * * Our policy in regard to Europe, which was adopted at an early stage of the wars which have so long agitated that quarter of the globe, nevertheless remains the same, which is, not to interfere in the internal concerns of any of its powers; to consider the Government de facto as the legitimate Government for us; to cultivate friendly relations with it, and to preserve those relations by a frank, firm, and manly policy, meeting, in all instances, the just claims of every power, submitting to injuries from none. But in regard to these continents, circumstances are eminently and conspicuously different. It is impossible that the allied powers should extend their political system to any portion of either continent without endangering our peace and happiness; nor can any one believe that our Southern brethren, if left to themselves, would adopt it of their own accord. It is equally impossible, therefore, that we should behold such interposition, in any form, with indifference."

The Monroe Administration, however, did not content itself with formulating a correct rule for the regulation of the relations between Europe and America. It aimed at also securing the practical benefits to result from the application of the rule. Hence the message just quoted declared that the American continents were fully occupied and were not the subjects for future colonization by European powers. To this spirit and this purpose also are to be attributed the passages of the same message which treat any infringement of the rule against interference in American affairs on the part of the powers of Europe as an act of unfriendliness to the United States. It was realized that it was futile to lay down such a rule unless its observance could be enforced. It was manifest that the United States was the only power in this hemisphere capable of enforcing it. It was therefore courageously declared not merely that Europe ought not to interfere in American affairs, but that any European power doing so would be re-

arded as antagonizing the interests and inviting the opposition of the United States.

That America is in no part open to colonization, though the proposition was not universally admitted at the time of its first enunciation, has long been universally conceded. We are now concerned, therefore, only with that other practical application of the Monroe doctrine, the disregard of which by a European power is to be deemed an act of unfriendliness toward the United States. The precise scope and limitations of this rule cannot be too clearly apprehended. It does not establish any general protectorate by the United States over other American States. It does not relieve any American State from its obligations as fixed by international law, nor prevent any European power directly interested from enforcing such obligations or from inflicting merited punishment for the breach of them. It does not contemplate any interference in the internal affairs of any American State or in the relations between it and other American States. It does not justify any attempt on our part to change the established form of government of any American State or to prevent the people of such State from altering that form according to their own will and pleasure. The rule in question has but a single purpose and object. It is that no European power or combination of European powers shall forcibly deprive an American State of the right and power of self-government and of shaping for itself its own political fortunes and destinies.

That the rule thus defined has been the accepted public law of this country ever since its promulgation cannot fairly be denied. Its pronouncement by the Monroe Administration at that particular time was unquestionably due to the inspiration of Great Britain, who at once gave to it an open and unqualified adhesion which has never been withdrawn. But the rule was decided upon and formulated by the Monroe Administration as a distinctively American doctrine of great import to the safety and welfare of the United States, after the most careful consideration by a Cabinet which numbered among its members John Quincy Adams, Calhoun, Crawford, and Wirt, and which, before acting, took both Jefferson and Madison into its counsels. Its promulgation was received with acclaim by the entire people of the country, irrespective of party. Three years after, Webster declared that the doctrine involved the honor of the country, "I look upon it," he said, "as part of its treasures of reputation, and for one I intend to guard it," and he added:

"I look on the message of December, 1823, as forming a bright page in our history. I will help neither to erase it nor to tear it out; nor shall it be by any act of mine blurred or blotted. It did honor to the sagacity of the Government, and I will not diminish that honor."

Though the rule thus highly eulogized by Webster has never been formally affirmed by Congress, the House in 1864 declared against the Mexican monarchy sought to be set up by the French as not in accord with the policy of the United States, and in 1889 the Senate expressed its disapproval of the connection of any European power with a canal across the Isthmus of Darien or Central America. It is manifest that if a rule has been openly and uniformly declared and acted upon by the Executive branch of the Government for more than

seventy years without express repudiation by Congress, it must be conclusively presumed to have its sanction. Yet it is certainly no more than the exact truth to say that every Administration since President Monroe's has had occasion, and sometimes more occasions than one, to examine and consider the Monroe doctrine, and has, in each instance, given it emphatic indorsement. Presidents have dwelt upon it in messages to Congress, and Secretaries of State have time after time made it the theme of diplomatic representation. Nor, if the practical results of the rule be sought for, is the record either meagre or obscure.

Its first and immediate effect was, indeed, most momentous and far reaching. It was the controlling factor in the emancipation of South America, and to it the independent States which now divide that region between them are largely indebted for their very existence. Since then the most striking single achievement to be credited to the rule is the evacuation of Mexico by the French upon the termination of the civil war. But we are also indebted to it for the provisions of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty, which both neutralized any interoceanic canal across Central America and expressly excluded Great Britain from occupying or exercising any dominion over any part of Central America. It has been used in the case of Cuba as if justifying the position that, while the sovereignty of Spain will be respected, the island will not be permitted to become the possession of any other European power. It has been influential in bringing about the definite relinquishment of any supposed protectorate by Great Britain over the Mosquito coast.

President Polk, in the case of Yucatan and the proposed voluntary transfer of that country to Great Britain or Spain, relied upon the Monroe doctrine, though perhaps erroneously, when he declared in a special message to Congress on the subject that the United States could not consent to any such transfer. Yet, in somewhat the same spirit, Secretary Fish affirmed in 1870 that President Grant had but followed "the teachings of all our history" in declaring in his annual message of that year that existing dependencies were no longer regarded as subject to transfer from one European power to another, and that when the present relation of colonies ceases they are to become independent powers. Another development of the rule, though apparently not necessarily required by either its letter or its spirit, is found in the objection to arbitration of South American controversies by a European power. American questions, it is said, are for American decision, and on that ground the United States went so far as to refuse to mediate in the war between Chile and Peru jointly with Great Britain and France. Finally, on the ground, among others, that the authority of the Monroe doctrine and the prestige of the United States as its exponent and sponsor would be seriously impaired, Secretary Bayard strenuously resisted the enforcement of the Pelletier claim against Haiti.

"The United States," he said, "has proclaimed herself the protector of this Western world, in which she is by far the stronger power, from the intrusion of European sovereignties. She can point with proud satisfaction to the fact that over and over again has she declared effectively that serious indeed would be the consequences if European hostile foot should, without just cause, tread those States in the New

World which have emancipated themselves from European control. She has announced that she would cherish as it becomes her the territorial rights of the feeblest of those States, regarding them not merely as in the eye of the law equal to even the greatest of nationalities, but in view of her distinctive policy as entitled to be regarded by her as the objects of a peculiarly gracious care. I feel bound to say that if we should sanction by reprisals in Haiti the ruthless invasion of her territory and insult to her sovereignty which the facts now before us disclose, if we approve by solemn Executive action and Congressional assent that invasion, it will be difficult for us hereafter to assent that in the New World, of whose rights we are the peculiar guardians, these rights have never been invaded by ourselves."

The foregoing enumeration not only shows the many instances wherein the rule in question has been affirmed and applied, but also demonstrates that the Venezuelan boundary controversy is in any view far within the scope and spirit of the rules as uniformly accepted and acted upon. A doctrine of American public law thus long and firmly established and supported could not easily be ignored in a proper case for its application, even were the considerations upon which it is founded obscure or questionable. No such objection can be made, however, to the Monroe doctrine understood and defined in the manner already stated. It rests, on the contrary, upon facts and principles that are both intelligible and incontrovertible. That distance and 3,000 miles of intervening ocean make any permanent political union between a European and an American State unnatural and inexpedient will hardly be denied. But physical and geographical considerations are the least of the objections to such a union. Europe, as Washington observed, has a set of primary interests which are peculiar to herself. America is not interested in them, and ought not to be vexed or complicated with them.

Each great European power, for instance, to-day maintains enormous armies and fleets in self-defense and for protection against any other European power or powers. What have the States of America to do with that condition of things, or why should they be impoverished by wars or preparations for wars with whose causes or results they can have no direct concern? If all Europe were to suddenly fly to arms over the fate of Turkey, would it not be preposterous that any American State should find itself inextricably involved in the miseries and burdens of the contest? If it were, it would prove to be a partnership in the cost and losses of the struggle, but not in any ensuing benefits.

What is true of the material is no less true of what may be termed the moral interests involved. Those pertaining to Europe are peculiar to her and are entirely diverse from those pertaining and peculiar to America. Europe as a whole is monarchical, and, with the single important exception of the Republic of France, is committed to the monarchical principle. America, on the other hand, is devoted to the exactly opposite principle—the idea that every people has an inalienable right of self-government—and in the United States of America has furnished to the world the most conspicuous and conclusive example and proof of the excellence of free institutions, whether from the standpoint of Na-

tional greatness or of individual happiness. It cannot be necessary, however, to enlarge upon this phase of the subject. Whether moral or material interests be considered, it cannot but be universally conceded that those of Europe are irreconcilably diverse from those of America, and that any European control of the latter is necessarily both incongruous and injurious. If, however, for the reasons stated, the forcible intrusion of European powers into American politics is to be deprecated—if, as it is to be deprecated, it should be resisted and prevented—such resistance and prevention must come from the United States. They would come from it, of course, were it made the point of attack. But if they come at all, they must also come from it when any other American State is attacked, since only the United States has the strength adequate to the exigency.

Is it true, then, that the safety and welfare of the United States are so concerned with the maintenance of the independence of every American State as against any European power as to justify and require the interposition of the United States whenever that independence is endangered? The question can be candidly answered in but one way. The States of America, South as well as North, by geographical proximity, by natural sympathy, by similarity of governmental constitutions, are friends and allies, commercially and politically, of the United States. To allow the subjugation of any of them by a European power is, of course, to completely reverse that situation and signifies the loss of all the advantages incident to their natural relations to us. But that is not all. The people of the United States have a vital interest in the cause of popular self-government. They have secured the right for themselves and their posterity at the cost of infinite blood and treasure. They have realized and exemplified its beneficent operation by a career unexampled in point of National greatness or individual felicity. They believe it to be for the healing of all nations, and that civilization must either advance or retrograde accordingly as its supremacy is extended or curtailed. Imbued with these sentiments, the people of the United States might not impossibly be wrought up to an active propaganda in favor of a cause so highly valued both for themselves and for mankind. But the age of the Crusades has passed, and they are content with such assertion and defense of the right of popular self-government as their own security and welfare demand. It is in that view more than in any other that they believe it not to be tolerated that the political control of an American State shall be forcibly assumed by a European power.

The mischiefs apprehended from such a source are none the less real because not immediately imminent in any specific case, and are none the less to be guarded against because the combination of circumstances that will bring them upon us cannot be predicted. The civilized States of Christendom deal with each other on substantially the same principles that regulate the conduct of individuals. The greater the enlightenment, the more surely every State perceives that its permanent interests require it to be governed by the immutable principles of right and justice. Each, nevertheless, is only too liable to succumb to the temptations offered by seeming special opportunities for its own aggrandizement, and

each would rashly imperil its own safety were it not to remember that for the regard and respect of other States it must be largely dependent upon its own strength and power. To-day the United States is practically sovereign on this continent, and its fiat is law upon the subjects to which it confines its interposition. Why? It is not because of the pure friendship or goodwill felt for it. It is not simply by reason of its high character as a civilized State, nor because wisdom and justice and equity are the invariable characteristics of the dealings of the United States. It is because, in addition to all other grounds, its infinite resources, combined with its isolated position, render it master of the situation and practically invulnerable as against any or all other powers.

All the advantages of this superiority are at once imperilled if the principle be admitted that European powers may convert American States into colonies or provinces of their own. The principle would be eagerly availed of, and every power doing so would immediately acquire a base of military operations against us. What one power was permitted to do could not be denied to another, and it is not inconceivable that the struggle now going on for the acquisition of Africa might be transferred to South America. If it were, the weaker countries would unquestionably be soon absorbed, while the ultimate result might be the partition of all South America between the various European powers. The disastrous consequences to the United States of such a condition of things are obvious. The loss of prestige, of authority, and of weight in the councils of the family of nations would be among the least of them. Our only real rivals in peace as well as enemies in war would be found located at our very doors. Thus far in our history we have been spared the burdens and evils of immense standing armies, and all the other accessories of huge warlike establishments, and the exemption has largely contributed to our National greatness and wealth, as well as to the happiness of every citizen. But, with the powers of Europe permanently encamped on American soil, the ideal conditions we have thus far enjoyed cannot be expected to continue. We, too, must be armed to the teeth; we, too, must convert the flower of our male population into soldiers and sailors, and by withdrawing them from the various pursuits of peaceful industry we, too, must practically annihilate a large share of the productive energy of the Nation.

How a greater calamity than this could overtake us it is difficult to see. Nor are our just apprehensions to be allayed by suggestions of the friendliness of European powers—of their good-will toward us—of their disposition, should they be our neighbors, to dwell with us in peace and harmony. The people of the United States have learned in the school of experience to what extent the relations of States to each other depend not upon sentiment or principle, but upon selfish interest. They will not soon forget, that, in their hour of distress, all their anxieties and burdens were aggravated by the possibility of demonstrations against their National life on the part of powers with whom they had long maintained the most harmonious relations. They have yet in mind that France seized upon the apparent opportunity of our civil war to set up a monarchy in the adjoining State of Mexico. They realize that

had France and Great Britain held important South American possessions to work from and to benefit, the temptation to destroy the predominance of the great Republic in this hemisphere by furthering its dismemberment might have been irresistible. From that grave peril they have been saved in the past and may be saved again in the future through the operation of the sure but silent force of the doctrine proclaimed by President Monroe. To abandon it, on the one hand, disregarding both the logic of the situation and the facts of our past experience, would be to renounce a policy which has proved both an easy defense against foreign aggression and a prolific source of internal progress and prosperity.

There is, then, a doctrine of American public law, well founded in principle and abundantly sanctioned by precedent, which entitles and requires the United States to treat as an injury to itself the forcible assumption by an European power of political control over an American State. The application of the doctrine to the boundary dispute between Great Britain and Venezuela remains to be made and presents no real difficulty. Though the dispute relates to a boundary line, yet, as it is between States, it necessarily imports political control to be lost by one party and gained by the other. The political control at stake, too, is of no mean importance, but concerns a domain of great extent—the British claim, it will be remembered, apparently expanded in two years some 33,000 square miles—and, if it also directly involves the command of the mouth of the Orinoco, is of immense consequence in connection with the whole river navigation of the interior of South Africa. It has been intimated, indeed, that in respect of these South American possessions Great Britain is herself an American State like any other, so that a controversy between her and Venezuela is to be settled between themselves as if it were between Venezuela and Brazil or between Venezuela and Colombia, and does not call for or justify United States intervention. If this view be tenable at all, the logical sequence is plain.

Great Britain as a South American State is to be entirely differentiated from Great Britain generally, and if the boundary question cannot be settled otherwise than by force, British Guiana, with her own independent resources, and not those of the British Empire, should be left to settle the matter with Venezuela, an arrangement which very possibly Venezuela might not object to. But the proposition that a European power with an American dependency is, for the purposes of the Monroe doctrine, to be classed not as a European, but as an American State will not admit of serious discussion. If it were to be adopted, the Monroe doctrine would be too valueless to be worth asserting. Not only would every European power now having a South American colony be enabled to extend its possessions on this continent indefinitely, but any other European power might also do the same by first taking pains to procure a fraction of South American soil by voluntary cession.

The declaration of the Monroe message—that existing colonies or dependencies of a European power would not be interfered with by the United States—means colonies or dependencies then existing, with their limits as then existing. So it has been invariably construed, and so it must continue to be construed unless it is to be

prived of all vital force. Great Britain can not be deemed a South American State within the purview of the Monroe doctrine, nor, if she is appropriating Venezuelan territory, is it material that she does so by advancing the frontier of an old colony instead of by the planting of a new colony. The difference is matter of form and not of substance, and the doctrine, if pertinent in the one case, must be in the other also. It is not admitted, however, and therefore can not be assumed, that Great Britain is in fact usurping dominion over Venezuelan territory. While Venezuela charges such usurpation, Great Britain denies it, and the United States, until the merits are authoritatively ascertained, can take sides with neither. But while this is so—while the United States may not, under existing circumstances, at least, take upon itself to say which of the two parties is right and which wrong—it is certainly within its right to demand that the truth shall be ascertained. Being entitled to resent and resist any sequestration of Venezuelan soil by Great Britain, it is necessarily entitled to know whether such sequestration has occurred or is now going on. Otherwise, if the United States is without the right to know and have it determined whether there is or is not British aggression upon Venezuelan territory, its right to protest against or repel such aggression may be dismissed from consideration.

The right to act upon a fact the existence of which there is no right to have ascertained is simply illusory. It being clear, therefore, that the United States may legitimately insist upon the merits of the boundary question being determined, it is equally clear that there is but one feasible mode of determining them, viz., peaceful arbitration. The impracticability of any conventional adjustment has been often and thoroughly demonstrated. Even more impossible of consideration is an appeal to arms—a mode of settling national pretensions unhappily not yet wholly obsolete. If, however, it were not condemnable as a relic of barbarism and crime in itself, so one-sided a contest could not be invited nor even accepted by Great Britain without distinct disparagement to her character as a civilized State. Great Britain, however, assumes no such attitude. On the contrary, she both admits that there is a controversy, and that arbitration should be resorted to for its adjustment. But, while up to that point her attitude leaves nothing to be desired, its practical effect is completely nullified by her insistence that the submission shall cover but a part of the controversy—that, as a condition of arbitrating her right to a part of the disputed territory, the remainder shall be turned over to her. If it were possible to point to a boundary which both parties had ever agreed or assumed to be such either expressly or tacitly, the demand that territory conceded by such line to British Guiana should be held not to be in dispute might rest upon a reasonable basis. But there is no such line. The territory which Great Britain insists shall be ceded to her as a condition of arbitrating her claim to other territory has never been admitted to belong to her. It has always and consistently been claimed by Venezuela.

Upon what principle—except her feebleness as a nation—is she to be denied the right of having the claim heard and passed upon by an impartial tribunal? No reason nor shadow of reason appears in all the volumi-

inous literature of the subject. "It is to be so because I will it to be so" seems to be the only justification Great Britain offers. It is, indeed, intimated that the British claim to this particular territory rests upon an occupation which, whether acquiesced in or not, has ripened into a perfect title by long continuance. But what prescription affecting territorial rights can be said to exist as between sovereign States? Or, if there is any, what is the legitimate consequence? It is not that all arbitration should be denied, but only that the submission should embrace an additional topic, namely, the validity of the asserted prescriptive title either in point of law or in point of fact. No different result follows from the contention that as a matter of principle Great Britain cannot be asked to submit and ought not to submit to arbitration her political and sovereign rights over territory. This contention, if applied to the whole or to a vital part of the possessions of a sovereign State, need not be controverted. To hold otherwise might be equivalent to holding that a sovereign State was bound to arbitrate its very existence.

But Great Britain has herself shown in various instances that the principle has no pertinency when either the interests or the territorial area involved are not of controlling magnitude, and her loss of them as the result of an arbitration cannot appreciably affect her honor or her power. Thus she has arbitrated the extent of her colonial possessions twice with the United States, twice with Portugal, and once with Germany, and perhaps in other instances. The northwest water boundary arbitration of 1872 between her and this country is an example in point, and well illustrates both the effect to be given to long-continued use and enjoyment and the fact that a truly great power sacrifices neither prestige nor dignity by reconsidering the most emphatic rejection of a proposition when satisfied of the obvious and intrinsic justice of the case. By the award of the Emperor of Germany, the arbitrator in that case, the United States acquired San Juan and a number of smaller islands near the coast of Vancouver as a consequence of the decision that the term "the channel which separates the continent from Vancouver Island," as used in the treaty of Washington of 1846, meant the Haro Channel, and not the Rosario Channel. Yet a leading contention of Great Britain before the arbitrator was that equity required a judgment in her favor because a decision in favor of the United States would deprive British subjects of rights of navigation of which they had had the habitual enjoyment from the time when the Rosario Strait was first explored and surveyed in 1798. So, though by virtue of the award the United States acquired San Juan and the other islands of the group to which it belongs, the British Foreign Secretary had in 1859 instructed the British Minister at Washington as follows:

"Her Majesty's Government must, therefore, under any circumstances, maintain the right of the British Crown to the Island of San Juan. The interests at stake in connection with the retention of that Island are too important to admit of compromise, and your lordship will consequently bear in mind that, whatever arrangement as to the boundary line is finally arrived at, no settlement of the question will be accepted by her Majesty's Government which does not provide for the Island of San Juan being reserved to the British Crown."

Mr. Adee to Mr. Bayard.

No. 806.] DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
WASHINGTON, July 24, 1895.
His Excellency Thomas F. Bayard, etc.,
etc., etc., London.

Sir: In Mr. Olney's instruction No. 804, of the 20th inst., in relation to the Anglo-Venezuelan boundary dispute, you will note a reference to the sudden increase of the area claimed for British Guiana, amounting to 33,000 square miles between 1884 and 1886. This statement is made on the authority of the British publication entitled the Statesman's Year Book.

I add for your better information that the same statement is found in the British Colonial Office List, a Government publication.

In the issue for 1885 the following passage occurs, on Page 24, under the head of British Guiana:

"It is impossible to specify the exact area of the colony, as its precise boundaries between Venezuela and Brazil, respectively, are undetermined, but it has been computed to be 76,000 square miles."

In the issue of the same list for 1886 the same statement occurs, on Page 33, with the change of area to "about 109,000 square miles."

The official maps in the two volumes mentioned are identical; so that the increase of 33,000 square miles claimed for British Guiana is not thereby explained, but later Colonial Office List maps show a varying sweep of the boundary westward into what previously figured as Venezuelan territory, while no change is noted on the Brazilian frontier. I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
ALVEY A. ADEE,
Acting Secretary.

Lord Salisbury to Sir Julian Pauncefote.

No. 189.] FOREIGN OFFICE, Nov. 26, 1895.

Sir: On the 7th of August I transmitted to Lord Gough a copy of the dispatch from Mr. Olney which Mr. Bayard had left with me that day, and of which he had read portions to me. I informed him at the time that it could not be answered until it had been carefully considered by the law officers of the Crown. I have therefore deferred replying to it till after the recess.

I will not now deal with those portions of it which are concerned exclusively with the controversy that has for some time past existed between the Republic of Venezuela and her Majesty's Government in regard to the boundary which separates their dominions. I take a very different view from Mr. Olney of various matters upon which he touches in that part of the dispatch; but I will defer for the present all observations upon it, as it concerns matters which are not in themselves of first-rate importance, and do not directly concern the relations between Great Britain and the United States. The latter part, however, of the dispatch, turning from the question of the frontiers of Venezuela, proceeds to deal with principles of a far wider character, and to advance doctrines of international law which are of considerable interest to all the nations whose dominions include any portion of the Western Hemisphere.

The contentions set forth by Mr. Olney in this part of his dispatch are represented by him as being an application of the political maxims which are well known in American discussion under the name of the

Thus, as already intimated, the British demand that her right to a portion of the disputed territory shall be acknowledged before she will consent to an arbitration as to the rest seems to stand upon nothing but her own ipse dixit. She says to Venezuela, in substance: "You can get none of the debatable land by force, because you are not strong enough; you can get none by treaty, because I will not agree, and you can take your chance of getting a portion by arbitration only if you first agree to abandon to me such other portion as I may designate." It is not perceived how such an attitude can be defended, nor how it is reconcilable with that love of justice and fair play so eminently characteristic of the English race. It in effect deprives Venezuela of her free agency and puts her under virtual duress. Territory acquired by reason of it will be as much wrested from her by the strong hand as if occupied by British troops or covered by British fleets. It seems, therefore, quite impossible that this position of Great Britain should be assented to by the United States, or that, if such position be adhered to with the result of enlarging the bounds of British Guiana, it should not be regarded as amounting, in substance, to an invasion and conquest of Venezuelan territory.

In these circumstances the duty of the President appears to him unmistakable and imperative. Great Britain's assertion of title to the disputed territory, combined with her refusal to have that title investigated, being a substantial appropriation of the territory to her own use, not to protest and give warning that the transaction will be regarded as injurious to the interests of the people of the United States, as well as oppressive in itself, would be to ignore an established policy with which the honor and welfare of this country are closely identified. While the measures necessary or proper for the vindication of that policy are to be determined by another branch of the Government, it is clearly for the Executive to leave nothing undone which may tend to render such determination unnecessary.

You are instructed, therefore, to present the foregoing views to Lord Salisbury by reading to him this communication (leaving with him a copy should he so desire) and to reinforce them by such pertinent considerations as will doubtless occur to you. They call for a definite decision upon the point whether Great Britain will consent or will decline to submit the Venezuelan boundary question in its entirety to impartial arbitration. It is the earnest hope of the President that the conclusion will be on the side of arbitration, and that Great Britain will add one more to the conspicuous precedents she has already furnished in favor of that wise and just mode of adjusting international disputes. If he is to be disappointed in that hope, however—a result not to be anticipated, and in his judgment calculated to greatly embarrass the future relations between this country and Great Britain—it is his wish to be made acquainted with the fact at such early date as will enable him to lay the whole subject before Congress in his next annual message. I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
RICHARD OLNEY.

dominion in the Western Hemisphere, and still less can they accept the doctrine that the United States are entitled to claim that the process of arbitration shall be applied to any demand for the surrender of territory which one of those States may make against another.

I have commented in the above remarks only upon the general aspect of Mr. Olney's doctrines, apart from the special considerations which attach to the controversy between the United Kingdom and Venezuela in its present phase. This controversy has undoubtedly been made more difficult by the inconsiderate action of the Venezuelan Government in breaking off relations with her Majesty's Government, and its settlement has been correspondingly delayed; but her Majesty's Government have not surrendered the hope that it will be adjusted by a reasonable arrangement at an early date.

I request that you will read the substance of the above dispatch to Mr. Olney, and leave him a copy if he desires it. S.

Lord Salisbury to Sir Julian Pauncefote.

No 190.] FOREIGN OFFICE, Nov. 26, 1895.

Sir: In my preceding dispatch of to-day's date I have replied only to the latter portion of Mr. Olney's dispatch of the 20th July last, which treats of the application of the Monroe doctrine to the question of the boundary dispute between Venezuela and the colony of British Guiana. But it seems desirable, in order to remove some evident misapprehensions as to the main features of the question, that the statement of it contained in the earlier portion of Mr. Olney's dispatch should not be left without reply. Such a course will be the more convenient because, in consequence of the suspension of diplomatic relations, I shall not have the opportunity of setting right misconceptions of this kind in the ordinary way in a dispatch addressed to the Venezuelan Government itself.

Her Majesty's Government, while they have never avoided or declined argument on the subject with the Government of Venezuela, have always held that the question was one which had no direct bearing on the material interests of any other country, and have consequently refrained hitherto from presenting any detailed statement of their case either to the United States or to other foreign Governments.

It is perhaps a natural consequence of this circumstance that Mr. Olney's narration of what has passed bears the impress of being mainly, if not entirely, founded on ex parte statements emanating from Venezuela, and gives, in the opinion of her Majesty's Government, an erroneous view of many material facts.

Mr. Olney commences his observations by remarking that "the dispute is of ancient date, and began at least as early as the time when Great Britain acquired by the treaty with the Netherlands in 1814 the establishments of Demerara, Essequibo, and Berbice. From that time to the present the dividing line between these establishments, now called British Guiana, and Venezuela, has never ceased to be subject of contention."

This statement is founded on misconception. The dispute on the subject of the frontier did not, in fact, commence till after the year 1840.

The title of Great Britain to the territory in question is derived, in the first

place, from conquest and military occupation of the Dutch settlements in 1796. Both on this occasion and at the time of a previous occupation of those settlements, in 1781, the British authorities marked the western boundary of their possessions as beginning some distance up the Orinoco beyond Point Barima, in accordance with the limits claimed and actually held by the Dutch, and this has always since remained the frontier claimed by Great Britain. The definitive cession of the Dutch settlements to England was, as Mr. Olney states, placed on record by the treaty of 1814, and, although the Spanish Government were parties to the negotiations which led to that treaty, they did not at any stage of them raise objection to the frontiers claimed by Great Britain, though these were perfectly well known to them. At that time the Government of Venezuela had not been recognized even by the United States, though the province was already in revolt against the Spanish Government, and had declared its independence. No question of frontier was raised with Great Britain, either by it or by the Government of the United States of Colombia, in which it became merged in 1819. That Government, indeed, on repeated occasions, acknowledged its indebtedness to Great Britain for her friendly attitude. When, in 1830, the Republic of Venezuela assumed a separate existence its Government was equally warm in its expressions of gratitude and friendship, and there was not at that time any indication of an intention to raise such claims as have been urged by it during the latter portion of this century.

It is true, as stated by Mr. Olney, that in the Venezuelan Constitution of 1830 Article V. lays down that "the territory of Venezuela comprises all that which previously to the political changes of 1810 was denominated the Captaincy General of Venezuela." Similar declarations had been made in the fundamental laws promulgated in 1819 and 1821.

I need not point out that a declaration of this kind made by a newly self-constituted State can have no valid force as against international arrangements previously concluded by the nation from which it has separated itself.

But the present difficulty would never have arisen if the Government of Venezuela had been content to claim only those territories which could be proved or even reasonably asserted to have been practically in the possession and under the effective jurisdiction of the Captaincy General of Venezuela.

There is no authoritative statement by the Spanish Government of those territories, for a decree which the Venezuelan Government allege to have been issued by the King of Spain in 1768, describing the Province of Guiana as bordered on the south by the Amazon and on the east by the Atlantic, certainly cannot be regarded as such. It absolutely ignores the Dutch settlements, which not only existed in fact, but had been formally recognized by the treaty of Munster of 1648, and it would, if now considered valid, transfer to Venezuela the whole of the British, Dutch, and French Guianas, and an enormous tract of territory belonging to Brazil.

But of the territories claimed and actually occupied by the Dutch, which were those acquired from them by Great Britain, there exist the most authentic declarations. In

1759, and again in 1769, the States General of Holland addressed formal remonstrances to the Court of Madrid against the incursions of the Spaniards into their posts and settlements in the basin of the Cuyuni. In these remonstrances they distinctly claimed all the branches of the Essequibo River, and especially the Cuyuni River, as lying within Dutch territory. They demanded immediate reparation for the proceedings of the Spaniards, and reinstatement of the posts said to have been injured by them, and suggested that a proper delineation between the Colony of Essequibo and the Rio Orinoco should be laid down by authority.

To this claim the Spanish Government never attempted to make any reply. But it is evident from the archives which are preserved in Spain, and to which, by the courtesy of the Spanish Government, reference has been made, that the Council of State did not consider that they had the means of rebutting it, and that neither they nor the Governor of Cumana were prepared seriously to maintain the claims which were suggested in reports from his subordinate officer, the commandant of Guiana. These reports were characterized by the Spanish Ministers as insufficient and unsatisfactory, as "professing to show the Province of Guiana under too favorable a light," and finally by the Council of State as appearing from other information to be "very improbable." They form, however, with a map which accompanied them, the evidence on which the Venezuelan Government appear most to rely, though it may be observed that among other documents which have from time to time been produced or referred to by them in the course of the discussions is a bull of Pope Alexander VI. in 1493, which, if it is to be considered as having any present validity, would take from the Government of the United States all title to jurisdiction on the Continent of North America.

The fundamental principle underlying the Venezuelan argument is, in fact, that, inasmuch as Spain was originally entitled of right to the whole of the American continent, any territory on that continent which she cannot be shown to have acknowledged in positive and specific terms to have passed to another power can only have been acquired by wrongful usurpation, and if situated to the north of the Amazon and west of the Atlantic, must necessarily belong to Venezuela, as her self-constituted inheritor in those regions. It may reasonably be asked whether Mr. Olney would consent to refer to the arbitration of another power pretensions raised by the Government of Mexico on such a foundation to large tracts of territory which had long been comprised in the Federation.

The circumstances connected with the marking of what is called the "Schomburgk" line are as follows:

In 1835 a grant was made by the British Government for the exploration of the interior of the British colony, and Mr. (afterward Sir Robert) Schomburgk, who was employed on this service, on his return to the capital of the colony in July, 1839, called the attention of the Government to the necessity for an early demarkation of its boundaries. He was in consequence appointed in November, 1840, special Commissioner for provisionally surveying and delimiting the boundaries of British Guiana, and notice of the appointment was given to the Gov-

ernments concerned, including that of Venezuela.

The intention of her Majesty's Government at that time was, when the work of the Commissioner had been completed, to communicate to the other Governments their views as to the true boundary of the British colony, and then to settle any details to which those Governments might take objection.

It is important to notice that Sir R. Schomburgk did not discover or invent any new boundaries. He took particular care to fortify himself with the history of the case. He had further, from actual exploration and information obtained from the Indians, and from the evidence of local remains, as at Barima, and local traditions, as on the Cuyuni, fixed the limits of the Dutch possessions, and the zone from which all trace of Spanish influence was absent. On such data he based his reports.

At the very outset of his mission he surveyed Point Barima where the remains of a Dutch fort still existed, and placed there and at the mouth of the Amacura two boundary posts. At the urgent entreaty of the Venezuelan Government, these two posts were afterward removed, as stated by Mr. Olney, but this concession was made on the distinct understanding that Great Britain did not thereby in any way abandon her claim to that position.

In submitting the maps of his survey, on which he indicated the line which he would propose to her Majesty's Government for adoption, Sir R. Schomburgk called attention to the fact that her Majesty's Government might justly claim the whole basin of the Cuyuni and Yuruari, on the ground that the natural boundary of the colony included any territory through which flow rivers which fall into the Essequibo. "Upon this principle," he wrote, "the boundary line would run from the sources of the Carumani toward the sources of the Cuyuni proper, and from thence toward its far more northern tributaries, the Rivers Iruary (Yuruari) and Iruang, (Yuruan), and thus approach the very heart of Venezuelan Guiana." But, on grounds of complaisance toward Venezuela, he proposed that Great Britain should consent to surrender her claim to a more extended frontier inland in return for the formal recognition of her right to Point Barima. It was on this principle that he drew the boundary line which has since been called by his name.

Undoubtedly, therefore, Mr. Olney is right when he states that "it seems impossible to treat the Schomburgk line as being the boundary claimed by Great Britain as a matter of right, or as anything but a line originating in considerations of convenience and expediency." The Schomburgk line was in fact a great reduction of the boundary claimed by Great Britain as matter of right, and its proposal originated in a desire to come to a speedy and friendly arrangement with a weaker power with whom Great Britain was at the time, and desired to remain, in cordial relations.

The following are the main facts of the discussions that ensued with the Venezuelan Government:

While Mr. Schomburgk was engaged on his survey the Venezuelan Minister in London had urged her Majesty's Government to enter into a treaty of limits, but received the answer that, if it should be necessary to enter into such a treaty, a survey was, at any rate, the necessary preliminary, and that this was proceeding.

As soon as her Majesty's Government were in possession of Mr. Schomburgk's reports, the Venezuelan Minister was informed that they were in a position to commence negotiations, and in January, 1844, M. Fortique commenced by stating the claim of his Government.

This claim, starting from such obsolete grounds as the original discovery by Spain of the American continent, and mainly supported by quotations of a more or less vague character from the writings of travelers and geographers, but adducing no substantial evidence of actual conquest or occupation of the territory claimed, demanded the Essequibo itself as the boundary of Venezuela.

A reply was returned by Lord Aberdeen, then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, pointing out that it would be impossible to arrive at any agreement if both sides brought forward pretensions of so extreme a character, but stating that the British Government would not imitate M. Fortique in putting forward a claim which it could not be intended seriously to maintain. Lord Aberdeen then proceeded to announce the concessions which, "out of friendly regard to Venezuela," her Majesty's Government were prepared to make, and proposed a line starting from the mouth of the Moroco to the junction of the River Barima with the Waini, thence up the Barima to the point at which that stream approached nearest to the Acarabisi, and thence following Sir R. Schomburgk's line from the source of the Acarabisi onward.

A condition was attached to the proffered cession, viz., that the Venezuelan Government should enter into an engagement that no portion of the territory proposed to be ceded should be alienated at any time to a foreign power, and that the Indian tribes residing in it should be protected from oppression.

No answer to the note was ever received from the Venezuelan Government, and in 1850 her Majesty's Government informed her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Caracas that, as the proposal had remained for more than six years unaccepted, it must be considered as having lapsed, and authorized him to make a communication to the Venezuelan Government to that effect.

A report having at the time become current in Venezuela that Great Britain intended to seize Venezuelan Guiana, the British Government distinctly disclaimed such an intention, but inasmuch as the Government of Venezuela subsequently permitted projects to be set on foot for the occupation of Point Barima and certain other positions in dispute, the British Chargé d'Affaires was instructed, in June, 1850, to call the serious attention of the President and Government of Venezuela to the question, and to declare to them "that whilst, on the one hand, Great Britain had no intention to occupy or encroach on the disputed territory, she would not, on the other hand, view with indifference aggressions on that territory by Venezuela."

The Venezuelan Government replied in December of the same year that Venezuela had no intention of occupying or encroaching upon any part of the territory the dominion of which was in dispute, and that orders would be issued to the authorities in Guiana to abstain from taking any steps contrary to this engagement.

This constitutes what has been termed the "Agreement of 1850," to which the Government of Venezuela have frequently ap-

pealed, but which the Venezuelans have repeatedly violated in succeeding years.

Their first acts of this nature consisted in the occupation of fresh positions to the east of their previous settlements, and the founding, in 1858, of the town of Nueva Providencia on the right bank of the Yururari, all previous settlements being on the left bank. The British Government, however, considering that these settlements were so near positions which they had not wished to claim, considering also the difficulty of controlling the movements of mining populations, overlooked this breach of the agreement.

The Governor of the colony was, in 1857, sent to Caracas to negotiate for a settlement of the boundary, but he found the Venezuelan State in so disturbed a condition that it was impossible to commence negotiations, and eventually he came away without having effected anything.

For the next nineteen years, as stated by Mr. Olney, the civil commotions in Venezuela prevented any resumption of negotiations.

In 1876 it was reported that the Venezuelan Government had, for the second time, broken "the agreement of 1850" by granting licenses to trade and cut wood in Barima and eastward. Later in the same year that Government once more made an overture for the settlement of the boundary. Various delays interposed before negotiations actually commenced; and it was not till 1879 that Señor Rojaz began them with a renewal of the claim to the Essequibo as the eastern boundary of Venezuelan Guiana. At the same time he stated that his Government wished "to obtain, by means of a treaty, a definitive settlement of the question, and was disposed to proceed to the demarkation of the divisional line between the two Guianas in a spirit of conciliation and true friendship toward her Majesty's Government."

In reply to this communication a note was addressed to Señor Rojaz on the 10th of January, 1880, reminding him that the boundary which her Majesty's Government claimed, as a matter of strict right on grounds of conquest and concession by treaty, commenced at a point at the mouth of the Orinoco, westward of Point Barima, that it proceeded thence in a southerly direction to the Imataca Mountains, the line of which it followed to the northwest, passing from thence by the high land of Santa Maria just south of the town of Upata, until it struck a range of hills on the eastern bank of the Caroni River, following these southward until it struck the great backbone of the Guiana district, the Barima Mountains of British Guiana, and thence southward to the Pacaraima Mountains. On the other hand, the claim which had been put forward on behalf of Venezuela by Gen. Guzman Blanco in his message to the National Congress of the 20th of February, 1877, would involve the surrender of a province now inhabited by 40,000 British subjects, and which had been in the uninterrupted possession of Holland and of Great Britain successively for two centuries.

The difference between these two claims being so great, it was pointed out to Señor Rojaz that, in order to arrive at a satisfactory arrangement, each party must be prepared to make very considerable concessions to the other, and he was assured that, although the claim of Venezuela to the Essequibo River boundary could not, under any circumstances, be entertained,

yet that her Majesty's Government were anxious to meet the Venezuelan Government in a spirit of conciliation, and would be willing, in the event of a renewal of negotiations for the general settlement of boundaries, to waive a portion of what they considered to be their strict rights if Venezuela were really disposed to make corresponding concessions on her part.

The Venezuelan Minister replied in February, 1881, by proposing a line which commenced on the coast a mile to the north of the Morocco River, and followed certain parallels and meridians inland, bearing a general resemblance to the proposal made by Lord Aberdeen in 1844.

Señor Rojaz's proposal was referred to the Lieutenant General and Attorney General of British Guiana, who were then in England, and they presented an elaborate report, showing that in the thirty-five years which had elapsed since Lord Aberdeen's proposed concession natives and others had settled in the territory under the belief that they would enjoy the benefits of British rule, and that it was impossible to assent to any such concessions as Señor Rojaz's line would involve. They, however, proposed an alternative line which involved considerable reductions of that laid down by Sir R. Schomburgk.

This boundary was proposed to the Venezuelan Government by Lord Granville in September, 1881, but no answer was ever returned by that Government to the proposal.

While, however, the Venezuelan Minister constantly stated that the matter was under active consideration, it was found that in the same year a concession had been given by his Government to Gen. Pulgar, which included a large portion of the territory in dispute. This was the third breach by Venezuela of the agreement of 1850.

Early in 1884 news arrived of a fourth breach by Venezuela of the agreement of 1850 through two different grants which covered the whole of the territory in dispute, and as this was followed by actual attempts to settle on the disputed territory, the British Government could no longer remain inactive.

Warning was therefore given to the Venezuelan Government and to the concessionaires, and a British Magistrate was sent into the threatened district to assert the British rights.

Meanwhile the negotiations for a settlement of the boundary had continued, but the only replies that could be obtained from Señor Guzman Blanco, the Venezuelan Minister, were proposals for arbitration in different forms, all of which her Majesty's Government were compelled to decline, as involving a submission to the arbitrator of the claim advanced by Venezuela in 1844 to all territory up to the left bank of the Essequibo.

As the progress of settlement by British subjects made a decision of some kind absolutely necessary, and as the Venezuelan Government refused to come to any reasonable arrangement, her Majesty's Government decided not to repeat the offer of concessions which had not been reciprocated, but to assert their undoubted right to the territory within the Schomburgk line, while still consenting to hold open for further negotiation, and even for arbitration, the unsettled lands between that line and what they considered to be the rightful boundary as stated in the note to Señor Rojaz of the 10th of January, 1880.

The execution of this decision was deferred for a time, owing to the return of Señor Guzman Blanco to London, and the desire of Lord Rosebery, then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, to settle all pending questions between the two Governments. Mr. Olney is mistaken in supposing that in 1886 "a treaty was practically agreed upon containing a general arbitration clause, under which the parties might have submitted the boundary dispute to the decision of a third power, or of several powers in amity with both." It is true that Gen. Guzman Blanco proposed that the commercial treaty between the two countries should contain a clause of this nature, but it had reference to future disputes only. Her Majesty's Government have always insisted on a separate discussion of the frontier question, and have considered its settlement to be a necessary preliminary to other arrangements. Lord Rosebery's proposal, made in July, 1886, was "that the two Governments should agree to consider the territory lying between the boundary lines respectively proposed in the eighth paragraph of Señor Rojaz's note of the 21st of February, 1881, and in Lord Granville's note of the 15th of September, 1881, as the territory in dispute between the two countries, and that a boundary line within the limits of this territory should be traced either by an arbitrator or by a joint commission on the basis of an equal division of this territory, due regard being had to natural boundaries."

Señor Guzman Blanco replied declining the proposal, and repeating that arbitration on the whole claim of Venezuela was the only method of solution which he could suggest. This pretension is hardly less exorbitant than would be a refusal by Great Britain to agree to an arbitration on the boundary of British Columbia and Alaska unless the United States would consent to bring into question one-half of the whole area of the latter territory. He shortly afterward left England, and as there seemed no hope of arriving at an agreement by further discussions, the Schomburgk line was proclaimed as the irreducible boundary of the colony in October, 1886. It must be borne in mind that in taking this step her Majesty's Government did not assert anything approaching their extreme claim, but confined themselves within the limits of what had, as early as 1840, been suggested as a concession out of friendly regard and complaisance.

When Señor Guzman Blanco, having returned to Venezuela, announced his intention of erecting a lighthouse at Point Barima, the British Government expressed their readiness to permit this, if he would enter into a formal written agreement that its erection would not be held to prejudice their claim to the site.

In the meanwhile the Venezuelan Government had sent commissioners into the territory to the east of the Schomburgk line, and on their return two notes were addressed to the British Minister at Caracas, dated, respectively, the 26th and 31st of January, 1887, demanding the evacuation of the whole territory held by Great Britain from the mouth of the Orinoco to the Pomeroon River, and adding that should this not be done by the 20th of February, and should the evacuation not be accompanied by the acceptance of arbitration as the means of deciding the pending frontier question, diplomatic relations would be broken off. In pursuance of this decision, the British representative at Caracas received his passports, and relations were

declared by the Venezuelan Government to be suspended on the 21st of February, 1887.

In December of that year, as a matter of precaution, and in order that the claims of Great Britain beyond the Schomburgk line might not be considered to have been abandoned, a notice was issued by the Governor of British Guiana, formally reserving those claims. No steps have, however, at any time, been taken by the British authorities to exercise jurisdiction beyond the Schomburgk line, nor to interfere with the proceedings of the Venezuelans in the territory outside of it, although, pending a settlement of the dispute, Great Britain cannot recognize those proceedings as valid or as conferring any legitimate title.

The question has remained in this position ever since. The bases on which her Majesty's Government were prepared to negotiate for its settlement were clearly indicated to the Venezuelan plenipotentiaries who were successively dispatched to London in 1890, 1891, and 1893, to negotiate for a renewal of diplomatic relations; but as on those occasions the only solutions which the Venezuelan Government professed themselves ready to accept would still have involved the submission to arbitration of the Venezuelan claim to a large portion of the British colony, no progress has yet been made toward a settlement.

It will be seen from the preceding statement that the Government of Great Britain have from the first held the same view as to the extent of territory which they are entitled to claim as a matter of right. It comprised the coast line up to the River Amacura and the whole basin of the Essequibo River and its tributaries. A portion of that claim, however, they have always been willing to waive altogether; in regard to another portion, they have been and continue to be perfectly ready to submit the question of their title to arbitration. As regards the rest, that which lies within the so-called Schomburgk line, they do not consider that the rights of Great Britain are open to question. Even within that line they have, on various occasions, offered to Venezuela considerable concessions as a matter of friendship and conciliation, and for the purpose of securing an amicable settlement of the dispute. If, as time has gone on, the concessions thus offered diminished in extent, and have now been withdrawn, this has been the necessary consequence of the gradual spread over the country of British settlements, which her Majesty's Government cannot in justice to the inhabitants offer to surrender to foreign rule, and the justice of such withdrawal is amply borne out by the researches in

the national archives of Holland and Spain, which have furnished further and more convincing evidence in support of the British claims.

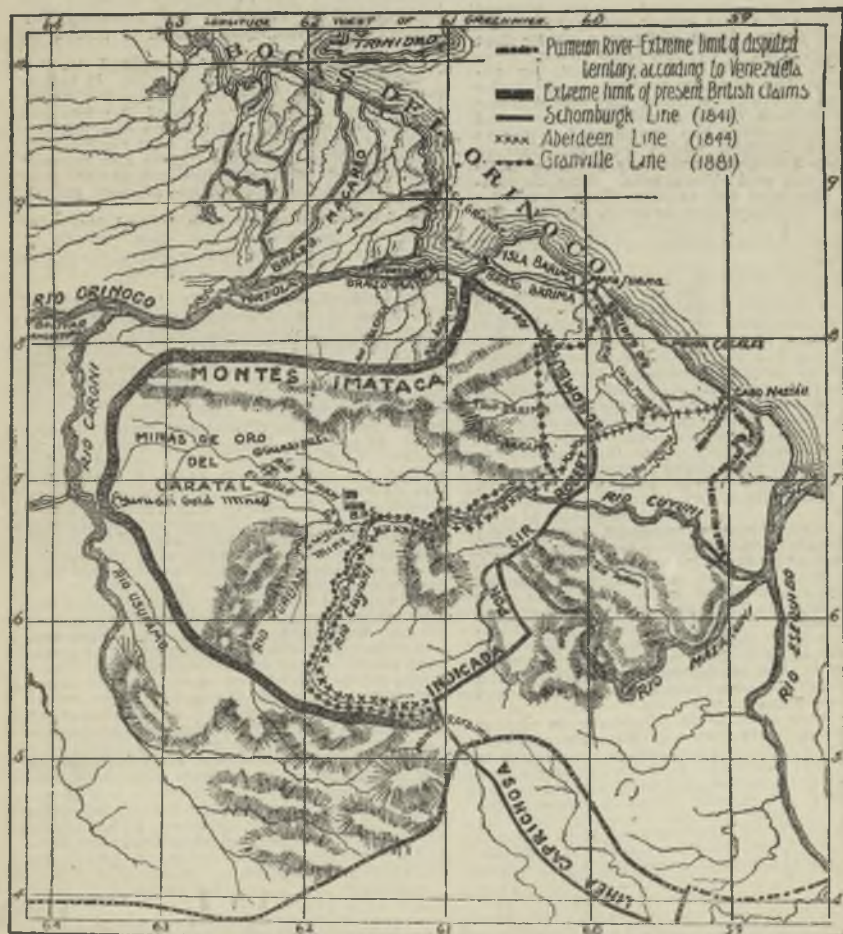
The discrepancies in the frontiers assigned to the British colony in various maps published in England, and erroneously assumed to be founded on official information, are easily accounted for by the circumstances which I have mentioned. Her Majesty's Government cannot, of course, be responsible for such publications made without their authority.

Although the negotiations in 1890, 1891, and 1893 did not lead to any result, her Majesty's Government have not abandoned the hope that they may be resumed with better success, and that when the internal politics of Venezuela are settled on a more durable basis than has lately appeared to be the case, her Government may be enabled to adopt a more moderate and conciliatory course in regard to this question than that of their predecessors. Her Majesty's Government are sincerely desirous of being on friendly relations with Venezuela, and certainly have no design to seize territory that properly belongs to her, or forcibly to extend sovereignty over any portion of her population.

They have, on the contrary, repeatedly expressed their readiness to submit to arbitration the conflicting claims of Great Britain and Venezuela to large tracts of territory which, from their auriferous nature, are known to be of almost untold value. But they cannot consent to entertain, or to submit to the arbitration of another power, or of foreign jurists, however eminent, claims based on the extravagant pretensions of Spanish officials in the last century, and involving the transfer of large numbers of British subjects, who have for many years enjoyed the settled rule of a British colony, to a nation of different race and language, whose political system is subject to frequent disturbance, and whose institutions as yet too often afford very inadequate protection to life and property. No issue of this description has ever been involved in the questions which Great Britain and the United States have consented to submit to arbitration, and her Majesty's Government are convinced that in similar circumstances the Government of the United States would be equally firm in declining to entertain proposals of such a nature.

Your Excellency is authorized to state the substance of this dispatch to Mr. Olney, and to leave him a copy of it if he should desire it.

HISTORY OF THE DISPUTE.



Map of the Disputed Territory.

(See Next Page.)

From The New-York Times of Dec. 18, 1895.

The controversy between Great Britain and Venezuela over territory is one of long standing. Claims made by England have steadily increased and have always been resisted by the Venezuelans. The territory in dispute is extremely valuable and fear of losing it is thought to be the reason for England's declining arbitration.

Great Britain acquired her title to the Colony of British Guiana by treaty from Holland in 1814, the provinces transferred being those of Esequibo, Demerara, and Berbice. From that time to the present day Venezuela has never recognized that England enjoys legal right to a single foot of ground west of the Esequibo River.

In 1841 Sir Robert Schomburgk, an engineer in the British service, entered the disputed territory without the concurrence of the British Government, and proceeded to run a line from the Brazilian frontier to the Boca Grande, which was intended to establish a definite boundary between British Guiana and Venezuela. The Schomburgk line was not at first claimed by the British Foreign Office as legal, and has not until recently been designated in British diplomatic correspondence as England's primary base.

When Schomburgk drew his "arbitrary line" of demarkation, in 1841, he set up posts to indicate British dominion at Point Barima, Amacuro, and other localities. The Venezuelan Government made a vigorous protest, and Lord Aberdeen, then Foreign Secretary, promptly ordered the posts removed, thus showing that England felt no certainty of the justice of her claims.

Lord Aberdeen, in 1844, proposed to the Venezuelans a boundary line which did not follow Schomburgk's line. It conceded to the Venezuelans a large part of the coast and the mouth of the Orinoco River, which Lord Salisbury now claims. Aberdeen's proposed line began on the coast at the mouth of the River Morocco and ran straight into the interior, crossing the Schomburgk line at right angles. This Aberdeen proposition was the first specific definition of England's pretended rights, and the sole foundation for it in international law was the shadowy allegation that Dutch settlements and Indian treaties justified Great Britain in instituting authority over a portion of the trans-Esequibo regions, the exact geographical limits of which had never been adjusted.

It is seen that Lord Aberdeen, in undertaking to trace British Guiana's extreme rightful bounds—thereby fixing a precedent for future British Foreign Secretaries—could find no excuse for carrying them further than the mouth of the Morocco. He made no pretense to ownership of the grand mouth of the Orinoco. It is claimed to-day by Lord Salisbury, who not only declares that England owns the coast up to

the terminus of the Schomburgk line at the mouth of the Amacuro, but claims land in the interior considerably beyond the furthest westward bend of the Aberdeen line.

Of course, the Venezuelans declined to accept the Aberdeen line, and nothing further was done in the matter until 1850, when the celebrated status quo was established, whereby Great Britain agreed not to occupy or encroach upon the territory in dispute in consideration of a similar agreement on the part of Venezuela. What was meant by "territory in dispute" was not stated. The status quo has never been abrogated. It is claimed by Venezuelans that England has repeatedly violated the status quo by invading the territory far beyond either the Schomburgk or Aberdeen line.

Lord Granville in 1881 proposed to the Venezuelans a new boundary line. It began far north of the Aberdeen line, on the coast, but a short distance south of the Schomburgk line, and did not include the Barima River or island, which are now claimed by England. The Granville line in the interior followed the Aberdeen line, but gave Venezuela undisputed possession of the mouth of the Orinoco.

This was equivalent to a formal disavowal of any design upon the Boca Grande of the Orinoco; in the most positive style the exclusive control was assigned to Venezuela.

In 1883 (Lord Granville being still at the head of the Foreign Office,) overtures were made to Venezuela to have an amicable settlement of the case. Venezuela was anxious for settlement, and dispatched Gen. Guzman Blanco, one of the foremost diplomats of South America, to England to act in the matter. Gen. Blanco did not waste his time in discussing maps and ancient lines, but bent all his energies to secure arbitration of the matter. He gained his point, for on June 18, 1885, Lord Granville assented to a treaty between England and Venezuela, one clause of which provided that any differences not adjustable by the usual means should be submitted to "the arbitration of a third power, or of several powers, in amity with both countries, without resorting to war."

This great diplomatic stroke of Gen. Blanco, absolutely bringing England to bay on the boundary question, was, however, immediately made of no avail by the overturn of the Gladstone Ministry. Lord Salisbury, who took office a few days later, promptly rescinded the arbitration clause of the proposed treaty. Since that time England has persistently declined every proposal to arbitrate the matter.

England is not satisfied with repudiating the comparatively moderate boundary designations originated by Aberdeen and Granville, but has enlarged her territorial claim with the utmost recklessness. The Venezuelan Government contends that the Esequibo-Pumeron-Cuyuni strip is the only land fairly in dispute.

HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS.

From The New-York Times of Wednesday, Dec. 25, 1895.

The scope, purposes, and aims of the Monroe doctrine are best shown by quotations from the public and private papers of Presidents of the United States, Secretaries of State, and many statesmen who have given the subject attention and study.

The intervention of European nations in the affairs of this hemisphere has been distinctly disapproved by these men at all times.

Mr. Canning, in his correspondence with Mr. Rush, the United States Minister in England in 1823, having suggested that the United States should take decided ground against the intervention of the Holy Alliance in South America, Mr. Monroe sent the papers to Mr. Jefferson, asking his advice. To this request Mr. Jefferson answered, as follows:

"MONTICELLO, Oct. 24, 1823.

"Dear Sir: The question presented by the letters you have sent me is the most momentous which has ever been offered to my contemplation since that of Independence. That made us a Nation; this sets our compass and points the course which we are to steer through the ocean of time opening on us. And never could we embark upon it under circumstances more auspicious. Our first and fundamental maxim should be never to entangle ourselves in the broils of Europe; our second, never to suffer Europe to intermeddle with cisatlantic affairs. America, North and South, has a set of interests distinct from those of Europe, and peculiarly our own. She should, therefore, have a system of her own, separate and apart from that of Europe. While the last is laboring to become the domicile of despotism, our endeavor should surely be to make our hemisphere that of freedom.

"One nation, most of all, could disturb us in this pursuit; she now offers to lead, aid, and accompany us in it. By acceding to her proposition we detach her from the bands, bring her mighty weight into the scale of free government, and emancipate a continent at one stroke which might otherwise linger long in doubt and difficulty. Great Britain is the nation which can do us the most harm of any one or all on earth, and with her on our side we need not fear the whole world. With her, then, we should most sedulously cherish a cordial friendship, and nothing would tend more to knit our affections than to be fighting once more side

by side in the same cause. Not that I would purchase even her amity at the price of taking part in her wars.

"But the war in which the present proposition might engage us, should that be its consequence, is not her war, but ours. Its object is to introduce and establish the American system of keeping out of our land all foreign powers—of never permitting those of Europe to intermeddle with the affairs of our nations. It is to maintain our own principle, not to depart from it; and if, to facilitate this, we can effect a division in the body of European powers and draw over to our side its most powerful member, surely we should do it. But I am clearly of Mr. Canning's opinion that it will prevent, instead of provoking, war. With Great Britain withdrawn from their scale and shifted into that of our two continents, all Europe combined would not undertake such a war, for how would they propose to get at either enemy without superior fleets? Nor is the occasion to be slighted which this proposition offers of declaring our protest against the atrocious violations of the rights of nations by the interference of any one in the internal affairs of another so flagitiously begun by Bonaparte, and now continued by the equally lawless alliance calling itself Holy.

"But we have first to ask ourselves a question. Do we wish to acquire to our own confederacy any one or more of the Spanish provinces? I candidly confess that I have ever looked on Cuba as the most interesting addition which could ever be made to our system of States. The control which, with Florida Point, this island would give us over the Gulf of Mexico and the countries and isthmus bordering on it, as well as all those whose waters flow into it, would fill up the measure of our political well-being. Yet, as I am sensible that this can never be obtained, even with her own consent, but by war, and its independence, which is our second interest, (and especially its independence of England,) can be secured without it, I have no hesitation in abandoning my first wish to future chances, and accepting its independence, with peace and the friendship of England, rather than its association at the expense of war and her enmity.

"I could honestly, therefore, join in the declaration proposed that we aim, not at the acquisition of any of those possessions—that we will not stand in the way of any amicable arrangement between them and the other country—but that we will oppose with all our means the forcible interposition of any other power as auxiliary, stipendiary, or under any other form or pretext, and most especially their transfer to any power by conquest, cession, or

acquisition in any other way. I should think it therefore advisable that the Executive should encourage the British Government to a continuance in the dispositions expressed in these letters by an assurance of his concurrence with them as far as his authority goes, and that, as it may lead to war, the declaration of which requires an act of Congress, the case shall be laid before them for consideration at their first meeting, and under the reasonable aspect in which it is seen by himself.

"I have been so long weaned from political subjects, and have so long ceased to take any interest in them, that I am sensible I am not qualified to offer opinions on them worthy of any attention; but the question now proposed involves consequences so lasting and effects so decisive of our future destinies as to rekindle all the interest I have heretofore felt on such occasions, and to induce me to the hazard of opinions which will prove only my wish to contribute still my mite toward anything which may be useful to our country. And, praying you to accept it at only what it is worth, I add the assurance of my constant and affectionate friendship and respect."

A Private Letter from Canning.

Mr. Canning, on Dec. 21, 1823, sent a private letter to Sir William A. Court, then British Minister to Spain, from which the following is taken:

"Monarchy in Mexico and monarchy in Brazil would cure the evils of universal democracy and prevent the drawing of demarkation which I most dread—America vs. Europe. The United States, naturally enough, aims at this division, and cherishes the democracy which leads to it. But I do not much apprehend their influence, even if I believe (which I do not altogether) in all the reports of their activity in America. Mexico and they are too neighborly to be friends. In the meanwhile, they have aided us materially."

The Monroe Doctrine.

The Monroe doctrine, as enunciated by President James Monroe in his message of December, 1823, is as follows:

I.

"At the proposal of the Russian Imperial Government, made through the Minister of the Emperor residing here, a full power and instructions have been transmitted to the Minister of the United States at St. Petersburg to arrange, by amicable negotiation, the respective rights and interests of the two nations on the northwest coast of this continent. A similar proposal has been made by his Imperial Majesty to the Government of Great Britain, which has likewise been acceded to. * * * In the discussions to which this interest has given rise, and in the arrangements by which they may terminate, the occasion has been judged proper for asserting as a principle in which the rights and interests of the United States are involved, that the American continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintain, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for

future colonization by any European powers." Paragraph 7, Message of Dec. 2, 1823.

II.

"In the wars of the European powers in matters relating to themselves we have never taken any part, nor does it comport with our policy to do so. It is only when our rights are invaded or seriously menaced that we resent injuries or make preparation for our defense.

"With the movements in this hemisphere we are of necessity more immediately concerned, and by causes which must be obvious to all enlightened and impartial observers. The political system of the allied powers is essentially different in this respect from that of America. This difference proceeds from that which exists in their respective Governments. And to the defense of our own, which has been achieved by the loss of much blood and treasure, and matured by the wisdom of their most enlightened citizens and under which we have enjoyed unexampled felicity, this whole Nation is devoted. We owe it, therefore, to candor and to the amicable relations existing between the United States and those powers to declare that we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety. With the existing colonies or dependencies of any European power we have not interfered, and shall not interfere. But with the Governments who have declared their independence and maintained it, and whose independence we have, on great consideration and just principles, acknowledged, we could not view any interposition for the purpose of oppressing them or controlling in any other manner their destiny, by any European power, in any other light than as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States. * * *

"Our policy in regard to Europe, which was adopted at an early stage of the wars which have so long agitated that quarter of the globe, nevertheless remains the same, which is not to interfere in the internal concerns of any of its powers; to consider the Government de facto as the legitimate Government for us; to cultivate friendly relations with it, and to preserve those relations by a frank, firm, and manly policy, meeting in all instances the just claims of every power, submitting to injuries from none.

"But in regard to these continents circumstances are eminently and conspicuously different. It is impossible that the allied powers should extend their political system to any portion of either continent without endangering our peace and happiness, nor can any one believe that our Southern brethren, if left to themselves, would adopt it of their own accord. It is equally impossible, therefore, that we should behold such interposition in any form with indifference." Paragraphs 48 and 49, Message of Dec. 2, 1823.

It will be observed that the above two passages, which are sometimes printed together as if they formed one continuous passage, and were intended to convey one idea, are widely separated in President Monroe's message. In reality they relate to two different subjects.

Mr. Gallatin's Strong Words.

Mr. Gallatin, Minister to France, wrote to J. Q. Adams, Secretary of State, June 24, 1823, as follows:

"But I added that the United States would undoubtedly preserve their neutrality, provided it was respected, and avoid every interference with the politics of Europe. * * * But I had reason to believe that, on the other hand, they would not suffer others to interfere against the emancipation of America."

Secretary of State Clay's Assertion.

Mr. Clay, Secretary of State, wrote to Mr. Poinsett, March 26, 1825, saying:

"The other principle asserted in the message is that whilst we do not desire to interfere in Europe with the political system of the allied powers, we should regard as dangerous to our peace and safety any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere. The political systems of the two continents are essentially different. Each has an exclusive right to judge for itself what is best suited to its own condition and most likely to promote its happiness, but neither has a right to enforce upon the other the establishment of its peculiar system. This principle was declared in the face of the world, at a moment when there was reason to apprehend that the allied powers were entertaining designs inimical to the freedom, if not the independence, of the new Governments. There is a ground for believing that the declaration of it had considerable effect in preventing the maturity, if not in producing the abandonment, of all such designs. Both principles were laid down after much and anxious deliberation on the part of the late Administration. The President, who then formed a part of it, continues entirely to coincide in both. And you will urge upon the Government of Mexico the utility and expediency of asserting the same principles on all proper occasions."

Reaffirmed by Mr. Clay.

Mr. Clay, Secretary of State, wrote to Messrs. Anderson & Sargent, May 8, 1826, as follows:

"In December, 1823, the then President of the United States, in his annual message upon the opening of Congress, announced as a principle applicable to this continent, which ought hereafter to be insisted upon, that no European nation ought to be allowed to plant upon it new colonies. It was not proposed by that principle to disturb pre-existing European colonies already established in America; the principle looked forward, not backward."

As Stated by Webster.

Mr. Webster, March, 27, 1826, in the House of Representatives, said:

"The amount of it [Mr. Monroe's declaration] was that this Government could not look with indifference on any combination to assist Spain in her war against the South American States; that we could not but consider any such combination as dangerous or unfriendly to us, and that if it should be formed, it would be for the competent

authorities of this Government to decide when the case arose what course our duty and our interest should require us to pursue."

Webster on the Panama Mission.

In Mr. Webster's speech on the Panama mission, delivered April 14, 1826, he said:

"It [the Monroe doctrine] has been said, in the course of this debate, to have been a loose and vague declaration. It was, I believe, sufficiently studied. I have understood from good authority that it was considered, weighed, and distinctly and decidedly approved by every one of the President's advisers at that time. Our Government could not adopt on that occasion precisely the course which England had taken. England threatened the immediate recognition of the provinces if the allies should take part with Spain against them. We had already recognized them. It remained, therefore, only for our Government to say how we should consider a combination of the allied powers to effect objects in America as affecting ourselves; and the message was intended to say what it does say—that we should regard such combination as dangerous to us.

"Sir, I agree with those who maintain the proposition, and I contend against those who deny it, that the message did mean something; that it meant much; and I maintain against both that the declaration effected much good, answered the end designed by it, did great honor to the foresight and the spirit of the Government, and that it cannot now be taken back, retracted, or annulled without disgrace. It met, Sir, with the entire concurrence and the hearty approbation of the country. The tone which it uttered found a corresponding response in the breasts of the free people of the United States. That people saw, and they rejoiced to see, that on a fit occasion our weight had been thrown into the right scale, and that, without departing from our duty, we had done something useful and something effectual for the cause of civil liberty. One general glow of exultation, one universal feeling of the gratified love of liberty, one conscious and proud perfection of the considerations which the country possessed, and of the respect and honor which belonged to it, pervaded all bosoms.

"Possibly the public enthusiasm went too far; it certainly did go far, but, Sir, the sentiment which this declaration inspired was not confined to ourselves. Its force was felt everywhere by all those who could understand its object and foresee its effect. In that very House of Commons of which the gentleman from South Carolina has spoken with such condemnation, how was it received? Not only with approbation, but I may say with no little enthusiasm. While the leading Minister (Mr. Canning) expressed his entire concurrence in the sentiments and opinions of the American President, his distinguished competitor (Mr. Brougham) in that popular body, less restrained by decorum and more at liberty to give utterance to all the feeling of the occasion, declared that no event had ever created greater joy, exultation, and gratitude among all the free men in Europe; that he felt pride in being connected by blood and language with the people of the United States; that the policy disclosed by the message became a great, a

free, and an independent nation, and that he hoped his own country would be prevented by no mean pride or paltry jealousy from following so noble and glorious example.

"It is doubtless true, as I took occasion to observe the other day, that this declaration must be considered as founded on our rights and to spring mainly from a regard to their preservation. It did not permit us at all events to take up arms on any indication of hostile feeling by the powers of Europe toward South America. If, for example, all the States of Europe have refused to trade with South America until her States should return to their former allegiance, that would have furnished no cause of interference to us. Or, if an armament had been furnished by the allies to act against provinces the most remote from us, as Chill or Buenos Ayres, the distance of the seat of action diminishing our apprehension of danger, and diminishing also our means of effectual interposition, might still have left us to content ourselves with remonstrance. But a very different case would have arisen if an army equipped and maintained by these powers had been landed on the shores of the Gulf of Mexico and commenced the war in our immediate neighborhood. Such an event might justly be regarded as dangerous to ourselves, and, on that ground, call for decided and immediate interference by us. The sentiments and the policy announced by the declaration, thus understood, were therefore in strict conformity to our duties and our interests."

President Polk in His Message.

President Polk's first annual message (1845) treated the subject as follows:

"It is well known to the American people and to all nations that this Government has never interfered with the relations subsisting between other Governments. We have never made ourselves parties to their wars or their alliances; we have not sought their territories by conquest; we have not mingled with parties in their domestic struggles, and, believing their own form of government to be the best, we have never attempted to propagate it by intrigue, by diplomacy, or by force. We may claim on this continent a like exemption from European interference. The nations of America are equally sovereign and independent with those of Europe. They possess the same rights, independent of all foreign interposition, to make war, to conclude peace, and to regulate their internal affairs. The people of the United States cannot, therefore, view with indifference attempts of European powers to interfere with independent action of the nations on this continent.

"The American system of government is entirely different from that of Europe. Jealousy among the different sovereigns of Europe, lest any one of them might become too powerful for the rest, has caused them anxiously to desire the establishment of what they term the 'balance of power.' It cannot be permitted to have any application on the North American Continent, and especially to the United States. We must ever maintain the principle that the people of this continent alone have the right to decide their own destiny. Should any portion of them, constituting an independent State, propose to unite themselves with our confederacy, this will be a question for

them and us to determine without any foreign interposition. We can never consent that European powers shall interfere to prevent such a union because it might disturb the 'balance of power' which they may desire to maintain upon this continent. Nearly a quarter of a century ago the principle was distinctly announced to the world in the annual message of one of my predecessors that 'the American continents, by the free and independent condition which they had assumed and maintained, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European power.' This principle will apply with greatly increased force should any European power attempt to establish any new colony in North America.

"In the existing circumstances of the world, the present is deemed a proper occasion to reiterate and reaffirm the principle avowed by Mr. Monroe, and to state my cordial concurrence in its wisdom and sound policy. The reassertion of this principle, especially in reference to North America, is at this day but the promulgation of a policy which no European power should cherish the disposition to resist. Existing rights of every European nation should be respected, but it is due alike to our safety and our interests that the efficient protection of our laws should be extended over our whole territorial limit, and that it should be distinctly announced to the world as our settled policy that no future European colony or dominion shall, with our consent, be planted or established on any part of the North American Continent."

From J. Q. Adams's Journal.

The following extract is from the journal of J. Q. Adams, Dec. 6, 1845, narrating a conversation with Mr. Bancroft, then in Mr. Polk's Cabinet:

"I said I approved entirely of Mr. Polk's repeated assertion of the principle first announced by President James Monroe, in a message to Congress, that the continents of North and South America were no longer to be considered as scenes for future European colonization. He said that he had heard that this part of the message of Mr. Monroe had been inserted by him at my suggestion. I told him that was true; that I had been authorized by him to assert the principle in a letter of instruction to Mr. Rush, then Minister to England, and had written the paragraph in the very words inserted by Mr. Monroe in his message."

More from President Polk.

President Polk said in his special message, April 29, 1848:

"While it is not my purpose to recommend the adoption of any measure with a view to the acquisition of the 'dominion and sovereignty' over Yucatan, yet, according to our established policy, we could not consent to a transfer of this 'dominion and sovereignty' to either Spain, Great Britain, or any other European power. In the language of President Monroe, in his message of December, 1823, 'we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety.' In my annual message of December, 1845, I declared that near a quarter of

a century ago the principle was distinctly announced to the world, in the annual message of one of my predecessors, 'that the American continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintain, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European power.' This principle will apply with greatly increased force should any European power attempt to establish any new colony in North America. In the existing circumstances of the world, the present is deemed a proper occasion to reiterate and reaffirm the principle avowed by Mr. Monroe, and to state my cordial concurrence in its wisdom and sound policy."

Mr. Buchanan States the Doctrine.

Mr. Buchanan, Secretary of State, in communicating with Mr. Hise June 3, 1848, said:

"The independence as well as the interests of the nations on this continent require that they should maintain an American system of policy entirely distinct from that which prevails in Europe. To suffer any interference on the part of the European Governments with the domestic concerns of the American republics, and to permit them to establish new colonies upon this continent, would be to jeopardize their independence and ruin their interests. These truths ought everywhere throughout this continent to be impressed upon the public mind; but what can the United States do to resist such European interference while the Spanish-American republics continue to weaken themselves by divisions and civil war and deprive themselves of doing anything for their own protection."

From Secretary of State Cass.

Mr. Cass, Secretary of State, said to Mr. Dodge, Oct. 21, 1858:

"The United States will not consent to the subjugation of any of the independent States of this continent to European powers, nor to the exercise of a protectorate over them, nor to any other direct political influences to control their policy or institutions."

Mr. Seward Upholds It.

Mr. Seward, Secretary of State, to Mr. Tassara, April 2, 1861:

"The Government of the United States would regard with grave concern and dissatisfaction movements in Cuba to introduce Spanish authority within the territory of Dominica."

Extract from Mr. Fish's Report.

The following extract is from the report of Mr. Fish, Secretary of State, to the President, July 14, 1870:

"Mr. John Quincy Adams, beyond any other statesman of the time in this country, has the knowledge and experience, both European and American, the comprehension of thought and purpose, and the moral convictions which peculiarly fitted him to introduce our country into this new field; and to lay the foundation of an American policy. The declaration known as the Mon-

roe doctrine, and the objects and purposes of the Congress of Panama, both supposed to have been largely inspired by Mr. Adams, have influenced public events from that day to this as a principle of government for this continent and its adjacent islands.

"It was at the period of the congress of Aix-la-Chapelle and of Laybach, when the 'Holy Alliance' was combined to arrest all political changes in Europe in the sense of liberty, when they were intervening in Southern Europe for the re-establishment of absolutism, and when they were meditating interference to check the progress of free government in America, that Mr. Monroe, in his annual message of December, 1823, declared that the United States would consider any attempt to extend the European system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety. 'With the existing colonies or dependencies of any European power,' he said, 'we have not interfered and shall not interfere, but with the Governments who have declared their independence and maintained it, and whose independence we have on great consideration and on just principles acknowledged, we could not view any interposition for the purpose of oppressing them, or controlling, in any other manner, their destiny, by any European power, in any other light than as the manifestation of an unfriendly feeling toward the United States.'"

"This declaration resolved the solution of the immediate question of the independence of the Spanish-American colonies, and is supposed to have exercised some influence upon the course of the British Cabinet in regard to the absolutist schemes in Europe as well as in America.

"It has also exercised a permanent influence on this continent. It was at once invoked in consequence of the supposed peril of Cuba on the side of Europe; it was applied to a similar danger threatening Yucatan; it was embodied in the treaty of the United States and Great Britain as to Central America; it produced the successful opposition of the United States to the attempt of Great Britain to exercise dominion in Nicaragua under the cover of the Mosquito Indians; and it operated in like manner to prevent the establishment of a European dynasty in Mexico.

"The United States stands solemnly committed by repeated declarations and repeated acts to this doctrine, and its application to the affairs of this continent. In his message to the two houses of Congress at the commencement of the present session, the President, following the teachings of all our history, said that the existing 'dependencies are no longer regarded as subject to transfer from one European power to another. When the present relation of colonies ceases, they are to become independent powers, exercising the right of choice and of self-control in the determination of their future condition and relations with other powers.'"

"This policy is not a policy of aggression; but it opposes the creation of European dominion on American soil, or its transfer to other European powers, and it looks hopefully to the time when, by the voluntary departure of European Governments from this continent and the adjacent islands, America shall be wholly American.

"It does not contemplate forcible intervention in any legitimate contest, but it protests against permitting such a contest

to result in the increase of European power or influence; and it ever impels this Government, as in the late contest between the South American republics and Spain, to interpose its good offices to secure an honorable peace.

"The Congress of Panama was planned by Bolivar to secure the union of Spanish America against Spain. It had originally military as well as political purposes. In the military objects the United States could take no part; and, indeed, the necessity for such objects ceased when the full effects of Mr. Monroe's declarations were felt. But the pacific objects of the Congress, the establishment of close and cordial relations of amity, the creation of commercial intercourse, of interchange of political thought, and of habits of good understanding between the new republics and the United States and their respective citizens, might perhaps have been attained had the Administrations of that day received the united support of the country. Unhappily, they were lost; the new States were removed from the sympathetic and protecting influence of our example, and their commerce, which we might then have secured, passed

into other hands unfriendly to the United States."

President Grant Speaks.

President Grant's second annual message, 1870, treated the subject as follows:

"The allied and other republics of Spanish origin on this continent may see in this fact a new proof of our sincere interest in their welfare; of our desire to see them blessed with good government, capable of maintaining order and of preserving their respective territorial integrity, and of our sincere wish to extend our own commercial and social relations with them. The time is not probably far distant when, in the natural course of events, the European political connection with this continent will cease. Our politics will be shaped in view of this probability, so as to ally the commercial interests of the Spanish-American States more closely to our own, and thus give the United States all the pre-eminence and all the advantage which Mr. Monroe, Mr. Adams, and Mr. Clay contemplated when they proposed to join in the Congress of Panama."

NO JUST CLAIM TO BARIMA.

Venezuelans are accumulating proofs showing that the British claim to a large section of their territory is an unjust one. In the tract which the British Government claims is the valuable island of Barima at the mouth of the Orinoco River. There is the best of proof—convincing to an unprejudiced mind—that the English do not own the island and did not pretend to own it sixty years ago.

The letter which is given below was written May 26, 1836, by Robert Ker Porter, the British agent at Caracas. He complained of the dangers encountered by mariners in entering the mouth of the Orinoco River, and requested, in a peremptory manner, that the Venezuelan Government place a conspicuous beacon on Cape Barima "without further delay."

Mr. Porter also declared that British merchants could effect no insurance on vessels bound for the Orinoco River without a considerable advance of premiums "and in many cases not at all." The Venezuelan Government was also asked to place buoys in the Orinoco River.

The letter shows that in 1836 the British Government did not own Cape Barima, and hence did not own the island of Barima. If it had owned this island, it would not have asked Venezuela to build a beacon on it. The beacon, which Mr. Porter said was needed to insure the safety of British ships, would have been built by the English if the island had not belonged to Venezuela.

The Schomburgk line is so drawn as to give the English control over the mouth of the great Orinoco River. Mr. Porter asked the Venezuelans to place buoys at the river's mouth, acknowledging that it belonged to the South Americans.

A copy of Mr. Porter's letter was sent in 1836 to F. R. St. John, the British Minister to Venezuela, as proof that the South American republic owned the island of Barima.

Mr. St. John replied briefly. He could not deny that Mr. Porter was the authorized representative of England, but he declared the letter was written without the knowl-

edge or authority of the British Government. Mr. St. John said Mr. Porter made no report regarding the letter to the home Government. To this assertion Mr. St. John added: "A doctrine that a Government is bound by every act or word of its diplomatic agent is entirely at variance with international law, it being perfectly well-known that even a formal treaty concluded and signed by a plenipotentiary is not valid unless it shall have been ratified by the Government of such plenipotentiary."

If, as stated by Mr. St. John, England is not bound by its agents' acts, yet Mr. Porter's letter shows that the merchants and British Consul at Angostura, (now Ciudad Bolivar) believed that Caracas was the place to apply in order to secure the beacon on Barima.

The Porter Letter.

A copy of the Porter letter is here given: British Legation.

CARACAS, May 26, 1836.

Sir: From a recent correspondence I have held with his Majesty's Consul in Angostura, I have to request the serious attention of the Executive to a representation I am about to make relative to the more safe navigation for vessels on entering the principal mouth of the Orinoco, situated to the southwest of the Island of Trinidad. Being particularly induced to address the Government on this subject, in consequence of the very imminent danger vessels are exposed to, not only for want of proper land and water marks to guide them, but likewise on account of the inefficient state of the pilot establishment on the Island of Pagayos, a considerable distance up the river.

In proof of the results from what I have just mentioned, allow me to state that on the 7th of January last the British brig *Coriolanus*, coming from St. Thomas to Angostura, ran on shore a little to the leeward of the grand mouth of the Orinoco, and totally for want of a beacon to point out the proper entrance. Every effort was made on the part of the master and crew, assisted by some Indians, to get her off, but without success. She soon blew up and became a wreck. On the 29th she was totally abandoned, and on the 6th of February the Captain and crew reached Angostura, when he duly reported his misfortune and the cause of it, to the British Consul in that city.

A second circumstance of the like nature (from similar causes) took place but a very few weeks afterward, namely: The British vessel the *Sir Walter Scott*, bound outward with a cargo of cattle for use of the troops in the English colonies, ran aground (and for want of a pilot) in crossing from the point of Crab Island to Cape Barima, where she remained in

the greatest distress during three days. The Consul, "in reporting this circumstance to me adds: "Here is an additional instance of ruinous tendency, arising out of the present imbecile pilot system of the Orinoco, and, although the misfortune was known at the station of the pilots in Pagayos, no assistance whatever was rendered. The vessel and cargo must have sustained considerable injury, the particulars of which I have not yet had, as the Captain, the moment he got off, proceeded on his voyage." Let me here refer you for the present to the inclosed copy of a letter addressed to the Governor of the Province of Guayana by the Consul in illustration of the great neglect, as also disobedience, to the pilot regulations:

Asks for a Beacon in Barima.

From what I have already said, it becomes my official duty to represent to the Executive of this republic, the indispensable necessity (and that without further delay) of placing a conspicuous beacon on Cape Barima, the point forming the grand mouth of the Orinoco to the south-southeast, where I am given to understand it could be done with the greatest facility, and to the greatest advantage. This object would effectually prove a sure mark, as also a safeguard to all vessels seeking for the proper entrance into this vast river; and it becomes the more to be required, from the great difficulty experienced by all navigators in finding the entrance, as the coast presents the same appearance for many leagues together, and at this day has not a single mark to denote it. The Island of Cangrejos forms the other side of the great mouth, situated at a distance of about eighty leagues from the cape to the west-northwest, whose dangerous sandbanks reduce the only navigable channel to scarcely three miles in width, which commences on passing the bar, (just without Cape Barima,) soon becoming difficult and intricate; particularly so, after ascending for about three leagues, where the channel frequently changes its course, on account of shifting sands. In fact, it cannot be denied but that the whole navigation up to the Island of Pagayos (eleven leagues from the cape) is extremely dangerous and uncertain, requiring to be well surveyed and carefully sounded by some one thoroughly acquainted with that part of the Orinoco, and its probable casualties. Buoys ought to be forthwith laid down at those particular points which either mark the channel or show where sandbanks or sunken rocks lay, both being numerous, impeding the navigation and increasing the dangers of the river, to the great risk of lives and property.

The next subject of my representation regards the actual, and, I may say, almost useless system of the Orinoco pilotage. I am well aware that a pilotboat was intended to have gone out every day from Point Barima to cruise for vessels bearing toward the entrance of the river, but a shameful want of proper arrangement, attended by neglect, rendered abortive this wise and well-intended plan on the part of the Department of Marine. And it does not exist at this day. The only pilot station on the Orinoco is at the Island of Pagayos, forty miles distant from the entrance at the great mouth of the river. And it appears very clear that great difficulties and perils must be encountered in reaching it.

Condition of the Orinoco.

The amicable bearings at all times manifested by this Government in its foreign relations, not only political but commercial, assures me that it is vividly alive at all times to whatever may

either augment that friendly feeling or increase the mercantile prosperity of the country. Under this firm belief, as well as from a sense of my duties in watching over that of my own country, I, therefore, seize the present occasion in endeavoring to impress on the Executive the imperative necessity of promptly taking stable and energetic measures in the regulation of that which is of such vital importance in the growing trade of Angostura, whose increase or diminution cannot but very materially affect that of the whole of the neighboring provinces of the republic, and, consequently, influence the public revenue. Allow me to add, (as materially connected with the subject in question,) being a well-known fact, that not only in England, but in many of her colonies, the merchants are afraid to speculate, or even send their vessels to the Orinoco, in consequence of the dangers to which both property and life are exposed from the causes I have already set forth, thus corroborating what I have stated touching the total abandonment in which the navigation of the Orinoco at present is left. Indeed, so deep is the impression of risk on the British mercantile mind that at Lloyds', in London, no insurance can be effected to that river without a very considerable advance on the premium, and, in many cases, not at all.

His Majesty's Consul at Angostura (as the preceding inclosure would show you) found it his indispensable duty to call the observance of the Governor of the Province of Guayana to the subjects I now write upon, under the full hope that he might be able by his authority and remonstrance to check in future the pursuance on the Orinoco of a system truly prejudicial to the interests of individuals as well as to general commerce. I have had the honor of just laying before you that gentleman's office to the Governor, which, together with his answer, as also other documents connected with the present representation, was forwarded to me, mentioning at the same time that such had been duly sent officially to his Government for its knowledge and guidance. These papers, I cannot doubt, will further show the Executive how absolutely useless the present pilot establishment is on the Island of Pagayos being rather detrimental than advantageous to the intent and use of the Legislature; hence demanding a most radical reform in some way or other.

Before I close this dispatch I must once more repeat my solicitude that the Minister of the Marine be directed to investigate and correct the abuses which have frustrated the good intent of the Government and the department, and likewise that he be directed to attend to the recommendation I now have the honor of making by placing a proper beacon on the Barima Cape, as also the appropriate buoys in the Orinoco, for the safer navigation of it, so that I may be enabled in a very short time (and I trust the urgency will be seen) to have the satisfaction of officially communicating to his Majesty's principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (for the information of the merchants interested at Lloyds) the measures that have been taken by this Government, rendering the great entrance to the Orinoco perfectly perceptible, as also the navigation of the river up to the Angostura perfectly safe.

I have the honor to remain, Sir, with the highest consideration, your most obedient, humble servant.

ROBERT KER PORTER.

The Hon. Senor José E. Gallegos, &c.

A copy of this letter is included in one of the pamphlets issued by the Venezuelan Government in support of its claim to territory which England professes to own.

