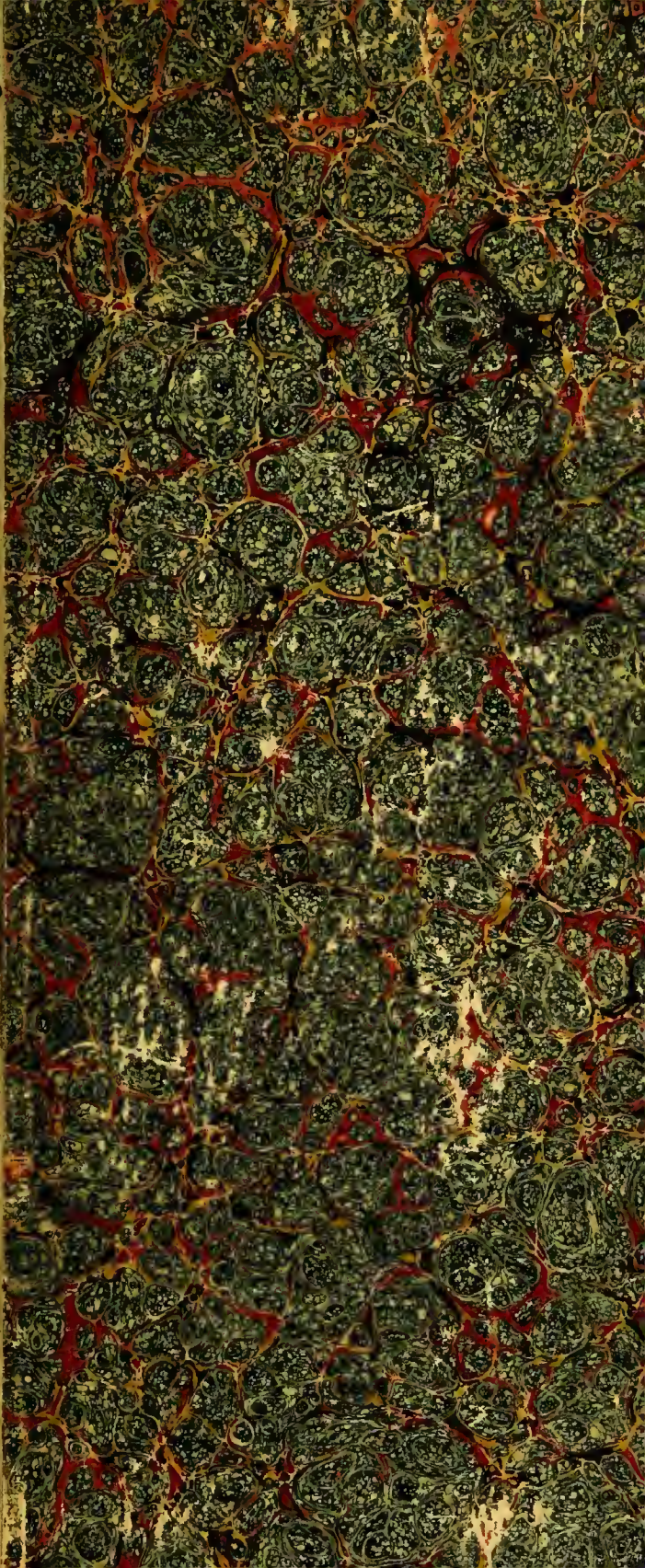


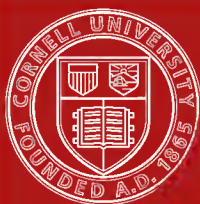
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**THE VENEZUELAN QUESTION AND THE
MONROE DOCTRINE.**

ADAMS.



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THE VENEZUELAN QUESTION AND THE MONROE DOCTRINE

A lecture delivered in response to an invitation of the Literary Societies of
the University of Wisconsin, January 10, 1896

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MADISON, WIS.,

1896.

THE VENEZUELAN QUESTION AND THE MONROE DOCTRINE.

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Literary Societies:

I take pleasure in complying with your invitation to speak to you upon the Venezuelan Question, though I should hardly venture to do so if I were not confident that it could be presented without impropriety, even though Commissioners have been appointed by President Cleveland to examine and report upon the whole subject. It will not be my purpose to advance opinions so much as to place before you such elements of the question as will enable you to read intelligently those accounts in the newspapers and journals which will necessarily come to your attention within the next few weeks or months. After describing briefly the region involved, it will be natural to present, as best I can, the crucial points in the Venezuelan claim; also those in the claim of Great Britain, and then to consider the relation to these claims of what we know as the Monroe Doctrine.

It is a very interesting fact that the country in question is the very first part of the American continent that fell under the eye of Christopher Columbus. In the course of his third voyage, in the last days of July, 1498, having been driven, as he says in his own narrative, by the intolerable heat, under the equator, to a northwesterly course, he came in sight of land. On the

following day, August 1st, his vessel was drawn in through the channel which separates the island of Trinidad from the shores on the left, which we now know to have been the continent. The mountains of the island suggested to Columbus the idea of the Trinity, and consequently he gave it the name which it has continued to bear until the present time. The waters of the Gulf Stream, drawn as through a tunnel into this narrow channel, threatened to overwhelm his tiny fleet. The entrance to the Gulf of Paria, because of these rushing waters, is still known as the Serpent's Mouth. The exit from the gulf was named by Columbus, Bocco del Drago, or the Dragon's Mouth. Students will remember that the phenomenon of these rushing waters led Columbus into some of his most curious and characteristic speculations as to the shape of the earth. It was only one year later, that is in 1499, when Hojeda sailed along the same coast, and, on arriving at the Gulf of Maracaibo, saw Indian huts along the lowlands, arranged in such a way as to suggest to his imagination the characteristics of Venice. He therefore called the country Venezuela, or Little Venice, a name which it has continued to hold to the present day. I need hardly remind you that this whole region lies about the mouth of one of the greatest of the South American rivers. The Orinoco drains a region no less than 2,000,000 square miles in extent; a territory nearly two-thirds as large as the United States, excluding Alaska.

This region, though it has been as yet but partially developed, is described as having immense possibilities. The French geographer, Reclus, one of the greatest of all authorities, from whom I shall often have occasion to quote, says, in substance, that it is quite possible the valley of the Orinoco may yet support as dense

a population as that of Belgium, and that, if it should do so, it would sustain two hundred millions of inhabitants.

The branches of the Orinoco are very numerous, and many of them are navigable for several hundred miles. The affluents of this great river come down from the several spurs of the Cordilleras, and are fed by the copious rains characteristic of that region. The average rainfall is more than 100 inches per year; in some localities it has reached 168 inches.

The lands may be divided into three general classes. The lowlands which stretch along the river, are swampy and at times are inundated. These regions are said to be capable of growing enormous crops of coffee, and to such use very considerable parts of the region have already been devoted. On the higher ground, known as the Llanos, large herds of wild cattle are still supported. Some 25 years ago these herds were very greatly reduced by methods that remind one of those which destroyed the North American buffalo; but within the past few years, successful efforts have been made not only to prevent this destruction, but to increase the numbers and improve the breeds. Reclus reports that in Venezuela alone in 1888 it was estimated that 8,500,000 head of cattle, or four times as many as the entire population, were enjoying the freedom of these vast upland plains. In the mountain regions west and south and east of Venezuela the scenery is said to be exceedingly picturesque, and often very impressive. Some of the mountains rise to an altitude of 16,000 feet and more, quite above the region of perpetual snow. One of the most noted, Mt. Roraima, consists of a solid mass of red sandstone, whose perpendicular walls on three sides rise to a height of between seven and eight thousand feet.

The summit consists of a long and broad flat surface, apparently the only reminder of an extended plain far above the present level, now almost entirely carried away by erosion. It was never ascended, so far as known, till 1885. The Kaieteur Falls on the Potaro river though never discovered until 1871, are said by Reclus to be among the finest of the whole world. This author gives an engraving of an enormous cataract, 340 feet wide the waters of which leap down at a single plunge into a whirling pool 741 feet below,—about three times the height of Niagara.

The climate also affords almost as great variety as does the landscape. On some of the lowlands, especially about Lake Maracaibo, the heat is intense; but in the more western regions the trade winds so modify the temperature that the thermometer seldom rises above 82 degrees or falls below 60. In the interior, of course, there are greater variations of heat and cold.

Besides the Orinoco and its numerous affluents, there are several other rivers that are often mentioned in the course of the discussions of this question. The most important of these is the Essequibo, whose outlet is some 220 miles east of the Orinoco. Still further east are the rivers Berbice and Demerara, the chief importance of which, in this connection, is the fact that they early gave their names to colonial provinces frequently named in this discussion. Between the Essequibo and the Orinoco are the Pomeroon and the Moroco. The most important of the branches of the Essequibo is the Cuyuni, which brings its waters from the neighborhood of the Orinoco. The Barima and the Amacuro flow into the Orinoco near its mouth.

The inhabitants of this region, insofar as they are native, have the same general characteristics as the other

peoples of South America. The early Spaniards seem not to have been embarrassed by any inconvenient fastidiousness in regard to Indians and Negros. The consequence of promiscuous intermarriages has been that there is a complete commingling of Spanish, Indian, and Negro blood. This unrestrained process of miscegenation, carried on for twelve or fifteen generations, has left almost absolutely no white native population in South America. It is said that only about one per cent. of the people of Venezuela are uncolored. The others show unmistakable evidences of all the characteristics that would be expected to result from such a mixture. In the whole of the 597,000 square miles claimed by Venezuela the number of inhabitants is only a little more than two millions.

The government of Venezuela, known as a republic, has had more than half a century of very turbulent vicissitudes. The revolutionary spirit that swept over Europe near the end of the 18th century, broke out in South America not much later. The Spanish colonies broke away from the rule of the mother country; and the people of Venezuela declared their independence in 1810. A long war ensued. It was not until 1822 that the government was recognized by the United States; and it was as late as 1845 that independence was acknowledged by Spain. But the inhabitants seemed hardly more willing to submit to their own rulers than to the rulers of the mother country. Revolution followed revolution. During the last forty years, in consequence of this revolutionary spirit, life in Venezuela has been turbulent in the extreme, and the government has often been in the hands of tyrannical and irresponsible dictators.

By the treaty of recognition of Spain in 1845, Vene-

zuela was given the territory extending from Colombia to British Guiana, but in this treaty there was no mention of any exact boundary lines. It was merely stated, in general terms, that the boundaries are "the same as those which mark the ancient vice-royalty and captaincy-general of New Granada and Venezuela in the year 1810."

There is equal indefiniteness in the treaty between England and the United Netherlands, by which the right of Great Britain was acknowledged by Holland in 1814. The exact language of that treaty is of importance. It will be noted that it was not in the first instance a gift from Holland to England, but rather of the nature of an abandonment of the claims of Holland. By that treaty England agreed to restore to Holland "all the colonies, factories and establishments in the actual possession of Holland in 1803 with the exception of the Cape of Good Hope, and the establishments of Demerara, Essequibo, and Berbice." In other words, she did not restore to Holland these South American provinces. This language unmistakably indicates that Great Britain claimed a prior right to these territories, and that in giving up certain other territories to Holland these lands were specially excepted. But in the same agreement, in order that assertion of rights might be mutual, and all doubt of title in the future be removed, the States-General ceded to Great Britain "The Cape of Good Hope, and the establishments of Demerara, Essequibo, and Berbice." But there is no mention of boundaries to any of these three settlements. The terms of this agreement might be stated to be a relinquishment on the part of Holland to Great Britain of all the claims of the United Netherlands to this region, whatever those claims might be.

Now having indicated the nature of the country and the indefiniteness of the rights conferred by Spain and by Holland, let us enumerate what may be termed the crucial claims of each.

I. THE VENEZUELA CLAIMS:

1. It is accepted as a canon of international law that a colony, on gaining its independence, is entitled to all the rights that were formerly enjoyed by the parent country. It follows that Venezuela is entitled to the rights formerly possessed by Spain.

2. The right of Spain to this territory is the right of discovery. By the Bull of Demarcation of Pope Alexander VI, issued in 1493, Spain was given all the territory she might discover west of the meridian a hundred leagues west of the Azores. East of this line, you will remember, all lands were to belong to Portugal. The whole of the territory in question went to Spain under this title, and passed to Venezuela when that colony became an independent state.

3. In consequence of the internal political revolutions of Venezuela the government has been unable to occupy much of the territory east of the Orinoco, but ever since the government was organized she has claimed the territory as far as the Essequibo.

4. The Venezuelans claim that the British have made constant and increasing encroachments upon the territory lying between the Essequibo and the Orinoco; that from time to time the Venezuelans have protested against these encroachments, but that these protests have not been respected. They claim also that in a treaty between Spain and Holland in 1791, each of the high contracting parties bound itself to return any

fugitive negro slaves of the one that might be found within the territories and settlements of the other; and that, at the time of this treaty, there were several settlements of the Venezuelans on the west bank of the Essequibo, and that this, in consequence, may fairly be interpreted as having been the boundary line.

6. That as early as 1827 a British settlement was planted as far west as the mouth of the Moroco river, quite within the limits of the Venezuelan territory, but that owing to internal strife, this and other aggressions met with only a formal remonstrance, which was totally disregarded.

7. In 1840 and 1841 Major, afterwards Sir Robert, Schomburgk was commissioned by the English government to survey and mark out the boundaries of British Guiana. Although notice of this appointment was given to the Venezuelan government, the assent and concurrence of that government was not asked.

8. The posts and boundaries made by Sir Robert were objected to very strongly by the Venezuelan government, and, on request of that government, the British finally ordered the marks removed. This fact the Venezuelans claim to be a virtual admission that the boundary was not one insisted upon by Great Britain.

9. Before 1840 Great Britain had not advanced beyond the Pomaroon river, but in the latter part of that year she extend her occupancy westward and southward as far as the mouth of the Amacuro river, where she arbitrarily fixed the starting point as a frontier line, known as the Schomburgk line.

10. In 1845, however, yielding to the strong remonstrances of Venezuela, she receded from this position and proposed what was afterwards know as the Aberdeen line, beginning near the mouth of the Pomaroon

river. This line was not agreed to by the Venezuelan government.

11. Thirty-six years later, *i. e.*, in 1881, Great Britain removed the starting point of a divisional line to a distance some 50 miles west of the Pomaroon river, generally referred to as the "Lord Granville line."

12. In 1886, the British government again shifted its claim; and proposed what is known as the Lord Rosebery line, which included even less than that proposed by the Schomburgk line.

13. In 1893, she shifted her position once more, and proposed what is now known as the Salisbury line, beginning at the mouth of the Amacuro river, and extending southwest in such a way as to include not only the control of the main outlet of the Orinoco but also all the branches and the gold fields of the Cuyuni.

Thus, according to the Venezuelan claim, Great Britain has been guilty of an uninterrupted series of aggressions from the time when in 1814 she found herself in control of the east bank of the Essequibo down to the present day. These aggressions have been steadily carried on, the Venezuelans assert, until the present British claims beyond the true line, amount to nearly or quite 60,000 square miles. It is asserted, that from time to time, the British have relinquished or receded from many of the claims set forth. In proof of this fact they cite the removal of the posts and other marks established by Sir Robert Schomburgk, the offer of a definite boundary by Lord Aberdeen, another boundary by Lord Granville, and still another by Lord Rosebery. In 1887 the Venezuelans in consequence, as they aver, of these continuous aggressions, and of the impossibility of securing fair terms, broke off diplomatic relations with Great Britain.

It should be added that their claim has been repeatedly presented to the public, and the good offices of the United States government have been repeatedly solicited. Their case was put into print in 1887, and re-published as a United States Senate document in 1888. Counsel was employed in this country to make public opinions and to push their claims. The substance of the contention of Venezuela may be seen in a pamphlet, by Mr. E. R. Johnes, entitled "The Anglo-Venezuelan Controversy and the Monroe Doctrine." In 1895, the second edition of a pamphlet was also published by the Hon. William J. Scruggs, late Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States to Venezuela, entitled "British Aggressions in Venezuela: the Monroe Doctrine on Trial."

II. BRITISH CLAIMS.

And now let us turn to the claims of the British government. It is difficult to give the full case of the British, for the reason that no complete statement of it has ever been given to the public. Lord Salisbury, in his recent dispatch to Secretary Olney, stated that the government had always regarded the matter as a controversy in which the British and the Venezuelans alone were interested, and therefore had never thought it necessary to publish their case. In the study of the question I have, however, found some evidences not mentioned in Lord Salisbury's dispatch, which perhaps will play some part in the ultimate settlement of the questions in dispute. Without expressing an opinion as to the significance of these different bits of evidence, I deem it not at all improper to present them as they have come to my attention:

1. The British do not admit in its entirety the claim of Spain that the Bull of Pope Alexander VI. gave territorial rights to the whole of the territory west of the line of demarkation. Lord Salisbury indulges in the seeming safe conjecture that the United States will hardly hold this doctrine to be sound, as it would deprive the Americans as well as the English of all their rights in North America. Great Britain, in common with the Protestant nations generally, claims the right to territories discovered or explored by themselves without much regard to the Bull of Demarkation. On this fact they establish their rights in North America, notwithstanding the early discoveries of Spain. Keeping this claim in mind we are prepared to estimate the significance of the next somewhat interesting fact.

2. This region, including a considerable part of the Orinoco river, was explored by Sir Walter Raleigh; and an original map, printed in Spain in the year 1591, is now in one of the British offices, stating that the British were in possession of the Orinoco river. In 1599 the British also published the Keymis map, showing British possessions in the same region.

3. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the territory from the Orinoco to the Demerara was the subject of contention between the Dutch and the English. According to the Peace of Westphalia, often alluded to as the Treaty of Münster, 1648, Holland was given the territories designated as Surinam, Demerara, Berbice, and Essequibo. After the treaty of Münster, several maps were published, which indicated the western boundary of the lands claimed by the Dutch. Among them are to be noticed:

(a) A map of America by DeLisle, geographer to King Louis XV., of France, printed in Amsterdam in

1744. This map shows Dutch Guiana with a line practically the same as the Schomburgk line.

(b) A map of America made by the geographer John Janvier, and printed in Vienna, in 1776. This map is substantially the same as the French map above alluded to, though in addition it shows Dutch settlements considerably west of the Essequibo line.

(c) A map of the Dutch Guiana, officially prepared for the use of the colonial department of the Batavian republic, and printed in Amsterdam in 1798. The date is important, as it shows what the Dutch claimed just before they ceded their rights to Great Britain. This map shows a line starting from a Dutch post at the mouth of the Orinoco and drawn straight into the interior, thus marking as the boundary of the Dutch territory substantially what is claimed by the British at the present time.

These several maps, unquestionably indicate the line claimed by the Dutch at the time when the territory, without reserve, was relinquished to the British in 1814.

4. But the limitations of this territory are not determined by maps alone. In 1759, and again in 1769, the States General of Holland addressed formal remonstrances to the Spanish government against the encroachment of the Spaniards into their posts and settlements in the basin of the Cuyuni. Lord Salisbury declares that in these remonstrances the Dutch distinctly claimed all the branches of the Essequibo river, and especially of the Cuyuni river, as lying within Dutch territory. To this formal demand the Spanish government never made reply. Lord Salisbury, however, says that the archives of the Spanish government have been examined, and it is found that the Spanish Council of State took these claims under consideration, and that neither

the Council nor the Governor of the region was prepared seriously to maintain the claims suggested in the reports of the subordinate Spanish officer. The reports, says Lord Salisbury, were characterized by the Spanish Minister as "insufficient and unsatisfactory," and as "professing to show the Spanish province of Guiana under too favorable a light;" and, finally, that the Council of State marked the Spanish claims as "very improbable."

5. It will perhaps be remembered that after the desperate battle between the *Richard* and the *Serapis*, off Flamborough Head in 1779, Commodore John Paul Jones took the *Serapis* and his prisoners into a Dutch port. The war between Holland and Great Britain which ensued, led to an attack by the British upon many Dutch posts, including those in Guiana. In 1781 the British took possession and marked the western boundary of their possessions as beginning some distance up the Orinoco river beyond Point Barima, in accordance with the limits claimed, and, at that time actually held by the Dutch. The line of demarkation then established is the line which Lord Salisbury claims is still held as the limit of British rights. By the treaty of 1814, the Dutch relinquished all rights to this territory, and Lord Salisbury calls attention to the fact that the Spanish government, though parties to the negotiations which led to that treaty, did not at any time raise objections to the frontiers claimed by Great Britain, though they were perfectly well aware of them. This general state of affairs is at least enough to show that the British claims, whether just or unjust, do not rest exclusively for their support upon what has occurred since 1814.

6. Serious questions in regard to the line were not

raised until about 1840, largely, perhaps, in consequence of the domestic disturbances and revolutions that were constantly going on. In that year, however, Major Robert Schomburgk, who, as an eminent German geographer and botanist, had already explored the region in the service of the Royal Geographical Society of London, represented to the British government that some determination of the line between the British possessions and Venezuela was highly desirable. The consequence of this representation was that Schomburgk was commissioned, in November, 1840, to survey the region, and, in the light of all the evidences he could secure, indicate where he thought the line ought to be. He found the remains of a Dutch fort at Point Barima, and other remains of the Dutch on the Cuyuni river, and from such data he framed his report. The result was what has since been known as the Schomburgk line. The line he recommended begins on the Orinoco river, not far above Barima Point, and, pursuing an irregular course, divides the territory between the Essequibo and the Orinoco in such a way that about one-third lies east of the line and two-thirds west of it. The Schomburgk report is based on the theory that the British were entitled to the whole of the valley of the Cuyuni river as an affluent of the Essequibo; but its author recommended that a part of this territory should be abandoned to Venezuela in return for a formal recognition of the British right to Point Barima. This was the reason why the Schomburgk line did not include the entire valley of the Cuyuni river.

7. The government of Venezuela, still claiming the Essequibo as their eastern boundary, not only refused to recognize the Schomburgk line, but asked that the posts be removed and the other marks be obliterated.

It is important to notice this fact for the reason that while the Venezuelan authorities now regard the removal of these marks as practically an admission on the part of the British that the Schomburgk line included territory to which the British had no claim, the British, on the other hand, assert that the marks were obliterated simply as an act of complaisance, without for a moment conceding that any right was abandoned by so doing.

8. Soon after Schomburgk's report was received, the Venezuelan Minister was informed that the British government was in position to commence negotiations. The Venezuelan Minister stated the claim of his government to be the Essequibo river. Lord Aberdeen, then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, pointed out that it would not be possible to arrive at any agreement if both sides brought forward claims of so extreme a nature, stating that the British government would not imitate the Venezuelan Minister in asserting claims which it could not be intended seriously to maintain. Lord Aberdeen then proceeded to announce concessions, which, he said, "her Majesty's government was prepared to make, out of friendly regard to Venezuela," and proposed a line which abandoned Barima Point, and, starting from the mouth of the Moroco, included a somewhat less amount of territory than that which lay east of the Schomburgk line. As this so-called Aberdeen line plays so important a part in the Venezuelan claim at the present time, it is of importance to note what followed. To the despatch proposing this line, which Lord Aberdeen specifically stated was a concession, no reply was ever received by Great Britain from the Venezuelan government; and after waiting from 1844 to 1850, Great Britain informed Vene-

zuela that, as, after more than six years, the proposal had not been accepted, it must be considered as having lapsed, and was accordingly withdrawn.

9. Immediately after the withdrawal of this offer, a report became current in Venezuela that Great Britain intended to seize Venezuelan-Guiana. Whereupon the British government formally disclaimed such an intention, declaring "That while, on the one hand, Great Britain had no intention to occupy or encroach on the disputed territory, she would not, on the other, view with indifference aggressions on that territory by Venezuela." Lord Salisbury calls attention to four instances, giving names and dates, in which the Venezuelan government has violated that so-called "Agreement of 1850."

10. Between 1850 and 1876, affairs in Venezuela were so disturbed that no serious effort to settle the boundary was again renewed. But in 1879, Venezuela again asserted her claim to the Essequibo, at the same time stating that the government wished "to obtain, by means of a treaty, a definite settlement of the question, and was disposed to proceed to the demarcation of a divisional line between the two Guianas in a spirit of conciliation and true friendship toward Her Majesty's Government." Venezuela, accordingly proposed as a compromise, a line running due south from the Moroco river, which would concede to the British an amount of territory west of the Essequibo, about one fourth of that proposed by Schomburgh. Lord Granville, replying, in behalf of Great Britain, on the 10th of January, 1880, reminded the Venezuelan government of the boundary which Great Britain claimed as a matter of strict right on the grounds of conquest and treaty, and stated still further, that the line now pro-

posed by Venezuela would involve the surrender of territory inhabited by 40,000 British subjects, living in regions which had been in the uninterrupted possession of Holland and Great Britain for nearly two centuries. It was then pointed out to the Venezuelan Minister that in order to arrive at any such arrangement each party must make very considerable concessions to the other, and that, although the claim to the Essequibo could not under any circumstances be entertained, yet the British government would meet the government of Venezuela in a spirit of concession, and in the event of a renewal of negotiations, would waive a portion of what they considered a part of their strict rights. He therefore proposed an alternative line somewhat west of the Schomburgk line, which is now known as the "Granville line" of September, 1881. To this proposal, as well as to the Aberdeen proposal, Lord Salisbury says, the Venezuelan government never made any reply.

11. In July, 1886, Lord Rosebery, then Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, proposed "That the two governments should agree to consider the territory lying between the boundaries respectively proposed by Venezuela on the 21st of February, 1881, and Lord Granville, on the 15th of September of the same year, as the territory in dispute between the two countries, and that a boundary line about midway between the limits of this territory should be traced, either by an arbitrator or by a joint commission on the basis of an equal division, due regard being had to natural boundaries." This proposition the Venezuelan Envoy declined, repeating that arbitration on the claim of Venezuela extending to the Essequibo was the only method of solution which he could suggest. After the British government had

once more declined this proposition, the Venezuelan Envoy withdrew from London; and Great Britain, in October, 1886, proclaimed the Schomburgk line as the irreducible boundary of the colony.

12. On the 26th and 31st of January, 1887, the Venezuelan government demanded the evacuation of the whole territory held by Great Britain from the mouth of the Orinoco to the Pomeroon river, adding that if this was not done before the 20th of February, diplomatic relations would be broken off. The British declining this request, the British representative received his passports, and relations were suspended on the 21st of February, 1887. During the same year a notice was issued by the government of British-Guiana, reserving its claims beyond the Schomburgk line. Lord Salisbury says that this was stated as a matter of precaution, in order that the claims of Great Britain beyond that line might not be considered as having been abandoned.

13. In this state of affairs the Venezuelan government made an appeal to the United States, and diplomatic correspondence with considerable activity has gone forward between the two governments down to the present day.

Now from the various statements that have been made, it will be seen that the British declare that they have never varied in their claim from the time in 1781, when they took possession by conquest of the territory at the mouth of the Orinoco river; that they never regarded the Schomburgk line as anything more than a temporary basis from which negotiations should be carried on, and that, while they have maintained from the first that a portion of the territory could not be submitted to arbitration, because it involved the lives and property of a large number of British subjects, they

have always held and still hold, that beyond that line, they are quite willing to submit the claim to arbitration. Lord Salisbury says that concerning the territory beyond the Schomburgk line, the government "has been and continues to be perfectly ready to submit the question of their title to arbitration." He adds that even within that line they have on various occasions offered Venezuela considerable concessions, as a matter of friendship and conciliation, and for the purpose of securing an amicable settlement of the dispute.

Such, as well as I have been able to state them, are the British claims. It is interesting to note how the maps and the geographical authorities, published in the course of this century, have been inclined to regard the matter of this boundary. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* in an article written, I suppose, some twenty years ago gives the western boundary of British Guiana as the 61st meridian; in other words, so far as to include the mouth of the Orinoco river. The Rand & McNally map, perhaps the most recent of the American maps of importance, gives the line so as to include somewhat more than half of the territory between the Essequibo and Orinoco. But perhaps the most important statement of all is in the work of the most experienced and eminent of modern geographers, *Élisée Reclus*, whom I have already so often quoted. In the eighteenth volume of this monumental work, at page 79, is this statement: "Since the days of Walter Raleigh, England has several times attempted to penetrate into the interior of the continent through this gateway (the Orinoco). In the 'Archives of the Indies' there exists a Spanish map, dated 1591, on which figures a large island in the middle of the delta with the legend: '*Aquí están los Ingleses*,' that is 'Here are the English.'" "In 1808," he continues, "the

British government occupied various points of the delta, where the farthest station, standing on a height between the Orinoco branches, defended both the entrance of the Orinoco and of the Serpent's Mouth. This strategic point was spoken of as the future 'Gibraltar;' and, although it has since been abandoned, the Venezuelans want also to recover Barima Island, and all the coastlands as far as Moroco. England has heretofore declined to submit the question to arbitration." The English translator and editor adds: "And will continue to do so until Venezuela withdraws her claim to the Barima district, and gives up some other utterly preposterous demands."

In closing this portion of the subject, it remains only to summarize by saying that the British stoutly maintain the following positions:

First. That they rest their claim upon early explorations and the conquest of the country in 1781 and 1786, confirmed to them by treaty with Holland in 1814.

Second. That they have never waived or relinquished the rights thus established, and that for more than a century their claims have been identically the same as they are at the present time.

Third. That all offers of settlement on the basis of a line east of that indicated have been in the nature of concessions to Venezuela, in the interests of friendship and a definitive settlement.

As to whether these claims are correct, it is not for you or for me to pronounce final judgment. The commission appointed by President Cleveland is one of such eminent knowledge, ability, and judicial fairness that its findings in regard to the whole question will unquestionably be entitled to the most favorable consideration of the country. Should the commission find that Great

Britain is substantially justified in regarding the Schomburgk line as reasonable, and as "irrevocable," the way would seem to be open for arbitration in regard to the territory west of that line. Should the commission find that the rights of Venezuela extend to the Essequibo, or that the indubitable rights of the British extend west of the Schomburgk line, any method of settlement would seem to be hedged about with some difficulties. That a peaceful method will, however, even in the event of such a finding, be found, I do not allow myself for a moment to doubt.

III. THE MONROE DOCTRINE.

The larger, and perhaps the more difficult part of this subject is the relation of the United States government to the questions at issue. The message of President Cleveland to Congress makes such use of what is known as the Monroe doctrine as to justify us in a brief examination of what that doctrine really is. It is to express one of the most elementary canons of interpretation to say that in order to understand any political doctrine justly, we must take into consideration the circumstances under which such doctrine was issued, and the end which it aimed to accomplish. Accordingly, if we would know the real significance of the Monroe doctrine, we must inquire into the circumstances under which it was issued, and the purposes it sought to subserve.

These circumstances and purposes can be briefly stated. After the overthrow of the first Napoleon, Russia, France, Prussia, and Austria, inspired, as Mueller says, "by a white-robed innocence, named Madam Krudener," formed an agreement known as the Holy

Alliance, for preserving the balance of power and suppressing revolutions within their domains. The Spanish colonies in America having revolted, established republican governments; and it was rumored and feared that this alliance contemplated their reduction. This rumor received some justification in the interference of the French Bourbons with the internal affairs of Spain and Portugal. It was feared that the holy alliance would undertake to overthrow the republican governments in South America by treating them as they were treating similar revolutionary attempts in Europe. Great Britain had not only refused to join the holy alliance, but was in every way interested in preventing the extension of their doctrines. Mr. George Canning, the English secretary of state, proposed that the United States should join England in the prevention of such a suppression. After a good deal of correspondence between various representatives of the two governments, President Monroe laid the matter before Jefferson, Madison, John Quincy Adams, and Calhoun, and finally sent to Congress, on the 2d of December, 1823, his famous message.)

The doctrine is really embodied in two sentences. Referring to a possible intervention of the allied powers, the message stated: "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." The second part of the doctrine was embodied in the statement: "The American continents by the free and independent conditions which they have assumed and maintained are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European powers."

These words reduced from diplomatic phraseology to

the plain language of ordinary usage would seem to mean simply this: First, the United States will not permit the so-called Holy Alliance to interfere for the purpose of changing the methods of government on this continent; and, secondly, they will not permit any new colonies to be established on this side of the Atlantic.

Now, when we bear in mind that this was a declaration of a nation of about ten million people, at a time when it was feared that all the forces of an alliance, consisting of Russia, Prussia, Austria, and France was to be brought to bear upon the subjugation of South America, it must be seen that the doctrine, as then promulgated, has only a very remote relation to such a question as that which is now presented in South America. It is not claimed that Great Britain has, at any time, undertaken to interfere with the methods of the Venezuelan government. The question is simply and solely, according to the avowal of both parties, the determination of a boundary line.

But, it may be asked, has not the Monroe Doctrine been very considerably expanded in its scope since it was first promulgated? The answer is that it has never taken any other form than that given it by President Monroe. It has often been referred to in official documents with approval, and in the imaginations of many people it doubtless is supposed to apply to a large number of cases never thought of by its author. But such an interpretation is not justified by the circumstances under which it was promulgated, or by the history of any subsequent events.

Nor has the Monroe doctrine received that hospitality of other nations which entitles it to be regarded as

a part of International Law. It is simply an American doctrine and is to be treated and defended as such.

But while, as it now stands, it has its limitations, it is certainly an American doctrine that is deeply imbedded in the hearts of the American people. There can be no doubt whatever, that, under circumstances in which the Monroe doctrine would strictly apply, we should insist upon its application, and enforce it with all the power at our command. But whether it does apply to the questions at issue is quite another question. Certain it is that to insist that every question of boundary line involving a difference between a European and an American power should be submitted to arbitration would be at least a new application of the doctrine that was set forth by President Monroe. But it may justly be said, that, as the Monroe doctrine is to be defended and upheld, not as a part of International Law, but simply as an American policy; so, *if the people demand it*, it can as easily and as logically be modified and extended as in the beginning it could be formulated and promulgated. What we had a right to create, we now have a right to modify. The nation may or may not be prepared to take such a position. This, as Mr. Bryce has well said, is a government of public opinion. It is a matter of national policy, which public opinion should decide.

But if we should ever be obliged to consider the subject in its most serious aspects, we should probably be reminded that the United States declined at six different times, according to Mr. Bancroft, to submit the question of our Northwest Boundary to arbitration when arbitration was proposed by Great Britain. After such a series of refusals on our part to submit a boundary question to arbitration, we should at least think very

seriously whether we will insist upon fighting another country for what the world might regard as imitating our example. Every student of American history knows that we once had a boundary dispute of our own. Before the British invented the term "Jingo" we had a jingo party whose long and loud cry for many years was "Fifty-four-forty-or fight." We know that Daniel Webster, much to his political disadvantage, remained in President Tyler's cabinet, long after the other members had abandoned their seats, in order that he might conclude the negotiations in regard to a boundary line between the United States and Canada. The Ashburton treaty settled the Northeastern boundary, but even Webster did not succeed in settling the dividing line in the Northwest. That was reserved for another administration. But when the "jingoes" had exhausted their lungs, Webster, no longer Secretary of State, sent a private note to the British Minister suggesting that if a friendly proposition should then be made, it might perhaps be considered. The hint was taken, and the boundary line separating the northwestern states from Canada as we now have it, was established. After all we did not have either fifty-four-forty, or a fight. Perhaps in the methods of those days, among the most creditable in our diplomatic history, we shall yet find an example worthy of our imitation.

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