

THE MONROE DOCTRINE.

Mr. LODGE presented the following:

THE MONROE DOCTRINE.

By Sir FREDERICK POLLOCK.

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Very little is generally known in this country about the principle of policy formulated by James Monroe in his Presidential address to the Congress of the United States in December, 1823, sanctioned by repeated utterances of American statesmen and commonly referred to as the Monroe Doctrine. Much has been written about it in America, while only one book, so far as I am aware, has specially dealt with it in England. Since Mr. Reddaway's monograph was published, new materials for the history of the doctrine have come to light,^b and events have happened which, in my view, have an important bearing on its modern application. The name is perhaps unfortunate, like many names that have become historical watchwords. "Doctrine" is hardly the most appropriate word for an executive principle of purely national policy, and it is doubtful, though the point seems to be rather of biographical than of historical interest, to what extent Monroe can properly be called its author. I suspect that the word "doctrine" is answerable for an error which might be mischievous if it became widely received—namely, the supposition that the Doctrine professes to be a rule of the law of nations or anything but a notification to whom it may concern of the manner in which the United States may be expected to exercise at

^a This paper contains (with the addition of authorities and references which in oral delivery had to be omitted) the substance of an address given in June at the offices of the London Chamber of Commerce, being the first of a series of addresses by various speakers intended to be arranged for by the Anglo-American League. It is right to explain that, although I am one of the joint secretaries of that body, neither the league as a whole nor its executive committee is in any way answerable for my statements or opinions. I shall not apologize for using "American" as the adjective corresponding to the "United States." There is no other to be had, and there is abundant English authority for it from the early part of the nineteenth century onward. In the same way I think a man of Scottish descent at any rate is free to use "England" and "English" in a sense extended to the United Kingdom, or even the Empire. Strict verbal accuracy must give way in literature to literary usage and convenience.

^b John Quincy Adams: His Connection with the Monroe Doctrine. By Worthington Chauncy Ford. Cambridge, Mass., 1902. The utility of Mr. Reddaway's meritorious book (The Monroe Doctrine: Cambridge, 1898) is gravely marred by the want of specific references to his documents.

need the undoubted right of every sovereign State to safeguard its own interests and preserve the type of institutions which it has deliberately chosen.

I. THE ORIGIN OF THE DOCTRINE.

Two quite distinct passages in President Monroe's message of 1823 are usually cited as containing the Monroe Doctrine. The first of these was the outcome of a Russian attempt to enforce exclusive commercial regulations in the region of the Bering Straits over an extent in space wider, in the judgment of both the American and British Governments, than was warranted by the actual Russian occupation of the territory now known as Alaska. Following with slight variation the terms of a communication already made to the Russian Minister at Washington, the President said:

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.

The independence of the Spanish-American republics had been recognized by the United States in 1822, and this passage may be said to involve the position (though such is not its principal meaning) that a war of reconquest by Spain, with or without allies, would not pass muster as a colonizing expedition. Otherwise it is unconnected with the more important protest which comes a long way afterwards in the message; and at first sight it is hard to find room at this day for any practical application of it. For there is now no part of either American Continent which is not under the jurisdiction of some recognized government,^a and there can be no question of founding any new colonies. A settlement, under an existing jurisdiction, of friendly aliens who may, and probably will, become naturalized citizens in their new home, and may or may not retain their own language and social customs, has, I need hardly say, nothing to do with the foundation of a colony in the proper sense. One might put the case of European immigrants and their descendants becoming an effective majority in a small American State, and then determining to annex themselves to the mother country. This might be held to be within the spirit of Monroe's declaration. But such an interpretation might also be held to conflict with the other and more vital branch of the Doctrine, which is founded on the indefeasible right of every American Commonwealth to choose its own form of government.

In any case it does not seem likely that any such offer of annexation will be made, or that if it were made any prudent European Government would accept it. There is another possibility, however, namely, that under the forms of spontaneous immigration a national propaganda should be semiofficially directed from some European country with a view to the control, and perhaps ultimate annexation, of outlying provinces in the vast and imperfectly administered dominions of some of the South American States. It appears that the national zeal associated with modern German enterprise—a zeal not always according to

^a The existence of boundary questions in both North and South America does not invalidate or qualify this statement any more than the existence of boundary questions between adjacent owners in England, or of doubt whether a particular acre is freehold or copyhold, affects the general efficacy of the law.

knowledge, and sometimes very far removed from discretion—has raised serious apprehensions in the United States. Clear warning has been given that proceedings amounting in substance to the settlement of a new European colony on American soil subject to the political control of an European power would not be acquiesced in by the United States; and Germany has given official assurances that nothing of the kind is intended.^a What is objected to is political colonization, open or disguised.

The words “future colonization” distinctly exclude any pretension on the part of the United States to object to any colonial occupation of greater or lesser portions of the New World already established at the date of the message, whether the colonies be insular or continental and whether the mother country be Denmark, France, Great Britain, the Netherlands, or Spain. Still more explicit words in the latter part of the message confirm this: “With the existing colonies or dependencies of any European power we have not interfered and shall not interfere.” Every subsequent authoritative comment has confirmed it. Nevertheless, a section of the continental press continues to circulate the grossest misrepresentations on this head in the hope of stirring up strife between the United States and England. A generally respectable organ of German-Austrian opinion has lately, with either malignant mendacity or such gross negligence as can hardly be counted honest, charged President Roosevelt with preaching a war of conquest for the annexation of Canada.^b Britons and Americans who are still averse or indifferent to a close understanding between their two countries would do well to take note of these transparent machinations (their clumsiness does not speak well for the alleged superior education of German publicists) and of the quarters from which they proceed. The statement said to have been made by a leading Parisian journal,^c that the extension of the Monroe Doctrine to all the American States is a new idea, may pass as pure ignorance. Our own position in the matter is quite simple. In the words of an anonymous but obviously judicious and well-informed writer, the policy declared by the United States—

is a policy to which this country has no right to take exception, and which we have no interest in obstructing. The title to our possessions on the American continent and our right to colonize them are not, and can not be, called in question by anybody. We have no reason to object to the protest of the United States against the acquisition of new territorial rights in North or South America by any European powers. That is not a principal of international law, but a question of policy, and one upon which every Government has an indisputable right to take its own line.^d

We now come to the passage which contained the more operative substance of the Monroe Doctrine. It was directed against the plan of the European “Holy Alliance” for aiding Spain, by moral and perhaps material pressure, to recover sovereignty over her American colonies—a task which was clearly beyond her unaided power. The character and resources of the Holy Alliance were such as to give fair warrant to the apprehension of many thoughtful Americans that nothing less was afoot than a scheme for the establishment of an universal despotism, that the danger was substantial, and that it was

^a Times, the 28th of August, 1902, first leading article.

^b Times, the 29th of August, 1902.

^c Times, the 30th of August, report from Paris.

^d Times, the 28th of August, 1902.

necessary "to secure the united liberties of the New World."^a Austria, Prussia, and Russia, then all despotically governed by men believing that they had barely escaped from the horrors of French democracy, were the original parties to the alliance. It was joined by France, whose government under the restored Bourbon monarchy was reactionary and practically despotic. Its first declared object was the maintenance, for the sake of justice, charity, and peace, of the European settlement made by the congress of Vienna; but the league was in fact for the support of high Legitimist doctrine and the suppression of liberalism in every form. In central Europe, including Italy, it fulfilled its purposes for a considerable time and with considerable apparent success; and in the very year 1823 the constitutional liberties of Spain were crushed by a French army. Paris is once more republican, but by one of the curious minor ironies of history, the name of a victory won in this inglorious cause is still familiar among Parisian landmarks.

Flushed with this exploit, the Holy Alliance now turned its attention to the Spanish-American republics. It was proposed to hold a conference of European powers in Paris, in order, as it was euphemistically said, "to aid Spain in adjusting the affairs of the revolted countries of America,"^b which had been in "revolt" for several years in consequence, it would seem not so much of any definite misgovernment as of the incompetence of Spanish authority to perform any functions of government at all while occupied at home with the Peninsular war. Canning was at the Foreign Office in London; our relations with the United States, notwithstanding the war of 1812 and the repugnance of English Liberals to the slave-holding interest which might at any time dominate American policy, were friendly. The notion sometimes met with that such relations between the two countries are a novelty can proceed only from ignorance of American history before the war of secession, which may, indeed, be presumed to be widespread on both sides of the Atlantic. In fact, the warning given to the Holy Alliance by Monroe's message was due, in the first instance, to a suggestion of Canning's; a no less effectual though less emphatic warning was given by Canning to the French ambassador in London two months earlier; and the two declarations were regarded at the time as witness of a practical concert. Canning had desired a joint or identical declaration; the fault, if any fault there was, which prevented the action of England and the United States from being in formal as well as substantial unison was certainly not on the British side.

On the 20th of August, 1823, Canning, in a confidential letter to Richard Rush, then the minister of the United States in London, proposed concerted action.^c The most material paragraphs are as follows:

Is not the moment come when our Governments might understand each other as to the Spanish-American colonies? And if we can arrive at such an understanding,

^a See Daniel C. Gilman's *James Monroe* (Boston and New York), 1898, p. 175.

^b *Annual Register*, 1824, p. 501.

^c Ford, page 47, full text apparently now first published. I can not find that there is any complete record of the correspondence between Adams, then Secretary of State at Washington, and Rush. The American ambassador has kindly caused search to be made in the archives of the embassy here, and informs me that there is nothing earlier than 1826. It must be remembered throughout that the United States had already recognized the Spanish colonies as independent, and in 1818 had declined to have anything to do with mediation on any other footing (see Gilman, 170, 171). Yet Adams (*Memoirs*, vi, 197) doubted whether the recognition had not been over-hasty.

would it not be expedient for ourselves, and beneficial for all the world, that the principles of it should be clearly settled and plainly avowed?

For ourselves we have no disguise.

- (1) We conceive the recovery of the colonies by Spain to be hopeless.
- (2) We conceive the question of the recognition of them as independent States to be one of time and circumstances.
- (3) We are, however, by no means disposed to throw any impediment in the way of an arrangement between them and the mother country by amicable negotiations.
- (4) We aim not at the possession of any portion of them ourselves.
- (5) We could not see any portion of them transferred to any other power with indifference.

If these opinions and feelings are, as I firmly believe them to be, common to your Government with ours, why should we hesitate mutually to confide them to each other and to declare them in the face of the world?

If there be any European power which cherishes other projects, which looks to a forcible enterprise for reducing the colonies to subjugation on the behalf or in the name of Spain, or which meditates the acquisition of any part of them to itself, by cession or by conquest, such a declaration on the part of your Government and ours would be at once the most effectual and the least offensive mode of intimating our joint disapprobation of such projects.

When Canning wrote this he had not heard of the proposed European Congress; the plan came to his knowledge within a few days, and he communicated it to Rush as an additional reason for an understanding.^a

Rush was an accomplished man and had excellent intentions, but he was not a statesman of the caliber of Adams, Jefferson, or Monroe. He was imbued with a fixed idea that all overtures from a monarchical government must be regarded with suspicion,^b and, instead of meeting Canning's proposal as frankly as it was made, he wasted time and ingenuity in trying to read sinister motives between the lines. At Washington they knew better. Monroe's own judgment several years earlier was recorded by Lord Holland.^c

Mr. Monroe (afterwards President) was a sincere Republican, who, during the revolution in France, had imbibed a strong predilection for that country, and no slight aversion to this. But he had candor and principle. A nearer view of the consular and imperial Government of France and of our Constitution in England converted him from both these opinions. "I find," said he to me, "your monarchy more republican than monarchical, and the French Republic infinitely more monarchical than your monarchy."

And now, while Rush was temporizing and suspecting in London, Jefferson, whom Monroe consulted in the matter, wrote in these memorable terms, really containing the whole of the Doctrine:

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 cis-Atlantic 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 endeavors 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. * * * 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 friend-

^a Ford, page 48.

^b Ford, pages 56-58. In Rush's published memoirs, second series (The Court of London from 1819 to 1825: London and Philadelphia, 1845; 2d edition, by Benjamin Rush, London, 1873), this is suppressed or much toned down.

^c Memoirs of the Whig Party during my time (edited by his son, 1854), ii, 101?

ship, and nothing would tend more to knit our affections than to be fighting once more side by side in the same cause.^a

Rush remained persuaded that Canning's real object was only to secure commercial or political advantages for England. "It is France that must not be aggrandized, not South America that must be made free."^b He called for immediate recognition by Great Britain of the independence of the South American Republics, wholly failing to see that the British Government had difficulties in the matter which the United States had not, and, at all events, if it had taken such action at that moment, would have thrown away a valuable card in the diplomatic game against the Holy Alliance;^c he raised as much dust as possible over collateral and irrelevant points; and then he professed to be surprised that "the Spanish-American topick [had] been dropped by Mr. Canning in a most extraordinary manner."^d Adams was indeed with him in principle to some extent, for in the debates of the American Cabinet he "maintained that [the United States] could act with England only on the basis of the acknowledged independence of the Spanish-American States."^e But Adams would never have conducted the business with Rush's want of tact. It is not clear, however, that mere pressure of time did not make separate action inevitable.

Canning, perceiving that something ought to be done promptly, and that a joint or identical declaration could not be arranged in time, acted in his own way. On the 9th of October he made the following statement^f in a conference with the Prince de Polignac, then French ambassador at St. James:

That the British Government were of opinion that any attempt to bring Spanish America again under its ancient submission to Spain must be utterly hopeless; that all negotiations for that purpose would be unsuccessful, and that the prolongation or renewal of war for the same object would be only a waste of human life and an infliction of calamity on both parties to no end.

That the British Government would, however, not only abstain from interposing any obstacle, on their part, to any attempt at negotiation which Spain might think proper to make, but would aid and countenance such negotiation, provided it were founded upon a basis which appeared to them to be practicable, and that they would, in any case, remain strictly neutral in a war between Spain and the colonies, if war should be unhappily prolonged.

But that the junction of any foreign power in an enterprise of Spain against the colonies would be viewed by them as constituting an entirely new question, and one upon which they must take such decision as the interests of Great Britain might require. — * * *

That, completely convinced that the ancient system of the colonies could not be restored, the British Government could not enter into any stipulation binding itself either to refuse or to delay its recognition of their independence.

That the British Government had no desire to precipitate that recognition so long as there was any reasonable chance of an accommodation with the mother country by which such a recognition might come first from Spain.

But that it could not wait indefinitely for that result; that it could not consent to make its recognition of the new States dependent upon that of Spain; and that it would consider any foreign interference, by force or by menace, in the dispute between Spain and the colonies as a motive for recognizing the latter without delay.

^a Gilman 173-4; Moore, in *Pol. Sci. Qu.*, xi. 11, 12. The passage about Great Britain is omitted in Gilman's extract.

^b Ford, p. 57; cp. Rush's character of Canning in the *Court of London*, 2d ed. Appendix.

^c Ford, 55, 65 n.

^d *Pol. Sci. Qu.*, xi, 12.

^e *Ib.*, 60 n.

^f *Annual Register*, 1824, p. 496.

By a later dispatch of the 30th of January, 1824,^a Canning instructed the British ambassador at Madrid to explain the reasons of Great Britain for refusing to enter into the proposed conference of European powers at Paris. Great Britain, he said, would prefer Spain "to have the grace and the advantage" of leading the way in recognizing the new States, but recognition could not in any case be much longer postponed. Plain speaking could not well go further from a power which had been in active and intimate alliance with Spain only ten years before. The constant habit of Spanish diplomacy, however, was never to make any kind of formal admission, or only so late and under such manifest necessity that the opportunity of producing any good effect was lost.^b In the result England recognized the Spanish-American States in the modest but effective way of making commercial treaties with them. Spain grumbled, the Holy Alliance protested, and Canning paid no attention to either.^c

It does not appear that Canning's communication to Polignac was known in Washington before the Presidential message was settled by Monroe's Cabinet. An immediate publication of it, or even the transmission of it to the Government of the United States by the British Government alone, would have been contrary to diplomatic usage.^d It is certain, however, that Adams treated our representative at Washington with marked cordiality throughout this time. Space would fail here, even if it were material to the purpose in hand, to follow the evolution of the critical passage enunciating the doctrine in the various stages of the draft message. The frequently cramped and involved style of the final text shows marks of cabinet revision on its face. But it is enough to say, with Monroe's biographer, that he—

spoke from the chair of the Chief Executive, and to him statesmen and historians have continuously attributed the Doctrine. His official station, at a critical moment, and not his personal characteristics and opinions, gave to his words authority, and their pronounced acceptance by the people of the United States shows how accurately they express the sentiments of the people.^e

It will be convenient to set out the paragraphs in question, though they have been many times reprinted. The message may be seen at large by English readers in the Annual Register of 1824. After referring to the condition of Spain and Portugal, the text proceeds:

The citizens of the United States cherish sentiments the most friendly in favor of the liberty and happiness of their fellow-men on that side of the Atlantic. 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 so to do. 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 connected, and by causes which must be obvious to all enlightened and impartial observers. The political system of the allied powers (i. e., the Holy Alliance) 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

^a Annual Register, p. 501.

^b This is amply illustrated in the tangled history of the Venezuelan boundary question. Spain was still officially claiming dominion over the whole of Guiana, while a Spanish governor was trying to put off on the nearest Dutch officer the responsibility of keeping order at the mouth of the Orinoco.

^c Stapleton, Political Life of G. Canning, c. 8 (1824-25).

^d Rush had from Canning a confidential memorandum of the conference, but only on the 13th of December, 1823, eleven days after Monroe's message was delivered.—Ford, p. 65. The slowness of communication between Europe and America at that time must not be forgotten by those who care to study the matter in detail.

^e Gilman, p. 178.

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^a 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 (i. e., to force monarchical government on any American community) 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 principle, 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. In the war between those new governments (the Spanish-American republics) and Spain we declared our neutrality at the time of their recognition, and to this we have adhered, and shall continue to adhere, provided no change shall occur which, in the judgment of the competent authorities of this Government, shall make a corresponding change on the part of the United States indispensable to their security.^b

The late events in Spain and Portugal show that Europe is still unsettled. * * * Our policy in regard to Europe, which was adopted at an early stage of the wars (i. e., the wars of the French Revolution) 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 anyone 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.

Monroe's declaration was received with no uncertain welcome in England. The Annual Register^c may be taken as a fair witness. After stating the effect of Canning's communications to Polignac, its commentary proceeds:

It may be believed that so unequivocal an avowal of the views of England on this great question must at once have put an end to any purpose, if any such had been entertained, of employing the force of the continental allies of Spain as a means either of menace or coercion against the new American republics. The English Government, however, was not likely to stand alone in its resistance to such an aggression. [Monroe's message is then cited.]

This coincidence of view and purpose on the part of the two great maritime powers of the Old and the New World was, of course, decisive against the further entertainment by the allies of any such purpose as that which has * * * been imputed to them.

This approval did not extend to the paragraph objecting to any fresh European colonization,^d but that point has long ceased to be material for England.

On the other hand, the importance of English cooperation was fully recognized by instructed Americans and by Rush himself some years afterwards, when he wrote:

That this change in France and her allies (the abandonment of any attempt to coerce the Spanish-American republics) was produced by the knowledge that Eng-

^aThe lower degrees of diplomatic "friendly relations" irresistibly remind a lawyer of "your loving friend, Richard Roe."

^bThe undiplomatic English of this paragraph is that the United States will treat any armed intervention in favor of Spain—or perhaps something less—as a just cause of war.

^c1824, p. 19.

^dRush, *op. cit.*, 2d ed., 419.

land would oppose, at all hazards, hostile plans upon Spanish America, may be inferred with little danger of error.^a

Among continental publicists the reception of the message was, as might be expected, very different, and, so far as there has been any continental tradition in the matter, it has been to regard the Monroe Doctrine as a characteristic and offensive display of American arrogance. Something might be said for this view if Monroe's Cabinet had in fact attempted or desired to add a new and unauthorized article to the law of nations. The belief or assumption that this was so may be met with; but there is nothing to warrant it in either the substance or the form of Monroe's action. I am not aware that any similar charge was brought against Canning; if there were any real question of a trespass against the law of nations Canning's trespass would be fully as great as that of Adams and Monroe, or indeed greater. No formal communication of the doctrine was made by the United States to the Holy Alliance, or to any power. The President's message is certainly a public document, but it is not international; it is a domestic message to the Congress, and through them to the people of the United States. Foreign governments are in no way bound to take any official notice of it. If Monroe had wished to claim from them any kind of admission or recognition of the doctrine, he could not have chosen a less apt form of publicity. If he wished to make a one-sided declaration not calling for answer or acknowledgment, the form he did choose was the best.^b

^a Rush, *op. cit.*, p. 417. It is astonishing to find that the Monroe Doctrine and its origins are not even alluded to in the article on Canning in the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

^b Sir Frederick Pollock omits to state, as do nearly all writers who have discussed this subject, that although Mr. Canning "called in the New World to redress the balance of the Old," and was the first to propose to the United States to take a position adverse to the plans of the Holy Alliance, he nevertheless promptly repudiated and denounced the Monroe Doctrine as soon as it was promulgated by the President in his message.

Mr. Stapleton, in "George Canning and his Times," p. 376, says:

"Mr. Canning maintained that foreign powers had no right, either directly or indirectly, to interfere forcibly between Spain and her American colonies, and that they had consequently no right to aid Spain in her attempts to reconquer them.

"The 'Monroe Doctrine' is essentially different. That doctrine is that the 'unoccupied parts of America are no longer open to colonization from Europe.' This doctrine Mr. Canning resolutely denied, affirming in opposition not only that Spain had a perfect right to make whatever unaided efforts she chose and was able to make to regain the lost dominion over her revolted colonies, but that 'the United States had no right to take umbrage at the establishment of new colonies from Europe in any such unoccupied parts of the American Continent.'

In a dispatch to Sir Charles Bagot, dated January 15, 1824, Mr. Canning says:

"These reasons had induced us to hesitate very much as to the expediency of acceding to the proposition of the United States for a common negotiation between the three powers, when the arrival of the speech of the President of the United States at the opening of Congress supplied another reason at once decisive in itself, and susceptible of being stated to Mr. Rush with more explicitness than those which I have just now detailed to your excellency. I refer to the principle declared in that speech, which prohibits any further attempt by European powers at colonization in America.

"Upon applying to Mr. Rush for an explanation of this extraordinary doctrine I found him unprovided with any instructions upon it. He said, indeed, that he had not heard from his Government since the opening of the Congress, and had not even received officially a copy of the President's speech.

"His conviction, however, was that against whatever power the President's doctrine was directed it could not be directed against us. He appealed in support of that conviction to the existence of the convention of 1818, by which we and the

II. THE NATURE AND LIMITS OF THE DOCTRINE.

The message did not, then, purport to lay down any rule binding on any power, or on the United States themselves, as part of the law of nations. It did not create or offer any conventional obligation. The United States, in fact, declined not long afterwards to take any steps which might be construed as a definite promise to the South American republics. The declaration was of an independent policy, to be interpreted and executed by the sole discretion of the nation whose chief magistrate had declared it; and from this attitude the United States have not departed. Not that Monroe's dictum could have of itself any binding force on his successors. Its present importance is derived, on the contrary, from their continuous and deliberate approval. The Doctrine is a living power because it has been adopted by the Government and the people of the United States, with little or no regard to party divisions, for the best part of the century. Since it is not a formula to be construed according to its literal terms like a statute or a convention, there is no reason why its application should be limited to precisely similar facts. The question in every case is not whether the facts fall within Monroe's words, or the words of any later President or Secretary of State, but whether they are within the spirit and the general purpose of the policy to which Monroe's message first gave an authentic shape. Adams, Jefferson, and Monroe could not foresee, for example, the making of a canal across the Isthmus of Panama. But they would probably have held, as a natural consequence of their principles, that such a canal, if made, ought to be free from the control of any European power. As a set-off to the complete freedom of action which the United States—wisely, so far as I may venture on an opinion—thought fit to reserve, the United States, like any other independent power, must act on its own view of national policy, whenever it does act, at its own risk. This is fully realized by President Roosevelt.

Speaking at Proctor, Vt., on the 1st of September, the President said:^a

The doctrine will be respected as long as we have a first-class, efficient navy—not very much longer. In private life a man who asserts something that he is going to do and does not back it up is always a contemptible creature, and as a nation the last thing we can afford to do is to take up a position which we do not intend to make

United States hold for a time joint occupancy and common enjoyment of all the territory on the northwest coast of America above latitude 42°.

"It was obviously the impression on Mr. Rush's mind that this pretension on the part of his Government was intended as a set-off against maritime pretension of the Russian ukase.

"I do not mean to authorize your excellency to report this construction at St. Petersburg as that of the American minister, but you will have no difficulty in stating it as one to which we think the President's speech liable, as that indeed which appears to us to be by far the most probable construction of it; as such it furnishes a conclusive reason for our not mixing ourselves in a negotiation between two parties whose opposite pretensions are so extravagant in their several ways as to be subject not so much of practical adjustment as of reciprocal disavowal." (Alaska Boundary, British case-appendix, p. 61.)

Mr. Canning's attitude, as expressed in the dispatch just quoted, and as explained by Mr. Stapleton, makes Mr. Rush's suspicions that Mr. Canning's intention was to use the United States merely for the benefit of his own policy seem less unreasonable than Sir Frederick Pollock would lead us to suppose.—(H. C. LODGE.)

^aTimes, the 2d of September, 1902.

good. Bragging and boasting in private life are almost always signs of a weak man, and a nation that is strong need not have its public men boast and brag on its account. Least of all does a self-respecting nation wish its public representatives to threaten, menace, or insult any other power. Our attitude toward all powers must be one of such dignified courtesy and respect as we intend they shall show us. In return, they must be willing to give us the friendly regard we exact from them. We must no more wrong them than we must submit to wrongdoing by them. When we take up a position, let us remember that our holding it depends on ourselves, depends on our showing that we have the ability to hold it.

This is exactly the tradition of the great school of American statesmen who flourished in the first quarter of the nineteenth century.

In one respect, no doubt, the expectations of the founders have been disappointed. They seem to have thought that the United States would be a self-contained country, with few external objects of any kind, and no foreign policy except the warning off of foreign interference in America. That was not to be. A commercial nation with a Pacific seaboard can not look westward without finding itself on the new meeting ground of nations, which for us is the Far East, and so it would still be even if the United States had nothing to do with the Philippines. In other words, to put it bluntly, the Monroe Doctrine is not so cheap as it looked. Few things worth having are.

Hence it is no matter for surprise that American statesmen have hardly ever made express reference to the Monroe Doctrine in official communication with other powers. It would have been an error to refer to it as if it had external authority. Such a course would merely provoke an answer whose plain sense, under the usual diplomatic forms, would amount to this: "That is your policy; you say you declared it long ago. We have nothing to do with your declarations; we were not bound to assent or dissent; but in fact we have objected to your policy before, and we object to it now." There is indeed one exception. American diplomacy has appealed to the Monroe Doctrine in correspondence with the British foreign office. We need not consider for the moment whether the doctrine, being vouched, really had much, or anything, to say to the special matter in hand. But the American Government was careful to justify such an appeal by the exceptional position of England in relation to the doctrine. It was not that Monroe's declaration was in itself a valid authority as against England, or any other independent state. Mr. Bayard, instructing Mr. Phelps in 1887, said:

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.^a

Thus the Secretary of State invoked not any general rule, but a common policy and common tradition of the two nations. If anyone thinks the Monroe Doctrine is anti-British, or contains any essentially anti-British element, it is evident that he reckons without the Government of the United States. Unless the doctrine is British as well as American the language held by Mr. Bayard and Mr. Olney was pointless.

At the same time, a principle of this kind not confined within any set form of words is obviously capable of abuse. Rash politicians and speculative publicists may be, and have been, tempted to suggest

^a Parl. Papers, U. S., No. 1, 1896 [C. 7926], p. 1.

unwarrantable extensions, and adversaries may fasten upon their indiscretion for the purpose of stirring up ill will against the United States. These dangers have not escaped American statesmen. The just limits of the doctrine have been recognized and explained in several utterances of hardly less weight than Monroe's original declaration.

It is, perhaps, as well to begin with the latest of these explanations, which is also one of the most authoritative. President Roosevelt said in the last days of August:^a

Our interest in the Monroe Doctrine is more concrete than ever before. The Monroe Doctrine is simply a statement of our very firm belief that the nations now existing on this continent must be left to work out their own destinies among themselves, and that this continent is no longer to be regarded as the colonizing ground of any European power. The one power on the continent that can make the Doctrine effective is, of course, ourselves; for in the world as it is a nation which advances a given doctrine likely to interfere in any way with other nations must possess the power to back it up if it wishes the doctrine to be respected. We stand firmly by the Monroe Doctrine, and the events of the last nine months have rendered it evident that we shall soon embark on the work of excavating the isthmian canal. This work is probably destined to be the greatest engineering feat of the twentieth century, and, as it is the biggest thing of its kind to be done, I am glad it is the United States that is to do it.

This is a summary and correct statement of the positive contents of the doctrine in its two branches. A few years earlier Mr. Roosevelt expressed his opinion more fully, writing as a private citizen:

The Monroe Doctrine is not a question of law at all. It is a question of policy.
* * *

The Monroe Doctrine may be briefly defined as forbidding European encroachment on American soil. It is not desirable to define it so rigidly as to prevent our taking into account the varying degrees of national interest in varying cases. The United States has not the slightest wish to establish a universal protectorate over other American States, or to become responsible for their misdeeds. If one of them becomes involved in an ordinary quarrel with a European power, such quarrel must be settled between them by any one of the usual methods.^b But no European State is to be allowed to aggrandize itself on American soil at the expense of any American State. Furthermore, no transfer of an American colony from one European State to another is to be permitted, if, in the judgment of the United States, such transfer would be hostile to its own interests.^c

A little earlier, again, Mr. Olney, as Secretary of State, wrote as follows:

The precise scope and limitations of this rule can not 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.^d

^a Times, the 28th August. The perfectly sound commentary in the first leading article of the same issue is well worth consulting. I have cited part of it above.

^b In fact, this has happened several times without any interference or protest from the United States. (See J. B. Moore, *Pol. Sci. Qu.*, xi., 25-29.)

^c Theodore Roosevelt, *American Ideals* (1897), pp. 230-231.

^d *Parl. Papers, United States, No. 1, 1896 (C. 7926)*, p. 15.

This clearly excludes ordinary diplomatic questions between American and European States, and, among others, questions of genuinely doubtful or disputed boundaries, from the scope of the Monroe Doctrine. How, then, did Mr. Olney come, in this very dispatch, to find an application for the doctrine in the boundary dispute between Great Britain and Venezuela? The answer is that the Government of the United States, being misled by one-sided information, thought it gravely doubtful whether it was an ordinary dispute, and whether England was not seeking to encroach on Venezuelan territory without a reasonable claim of right, or at any rate to insist on being judge in her own cause. It is needless to go back upon the extraordinary manner in which President Cleveland thought fit to bring the matter into a prominence wholly out of proportion to its importance, or to consider whether British ministers might not have taken more pains to give correct information, at various times, to the American Government, and whether we might not safely and wisely have accepted the first American offer of mediation. The controversy has already passed into the region of forgotten history.

The President's all but hostile attitude^a at the end of 1895 was happily modified, under pressure of a great body of enlightened American opinion, into a diplomatically correct tender of good offices. Ultimately an arbitral tribunal was constituted, and dealt with the matter calmly and judicially. Its decision showed that the question—complicated as it had been by some blunders, much ignorance, and a singular run of unlucky accidents—was really a genuine boundary question; and, moreover, it justified the British claim on all points of substance except one, and that a minor one.^b The circumstances increase rather than diminish the value of Mr. Olney's candid exposition with regard to the limitations of the Monroe Doctrine in general.

It would be possible to add to these authorities, but they are sufficient. They must outweigh any less deliberate utterances of less responsible persons. The Monroe Doctrine is not what any stump orator or yellow journalist chooses to make it, but what the people of the United States in their settled judgment and corporate action have made and will continue to make it.

III. NOMINAL AND REAL APPLICATIONS OF THE DOCTRINE.

During the generation which elapsed between Monroe's Presidency and the beginnings of the civil war the United States enlarged its borders to the west, and became a Pacific as well as an Atlantic power. These acquisitions have been, on the whole, no less beneficial to mankind than to the advantage of the United States; but the motives and instruments were not of unalloyed purity. Desire of new slave territory counted for much in the slave States; and fantastic apprehen-

^a It has already been pointed out that a Presidential message is not a diplomatic or international document; in this case fortunately so.

^b The final settlement was arrived at in 1899, and excited very little public interest. It now seems hard to believe that at the beginning of 1896 people were actually talking about war on this question. My own answer to an anxious friend was that the most careful mother might safely feed her infant on all the powder that would be burnt in that war. Mr. Olney himself has, unofficially, supplied the best commentary: "The two peoples, at the safe distance which the broad Atlantic interposes, take with each other liberties of speech which only the fondest and dearest relatives indulge in."—Atlantic Monthly, 1898, vol. 81, p. 588.

sions of European conquest were, it is said, fostered in order to make the people of the United States eager to be beforehand in annexation. For this purpose the name of the Monroe Doctrine was used, and was for a time brought into disrepute among the opponents of slavery.^a But it does not seem that the Government of the United States was ever officially committed to this application, or that any incident in foreign politics can be definitely connected with it. Cuba, no doubt, was in a more or less chronic state of disturbance; and a reasonable aversion to Cuba falling into the possession of any European nation other than Spain existed in the United States until the knot was cut by the war of 1898. This aversion may be traced further back than the formulation of the Monroe Doctrine, and should perhaps be reckoned as a joint cause rather than a consequence of it.

We have seen that interference with existing colonies and their attachment to European states was expressly disclaimed by the authors of the Doctrine. Nevertheless the Doctrine was for some time vaguely associated, by an error perhaps common enough to be called vulgar, with speculative dislike of even the ancient colonial establishments in America. Canada was supposed, in particular, to be a source of danger. During the first half of the nineteenth century many American statesmen believed—Mr. Sumner believed as late as 1871—“that the greatest menace to our peace with Great Britain was in the maintenance of a colonial dependency on our northern border.”^b This feeling was not unnatural a generation or two ago. Not only the United States were actually and relatively weaker, but the fate of Canada seemed precarious. Not forty years have elapsed since the prevailing opinion of English publicists—an opinion which had its full share in the policy of the colonial office—was that the self-governing colonies must soon become independent. The only wise course, it was said, was to regard separation as inevitable, in order that when the time came it might be peaceful. In face of this expected abandonment Americans might plausibly doubt whether an independent Canada would remain united, or would be strong enough even united to maintain her independence. A French expedition to defend alleged rights of the French Canadians was quite conceivable in the days of the Second Empire. The general interest of America, not merely of the United States, was manifestly opposed to any kind of dominion or control over Canada being acquired by any foreign power. If Canada fell to anyone, it must be to the United States. It is perfectly true that such a line of reasoning would have ignored the material factor of the Canadians themselves. But we can not blame the United States for not knowing what was ignored, with much less excuse, in England. Throughout the Palmerstonian period the judgment of the best informed persons in Europe was singularly at fault, with few exceptions, on the political future of both Europe and America for the rest of the century.

The conditions are wholly different at this day. Canada was in rebellion at the beginning of Queen Victoria's reign. At the end of it French-speaking Canadians were foremost, side by side with Englishmen, in the assault on Paardeberg which decided the South African war.

^aJohn W. Burgess in *Pol. Sci. Qu.*, xi, 44, speaking apparently from personal knowledge and recollection.

^bJohn W. Foster, *A Century of American Diplomacy*, p. 429.

The Dominion of Canada is knit together by a Constitution not less liberal and not less aptly framed than that of the United States. What is more—and this is the real answer to the old anticolonial mistrust—Canada can no longer be described as a colonial dependency. Our Canadian fellow-citizens are no dependents. They are our partners and equals in the heritage of an empire whose service is freedom, not merely for the pursuit of material prosperity, but for the higher partnership of the true state, which, in Burke's prophetic words, is “a partnership in all science, a partnership in all art, a partnership in every virtue and in all perfection.” Formally or informally they will henceforth have their due voice in imperial affairs; in their own they are as autonomous as any people on earth. Nominally the Imperial Parliament has unlimited power; in fact it would no more interfere with the domestic laws of the Dominion or of any province than the Congress of the United States could or would interfere with those of California. The Canadians are attached—nay, devoted—to the imperial connection, because under the British flag they see the best security for living their own life and working out their own destiny.^a No man can yet foresee what shape the Government of the British Empire will take in our children's time; but the old “Government from Downing street” is dead, and the fear of excessive European influence in Canada may follow it as a solitary and decrepit mourner.

Another false application of the Doctrine may be very shortly dismissed. In 1895 Mr. Olney, then in no mood to disparage any arguable pretension of the United States, wrote: “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 an European power.”^b Certainly Mr. Olney's criticism was just. One can not see why independent American States should not be free to refer matters in difference to any arbitrator of their own choice. There might be a valid objection to rewarding the arbitrator with a slice of territory, could such a transaction be supposed possible. This would not touch the arbitration itself or the person of the arbitrator, but only the mode of paying his fee. At present it is enough to say that the King of England has been chosen by Chile and Argentina to arbitrate on a vexed question of boundary, and no difficulty whatever has been raised by the United States.

One serious European intervention in North American affairs took place in our own time, and was frustrated by the resolute action of the United States. This was Napoleon the Third's endeavor to establish a monarchical government under French influence in Mexico.^c For reasons already given the Monroe Doctrine was not then mentioned by name, but it was not therefore the less really and effectually applied. The beginning of the matter was a joint English, French, and Spanish

^a Anyone who still dreams that there is such a thing as an annexation party in Canada should refer to the unanimous speeches of unofficial English, French, and Irish Canadians in the Dominion House of Commons in February, 1896. (Parl. Papers, Canada and Australasian Colonies, 1896 [C. 8143], p. 5.) Their correct and dignified handling of the relations between Canada and the United States might well be taken as a model by British publicists.

^b P. P., 1896 [C. 7926], p. 16.

^c See Frederic Bancroft, “The French in Mexico and the Monroe Doctrine,” Pol. Sci. Qu., xi, 30. Some persons in London thought the French expedition was about to extinguish the Doctrine. Everett, The Monroe Doctrine (New York, Loyal Publication Society, 1863), p. 2.

expedition in 1861-2 to obtain redress for gross injuries. To that extent there was no violation of the Monroe Doctrine, and the United States admitted, in effect, that there was none. But soon it appeared that Napoleon the Third had further and other aims. England and Spain withdrew. French troops remained, nominally to obtain satisfaction of French claims magnified to the utmost. Mexico was occupied. An assembly dominated by France invited the Austrian Archduke Maximilian—a gallant man lamentably duped and sacrificed—to become emperor. The new Mexican monarchy seemed to be firmly founded, and the waning popularity of the Second Empire restored. Louis Napoleon had counted on the disruption of the United States, or at least on the war of secession, then at its height, being protracted. In 1865 the situation was changed. The ending of the war had given the United States a free hand. After plain intimations that the new empire of Mexico could not be recognized, the French Government was "respectfully informed:"

First. That the United States earnestly desire to continue to cultivate sincere friendship with France.

Second. That this policy would be brought into imminent jeopardy unless France could deem it consistent with her interest and honor to desist from the prosecution of armed intervention in Mexico to overthrow the domestic republican Government existing there and to establish upon its ruins the foreign monarchy which has been attempted to be inaugurated in the capital of that country.^a

This was in fact an ultimatum, backed by the veteran army which had come out of the civil war. After some vain procrastination the French troops evacuated Mexico in March, 1867. The final act of the tragedy belongs to European history. Louis Napoleon, baffled in America, staked all on the hazard of war with Germany, and Maximilian was avenged at Sedan.

IV. REVIVAL OF THE ORIGINAL DOCTRINE.

Lastly, we have lived to see the Monroe Doctrine enforced in its original form and in closely similar circumstances by the spontaneous cooperation of England with the United States. In 1898 the chronic troubles of Cuba reached a crisis. The patience of the United States was exhausted, and war with Spain, already probable if not imminent, was accelerated by a catastrophe which is still mysterious. With the exception of the United States being actually involved in war the situation was much like that of 1823. There was no holy alliance in Europe, but it is known that overtures passed among the continental powers for a coalition to exert pressure in favor of Spain, and that hopes were entertained of obtaining English assistance to that end. Whatever documentary proofs may exist will hardly be disclosed in our time, but there is no doubt as to what well-informed persons believed both in London and at Washington. I quote the statement of the *Annual Register*^b (a publication sufficiently free from any charge of partisanship or levity) as the best authority so far accessible:

Unfortunately for [Spain] some of the European countries counselled resistance, and even held out the prospect of at least moral support. * * *

It was only after war was inevitable that the Spanish Government learnt that the overtures * * * for a joint representation to the Washington Government had fallen through in consequence of Great Britain's absolute refusal to interfere. In

^aThe 16th of December. 3 Dipl. Cor., 1865, 460; Pol. Sci. Qu., xi, 41.

^b1898, pp. 81, 82.

acting thus, Lord Salisbury undoubtedly gave expression to the dominant feeling in this country. * * *

[Austria, France, and Germany were, it seems, prepared to act if Great Britain would cooperate.]

Mr. Balfour, however, who was, in the absence of Lord Salisbury, acting as foreign secretary, promptly demolished this carefully planned scheme to embroil the two English-speaking countries and then to profit by the exhaustion of both. Appreciating fully the real meaning of the "friendly mediation" it was suggested should be offered, he instructed Sir Julian Pauncefote that under no circumstances would Great Britain adopt a policy which might be regarded as unfriendly by the Washington Cabinet. This refusal, which was notified to the various European courts, was, as might have been anticipated, followed by eager denials in the official and semi-official newspapers of those countries that anything unfriendly to the United States had ever been contemplated.

Every discreet reader can weigh for himself the worth of such denials. Lord Pauncefote's last days were embittered by offensive repetition of them, coupled with the impudent assertion that, if there was anti-American intrigue, it proceeded not from any continental chancery, but from this country. To my mind, the character of these attempts, taken together with the studious and prudent reticence opposed by our own Government to public demands for particulars, amounts to all but conclusive proof that the account given at the time, and not met in any straightforward manner by the parties interested in refuting it, is substantially true. Public opinion in England was no less decisively in favor of the line taken by our ministers than it had been in favor of Monroe's original declaration in 1824. The projected European coalition, which would have been a barefaced menace to the right and power of the Cubans to choose their own form of government, never came into existence. How far any proposals were formulated, how categorical in terms was the refusal of England to have anything to do with such a scheme, how positive the intimation that even British neutrality was not to be counted on is, after all, not very material. Since 1898 it is certain that if in the future any like enterprise is attempted the moral and, if necessary, the physical power of the British Empire will be on the side of the United States. We have not formally reasserted Canning's policy in its modern application. We have not declared that we accept a joint interest and joint duties in respect of the principles embodied in the Monroe Doctrine; but we have done better. We have acted upon that policy and those principles.

It is clear that the feeling which prompted and approved this action and the response it called forth in America can not be accounted for on grounds of common material interest alone. Neither will the affinity of race give an adequate explanation. Community of race, language, and even manners is compatible with hostility. Nearness just short of community seems rather to provoke it. On the other hand, a compact and patriotic nation can exist, as we see in Switzerland, without any visible peculiarity of race and without any one national or prevailing language; and we have found within our own empire a spontaneous loyalty transcending the bounds not only of race and language, but of religion and social structure. "Blood is thicker than water" is a good saying, but best when it means more than it says. Beyond the facts of speech and kindred, deeper than all our occasions of difference, is the common stock of traditions and institutions, the ideal of political and intellectual freedom which was framed in England by centuries of toil and conflict, and has gone round the world with the law happily called by a name neither distinctively English nor American—our

common law. There is room for many political systems in the world, and we have no ambition to thrust our ideals upon other nations. We can respect their genius and their methods; we may learn much from them, but we must also maintain our own, and if other communities are desirous of trying that which we have found good for ourselves we may well claim the right of saying that no external interference shall prevent a fair trial. Nothing less than this can be taken as the ultimate significance of the Monroe Doctrine for the two English-speaking powers. It may be said that if so the doctrine has outgrown its name and origin, and the name is no longer useful. That is a question for Americans (for here the name is barely understood) and a question in which sentiment is entitled to a considerable voice. But, further, it may be said that any danger of the kind suggested is imaginary. The President of the United States may be presumed to know more than is publicly known, and he does not appear to think so. We are too apt, perhaps, to assume that civilization is essentially progressive and reaction on a large scale impossible. The enemies of light and freedom are neither dead nor sleeping; they are vigilant, active, militant, and astute. It is certain that any serious discord between the United States and Great Britain would be an opportunity for those enemies all over the world; and, that being so, harmony should be among the first objects of the citizens of both countries. There is no need to talk of any formal convention or declarations. If the spirit is there the letter can be provided when the time calls for it. A generally understood accord on the greater matters of policy will suffice. It is the business of the present generation, wherever the English tongue runs, to make that accord so firm that for generations to come it may be the best security for peace and progress.

FREDERICK POLLOCK.

[This paper was written and published before the recent proceedings arising out of claims against Venezuela. I do not think it useful to add, or necessary to alter, anything.—F. P.]

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