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# THE UNITED STATES AND CUBA

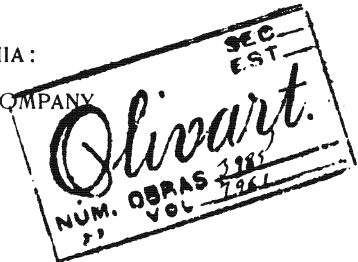
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A REVIEW OF DOCUMENTS RELATING TO THE  
INTERVENTION OF THE UNITED STATES IN  
THE AFFAIRS OF SPANISH-AMERICAN  
COLONIES

*Juan* — BY —  
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PHILADELPHIA:  
THE LEVYTYPE COMPANY

1895



## THE UNITED STATES AND CUBA.

BY JOHN GUITÉRAS, M. D.

The recognition of belligerent rights is the first active step a nation may take towards intervention in a struggle between foreign nations, or between a nation and a portion of its territory contending for independence. The recognition takes the form of a proclamation of neutrality, that is, the third nation declares its neutrality as between the parties in the contest. This is the first step of intervention, and is, naturally, the least objectionable. The neutral nation simply takes cognizance of a fact—the fact that a state of war exists, and declares its neutrality as between the two parties. If this neutrality is maintained in good faith the recognition is not, according to international law, a hostile measure. The United States have repeatedly granted the rights of belligerency to numerous nations and struggling colonies. Such actions have never given rise to any serious conflict; they have given rise to nothing beyond an occasional remonstrance when the action has been judged precipitate. But even when the step is of more serious import than the recognition of belligerent rights; when it amounts to the recognition of sovereignty, it is not a breach of law, even though it may prove to have been precipitate. This is very clearly set forth by Mr. Webster in his famous answer to Mr. Hülsemann, the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires at Washington. The United States had sent Mr. Mann to Hungary on a secret and confidential mission to obtain information as to the prospects of Hungary in her revolutionary movement against Austria. Mr. Hülsemann, complaining that the mission was a violation of the law of nations, drew forth a spirited reply from Mr. Webster, (*Wharton's Digest of International Law*, Vol. I, p. 188):

“ If, therefore, the United States had gone so far as to formally acknowledge the independence of Hungary, although, as the result has proven, it would have been a precipitate step, and one from which no benefit would have resulted to either

party, it would not, nevertheless, have been an act against the law of nations, provided they take no part in her contest with Austria."

It should be clearly understood that *the recognition of belligerent rights* is nothing more than an *acknowledgment of the existence of a state of war*. If we so understand it we can more readily apply our common sense to the elucidation of individual cases. We should avoid, then, many of the perplexities of international law wherein we may blind ourselves when we wish not to see what is evident. The use of the term *acknowledgment of a state of war* keeps the question of fact clearly before our eyes, and prevents confusion with another and more difficult question—the recognition of the rights of sovereignty or nationality.

Does a state of war exist?—that is the question of fact. And is this so intricate a question that it may not be discussed with advantage by all parties concerned? We, as a people, are deeply interested in Cuban affairs. We ask, in the name of common sense, whether there be not a state of war in Cuba. We read in the daily press that Spain has set on foot military expeditions against Cuba; that these armaments surpass all efforts of the nation since the Napoleonic wars; that there are daily conflicts of armed forces in Cuba; that there is to be a winter campaign; that the Cubans have regularly organized forces under a civil government; that this government is practically the continuation of one with which the Spanish government came to terms in 1878; that in dealing with this contest we ourselves have to invoke the neutrality laws of this country. If all this be not war, then, is it not high time that we should ask what means this great armament in our Southern waters?

The right of citizens to judge in these questions as matters of fact has been recognized by the United States. Our government has taken strong grounds against those who held them to be questions of law. I quote from instructions of Mr. Cass, Secretary of State, to Mr. Clay, November 26, 1858, as follows:

"Mr. Osma insists, however, that a civil war in one country can not be known to the people of another but through their own government; that the existence or non-existence of civil war is a question not of fact but of law, which no private

person has a right to decide for himself; that foreigners must regard the former state of things as still existing, unless their respective governments have *recognized* the change. But I am very clearly of the opinion that an American citizen who goes to Southern Peru may safely act upon the evidence of his own senses."

Our Government has also declared its own independence to act in these matters. President Grant in his first Annual Message says:

"The principle is maintained, however, that this nation is its own judge when to award the rights of belligerency, either to a people struggling to free themselves from a government they believe to be oppressive, or to independent nations at war with each other."

The question immediately arises: What are the facts upon which such judgment may be based; or, in other words, what are the conditions that constitute the occasion for the acknowledgement of the existence of a state of war? I shall quote several authorities upon the requirements for recognition, and I submit to the reader, whether these requirements have not been fulfilled by the Cubans in their present contest.

In the correspondence between Mr. Adams and Earl Russel, extending from April 7 to September 18, 1865, Mr. Adams lays down the following rule:

"Whenever an insurrection against the established government of a country takes place, the duty of governments, under obligations to maintain peace, and friendship with it, appears to be, at first, to abstain carefully from any step that may have the smallest influence in effecting the result. Whenever facts occur of which it is necessary to take notice, either because they involve a necessity of protecting personal interests at home, or avoiding an implication in the struggle, then it appears to be just and right to provide for the emergency by specific measures, precisely to the extent that may be required but no farther. It is, then, facts alone and not appearances or presumptions that justify action. But even these are not to be dealt with farther than the occasion demands: a rigid neutrality in whatever may be done is of course understood. If, after the lapse of a reasonable period, there be little prospect of a termination of the struggle, especially if this be carried on upon the ocean, a recognition of the parties as belligerent appears to be justifiable; and at

that time, so far as I can ascertain, such a step has never in fact been objected to."

Again we find in Woolsey's *International Law*, p. 292, that "Our Government has more than once professed to govern its action by the following criteria expressed in Mr. Monroe's words relating to the Spanish South American revolt: "As soon as the movement assumes such a steady and consistent form as to make the success of the province probable, the rights to which they were entitled by the law of nations, as equal parties in a civil war, have been extended to them."

And in Abdy's *Kent*, quoted in Wharton's *Digest of International Law*, Vol. I, p. 519, we read the opinion of Mr. Canning as follows:

"It has been the constant practice of European nations and of the United States to 'look upon belligerency as a fact rather than a principle,' holding with Mr. Canning, 'that a certain degree of force and consistency acquired by a mass of population engaged in war entitle that population to be treated as belligerents.'"

Lastly we have the opinion of the Supreme Court as expressed by Judge Grier in the *Prize Cases*, 2 Black, 667, in terms that are peculiarly applicable to the Cuban situation:

"A civil war is never solemnly declared; it becomes such by its accidents—the number, power and organization of the persons who originate and carry it on. When the party in rebellion occupy and hold in a hostile manner a certain portion of territory; have declared their independence; have cast off their allegiance; have organized armies; have commenced hostilities against their former sovereign, the world acknowledges them belligerents and the contest a war."

I conclude this series of extracts with the presentation of a specific instance of recognition of rights of belligerency by the United States. The Texans declared their independence from Mexico on March 2, 1836. This declaration of independence was signed by sixty men. Of this number only two were of Mexican nationality. We find, according to the following extract, that on September 2 of the same year, the United States had recognized the belligerent rights of the Texans by proclaiming the neutrality of the United States in the contest. The state paper I am about to quote shows also that an early

recognition of belligerent rights signalized our policy in the conflicts of South America with Spain. The extract will be found in MSS. Notes, Mexico, in a communication from Mr. Forsyth, Secretary of State, to Mr. Gorostiza, Mexican Plenipotentiary in Washington, dated September 20, 1836:

"It is a well known fact that the vessels of the South American provinces were admitted into the ports of the United States under their own or any other flags, from the commencement of the revolution, and it is equally true that throughout the various civil contests that have taken place at different periods among the states that sprung from that revolution, the vessels of each of the contending parties have been alike permitted to enter the ports of this country. It has never been held necessary as a preliminary to the extension of the rights of hospitality to either, that the chances of the war should be balanced and the probability of eventual success entertained. For this purpose it has been deemed sufficient that the party had declared its independence and was at the time actually maintaining it. Such having been the course hitherto pursued by this Government, however important it might be to consider the probability of success, if a question should arise as to the recognition of the independence of Texas, it is not to be expected that it should be made a prerequisite to the mere exercise of hospitality implied by the admission of the vessels of that country into our ports. The declaration of neutrality by the President in regard to the existing contest between Mexico and Texas was not intended to be confined to the limits of that province or of the theatre of war, within which it was hardly to be presumed that any collision would occur or any question on the subject arise, but it was designed to extend everywhere and to include as well the United States and their ports as the territories of the conflicting parties. The exclusion of the vessels of Texas, while those of Mexico are admitted, is not deemed compatible with the strict neutrality which it is the desire and the determination of this Government to observe in respect to the present contest between those countries; nor is it thought necessary to scrutinize the character or authority of the flag under which they may sail, or the validity of the commission under which they may be commanded, when the rights of this country and its citizens are respected and observed. In this frank expression of the views and policy of the United States in regard to a matter of so much interest as the war now waging between Mexico and its revolted province, it is hoped that new evidence will

be perceived, not only of the consistency and impartiality of this Government in its relations with foreign countries, but of the sincere desire which is entertained, by such exposition of its course, to cherish and perpetuate that friendly feeling, which will see in the scrupulous regard that is paid to the rights of other, and even of rival, parties, one of the surest guarantees that its own will continue to be respected."

Many other evidences of the early enforcement of impartial neutrality on the part of the United States, in the contest between Spain and her American colonies might be presented, Mr. Monroe, in his message to Congress (first session, Sixteenth Congress) said: "In the civil war existing between Spain and the Spanish provinces in this hemisphere the greatest care has been taken to enforce the laws intended to preserve an impartial neutrality."

Why should a similar action in regard to Cuba be so long deferred? For the reader must understand clearly that the United States are not acting the part of neutrals in the present conflict of Cubans and Spaniards. The frequent use by the press of the term infraction of the neutrality laws as applied to filibustering expeditions, etc., is convenient, but is misleading. The United States cannot be neutral, because they have not acknowledged the existence of a state of war in Cuba. If they had, the rights of belligerency would have followed as a matter of course, and the writing of this paper would have been needless.

The Cubans declared their independence from Spain on the 10th of October, 1868, and maintained sovereign control of portions of their territory for a period of ten years. They were forced to surrender in 1878, chiefly because the United States would not grant them the neutrality which had been accorded other revolted colonies on the American continent.

Cuba has now declared once more her independence of Spain. Her people rose in arms against Spanish domination on the 24th of February of this year. Since then, by force of arms, the revolution has invaded the country from East to West, until more than two-thirds of the territory are occupied by the patriots. On the 13th of last September representatives of the people from all sections of the country were assembled at Jimaguayú in the province of Camagüey. They organized a Con-

stituent Assembly; they formulated a Constitution for the establishment and government of the Republic of Cuba; they elected a President, a Vice-President, and four Secretaries of State, for Foreign Affairs, for War, for Finance, and for the Interior. They appointed also a Delegate Plenipotentiary to foreign countries, who is now in the United States, duly accredited from his Government.

With such antecedents the Cubans come now before the United States, after nine months of struggle in the field, and ask for a proclamation of neutrality as between Spain and Cuba. We must admit that the Cubans have acted prudently and wisely. They have thought that the recognition of belligerent rights was the easiest and least objectionable step; that it would be sufficient to enable them to fight it out on more nearly equal terms with Spain, without embroiling the United States in a foreign war. It must also be said that the Cubans have learned something by experience. Better things than a mere recognition of belligerent rights were promised them once before. The records show that the Cabinet of General Grant busied itself with long negotiations looking hopefully towards a successful settlement of the former Cuban revolution on the basis of independence. General Prim, who was then at the head of the Spanish Government, dangled this bauble for some time before our diplomats, until the subject was dropped, for very shame of deferred expectations and promises unfulfilled.

The success of the South American republics came not through intervention, but was materially aided by the early recognition of belligerent rights. The advantages of such recognition are summed up by Dana in the following words: (See Dana's Wheaton, p. 37.)

"They (the insurgents) gain the great advantage of a recognized *status*, and the opportunity to employ commissioned cruisers at sea, and to exert all the powers known to maritime warfare, with the sanction of foreign nations. They can obtain abroad loans, military and naval materials, and enlist men, as against everything but neutrality laws; their flags and commissions are acknowledged, their revenue laws are respected and they acquire a *quasi* political recognition."



Notwithstanding the positive advantages that are conceded to belligerents, according to such high authority, we find some writers who maintain that the rights of belligerency would be detrimental to the Cuban cause. It is possible that the end of the paragraph just quoted may have something to do with the holding of such opinions. The paragraph ends with the following words:

"On the other hand the parent Government is relieved from responsibility for acts done in the insurgent territory; its blockade of its own ports is respected, and it acquires a right to exert against neutral commerce, all the powers of a party to a maritime war."

It is impossible to deny that the last part of the paragraph portends serious inconvenience to the country acknowledging the state of war, if the said country has commercial and industrial interests at the seat of war. If we look at the surface of things, and if we are guided by interested motives alone, we might be persuaded to refuse Cuba her rights, in order to avoid inconvenience to ourselves. But this, in my opinion would be a very short-sighted policy. The refusal to recognize a state of war in Cuba means a prolongation of the struggle, destruction of lives and property, ruining of the agricultural and mining industries, and an impoverishment of commerce compared with which the inconveniences of the right of search are small. Our business exchange with Cuba is already reduced about one-half since the beginning of the war, and investments of American capital are seriously threatened.

This is furthermore a question that cannot be looked upon merely from the point of view of gain and barter. There are involved here high principles of morality, that impose duties upon a people and their government. As Mr. Dana has it in Wheaton, p. 36, the Government "owes it to its own citizens, to the contending parties and to the peace of the world to make that decision seasonably." Even a more decided form of intervention than the granting of belligerent rights is admissible under peculiar circumstances, as a high act of policy, though it may not be strictly legal.

Of course the United States might go further than the recog-

dition of belligerency in this Cuban matter. They might grant a recognition of nationality, or they might interfere actively in favor of the patriots, as the allied powers did in the case of Greece. It is quite probable that Spain would yield readily to such intervention, and it is even possible that she might welcome it as a cloak to cover her weakness. Spain could protest that, under the circumstances, she had yielded to a greater power, and not to the colonists. The Cubans, however, have not pretended to ask for such measures of intervention. They simply ask that the existence of a state war in the Island of Cuba be recognized.

It is assumed here, as a matter of course, that no American administration would venture to put an end to the Cuban struggle for independence through an active intervention in favor of Spain. The love of fair play, the dignity of the American people, our clean record in matters of foreign intervention would exclude such possibility. Our sympathies with peoples struggling for liberty has been too frequently expressed by our great statesmen, as may be seen in the following extracts, the reading of which may well fill with pride the heart of every American.

The wise policy of non-intervention in foreign affairs, advocated by Washington in his farewell address, and throughout his administration, was gradually modified by the creation of new interests resulting from the nationalization of the American continent. The revolt of the Spanish-American colonies enlisted from the commencement of the revolution, the sympathies of the American people, and an American policy was instituted which culminated in the proclamation of the doctrine of Monroe. In his eighth Annual Message, 1824, President Monroe declared:

“Separated as we are from Europe by the great Atlantic Ocean, we can have no concern in the wars of the European governments, nor in the causes which produce them. The balance of power between them, into whichever scale it may turn in its various vibrations, cannot affect us. It is the interest of the United States to preserve the most friendly relations with every power, and on conditions fair, equal and applicable to all. But in regard to our neighbors our situation is different.”

Long before this date, however, we have numerous expressions of sympathy towards European colonies in America, and acts of the Executive that indicate the greatest concern for the welfare of those colonies, and the protection of our own interests. This may be illustrated by referring to our active intervention in the affairs of Florida, our neutrality towards the South American revolutionists, our appointment of commissions to investigate the provisional governments by them established, with a view towards the recognition of their independence, and our final recognition of the same in advance of all other nations. Referring to this action, Mr. Gallatin, our minister to France, writes to Mr. J. Q. Adams, Secretary of State, November 5, 1818 (2 Gallatin's Writings, 75) as follows:

"I had upon every occasion stated that the general opinion of the United States must irresistibly lead to such a recognition; that it is a question, not of interest, but of feeling, and that this arose much less from the wish of seeing new republics established than that of the emancipation of Spanish-America from Europe. We have not, either directly or indirectly, excited the insurrection. It had been the spontaneous act of the inhabitants, and the natural effect of causes which neither the United States nor Europe could have controlled. We had lent no assistance to either party; we had preserved a strict neutrality. But no European government could be surprised or displeased that in such a cause our wishes should be in favor of the success of the colonies, or that we should treat as independent powers those amongst them which had in fact established their independence."

Again, Mr. Adams, Secretary of State, writing to Mr. Rush, January 1, 1819 (See MSS. Instructions, Ministers), shows his solicitude to extend towards the colonies all the benefits of true neutrality, when he states:

"But while this state of things continues, an entire equality of treatment of the parties is not possible. There are circumstances arising from the nature of the contest itself which produce unavoidable inequalities. Spain, for instance, is an acknowledged sovereign power, and, as such, has ministers and other accredited and privileged agents to maintain her interest and support her rights conformably to the usages of nations. The South-Americans, not being acknowledged as sovereign and independent states, cannot have the benefit of

such officers. We consider it, however, as among the obligations of neutrality to obviate this inequality, as far as may be practicable, without taking a side, as if the question of the war was decided. We listen, therefore, to the representations of their deputies or agents, and do them justice as much as if they were formally accredited. By acknowledging the existence of a *civil war*, the right of Spain, as understood by herself, is no doubt, affected. She is no longer recognized as the sovereign of the provinces in revolution against her. Thus far neutrality itself operates against her, and not against the other party. This also is an inequality arising from the nature of the struggle, unavoidable, and therefore not incompatible with neutrality."

And Mr. Madison (Letter of March 6, 1822, 3 Madison's Writings, 267), referring to the same subject of recognition of the independence of the South American Republics, writes:

"Mr. Anduaga, I observe, casts in our teeth the postponement of the recognition of Spanish-America till the cession of Florida was secured, and taking that step immediately after. This insinuation will be so readily embraced by suspicious minds, and particularly by the wily cabinets of Europe, that I cannot but think that it will be well to take away that pretext against us by an exposé brought before the public in some due form in which our conduct would be seen in its true light. An historical view of the early sentiments in favor of our neighbors expressed here, the successive steps openly taken manifesting our sympathy with their cause, and our anticipations of its success, more specially our declaration of neutrality towards the contending parties as engaged in a civil war, not an insurrectionary war, would show to the world that we never concealed the principles that governed us, nor the policy which terminated in the decisive step last taken."

At the risk of fatiguing the reader, I must continue this series of quotations from eminent men of successive periods of our Government. President Van Buren, in his second Annual Message (1836), stated:

"That the people of the United States should feel an interest in the spread of political institutions as free as they regard their own to be is natural; nor can a sincere solicitude for the success of all those who are, at any time, in good faith struggling for their acquisition, be imputed to our citizens as a crime. With the entire freedom of opinion, and an undis-

guised expression thereof, on their part, the Government has neither the right, nor, I trust, the disposition, to interfere."

Mr. Webster, who was at the time Secretary of State, spoke as follows, at a banquet given in honor of the Hungarian patriot Kossuth, January 7, 1852:

"The progress of things is unquestionably onward. It is onward with respect to Hungary; it is onward everywhere. Public opinion, in my estimation at least, is making great progress. It will penetrate all resources; it will come more or less to animate all minds; and, in respect to that country for which our sympathies to-night have been so strongly invoked, I cannot but say that I think the people of Hungary are an enlightened, industrious, sober, well-inclined community, and I wish only to add that I do not now enter into any discussion of the form of government that may be proper for Hungary. Of course, all of you, like myself, would be glad to see her, when she becomes independent, embrace that system of government which is most acceptable to ourselves. We shall rejoice to see our American model upon the Lower Danube and on the mountains of Hungary. But this is not the first step. It is not that which will be our first prayer for Hungary. That first prayer shall be that Hungary may become independent of all foreign powers; that her destinies may be intrusted to her own hands and to her own discretion. I do not profess to understand the social relation and connections of races and of twenty other things that may affect the public institutions of Hungary. All I say is that Hungary can regulate these matters for herself infinitely better than they can be regulated for her by Austria; and, therefore, I limit my aspirations for Hungary, for the present, to that single and simple point—Hungarian independence, Hungarian self-government, Hungarian control of Hungarian destinies."

Mr. Seward, who was Secretary of State during the most critical period of our foreign relations, was called upon, more frequently than any other American statesman, to put to the test the doctrine of Monroe. During our civil war several European nations were tempted to take advantage of our temporary weakness, and increase their spheres of action on the American Continent. The invasion of Mexico has overshadowed all other attempts of this kind. It is well, at the present time, that we should be reminded that Spain also was one of the most aggressive of these foreign powers. Through deceptive promises she succeeded, as the French did in Mexico, in creat-

ing a Spanish party in the Island of San Domingo, and, in 1861, she took possession of the Island, abolished the Dominican Republic, and established her own colonial regime, in spite of the following protest of Mr. Seward to Mr. Tassara, (April 2, 1861; MSS. Notes, Spain).

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

Mr. Hamilton Fish, Secretary of State, in a report accompanying the President's Message, July 14, 1870, reviews in a masterly manner the relations of the United States towards the Spanish American colonies. I transcribe three extracts from this important document:

“To this point in our foreign policy we had arrived when the revolutionary movements in Spanish and Portuguese America compelled a modification of our relations with Europe, in consequence of the rise of new and independent states in America.

“The révolution, which commenced in 1810 and extended through all the Spanish-American continental colonies, after vain efforts of repression on the part of Spain, protracted through twenty years, terminated in the establishment of the independent states of Mexico, Guatemala, San Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Chile, Bolivia, The Argentine Republic, Uruguay and Paraguay, to which the Empire of Brazil came in time to be added. These events necessarily enlarged the sphere of action of the United States, and essentially modified our relations with Europe and our attitude to the rest of this continent.

“The new states were, like ourselves, revolted colonies. They continued the precedent we had set, of separating from Europe. Their assumption of independence was stimulated by our example. They professedly imitated us, and copied our national constitution, sometimes even to their inconvenience.

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“We also, simultaneously therewith, exerted our good offices with Spain to induce her to submit to the inevitable result, and herself to accept and acknowledge the independence of her late colonies. We endeavored to induce Russia to join us in these representations. In all this our action was

positive in the direction of promoting the complete political separation of America from Europe.

"A vast field was thus opened to the statesmen of the United States for the peaceful introduction, the spread, and the permanent establishment of the American ideas of republican government, of modification of the laws of war, of liberalization of commerce, of religious freedom and toleration, and of the emancipation of the New World from the dynastic and balance-of-power controversies of Europe.

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

This series of citations may be advantageously closed with a few having more special reference to the Island of Cuba, the important relations she bears to the United States, and the grave concern that our statesmen have felt in respect to her destiny.

In a letter of Mr. Jefferson to Mr. Monroe (7 Jefferson's Works, 315) on the subject of the proposed intervention of the Holy Alliance in South America, we find the following:

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

Upon another occasion, Mr. Jefferson, always endeavoring to adapt changing political conditions to his belief in the

advantage that would accrue to the United States from the acquisition of Cuba, writes to Mr. Monroe:

"I had supposed (when writing a former letter) an English interest there (in Cuba) quite as strong as that of the United States, and therefore that to avoid war and keep the Island open to our own commerce it would be best to join that power in mutually guaranteeing its independence. But if there is no danger of its falling into the possession of England, I must retract an opinion founded on an error of fact. We are surely under no obligation to give her gratis an interest which she has not; and the whole inhabitants being averse to her, and the climate mortal to strangers, its continued military occupation by her would be impracticable. It is better, then, to lie still, in readiness to receive that interesting incorporation when solicited by herself, for certainly her addition to our confederacy is exactly what is wanted to round our power as a nation to the point of its utmost interest."

The machinations of the Holy Alliance called forth from Mr. Adams, also, an expression of opinion in regard to Cuba. This letter is perhaps better known in Spain than any other American document bearing on this subject. Writing, April 28, 1823 (MSS. Instructions to Ministers), to Mr. Nelson, the newly accredited Minister of the United States to Spain, Mr. Adams says:

"In the war between France and Spain, now commencing, other interests, peculiarly ours, will in all probability be deeply involved. Whatever may be the issue of this war as between those two European powers, it may be taken for granted that the dominion of Spain upon the American continent, north and south, is irrevocably gone. But the islands of Cuba and Porto Rico still remain nominally, and so far really, dependent upon her, that she yet possesses the power of transferring her own dominion over them, together with the possession of them, to others. Those islands, from their local position are natural appendages to the North American continent, and one of them (Cuba) almost in sight of our shores, from a multitude of considerations has become an object of transcendent importance to the commercial and political interests of our Union. Its commanding position, with reference to the Gulf of Mexico and the West India seas; the character of its population; its situation midway between our southern coast and the island of San Domingo; its safe and capacious harbor of the Havana, fronting a long



line of our shores destitute of the same advantage; the nature of its productions and of its wants, furnishing the supplies and needing the returns of a commerce immensely profitable and mutually beneficial, give it an importance in the sum of our national interests with which that of no other foreign territory can be compared, and little inferior to that which binds the different members of this Union together. Such, indeed, are, between the interests of that island and of this country, the geographical, commercial, moral and political relations formed by nature, gathering, in the process of time, and even now verging to maturity, that, in looking forward to the probable course of events for the short period of half a century, it is scarcely possible to resist the conviction that the annexations of Cuba to our Federal Republic will be indispensable to the continuance and integrity of the Union itself.

"It is obvious, however, that for this event we are not yet prepared. Numerous and formidable objections to the extension of our territorial dominions beyond sea present themselves to the first contemplation of the subject; obstacles to the system of policy by which alone that result can be compassed and maintained are to be foreseen and surmounted, both from at home and abroad; but there are laws of political as well as of physical gravitation; and if an apple, severed by the tempest from its native tree, cannot choose but fall to the ground, Cuba, forcibly disjoined from its own unnatural connection with Spain, and incapable of self-support, can gravitate only towards the North American Union, which, by the same law of nature, cannot cast her off from its bosom."

Mr. Calhoun, in a speech delivered in the Senate, May 15, 1848, while opposing the intervention of the United States in Yucatan, and qualifying and restricting the general applicability of the Monroe doctrine, made an exception of the case of Cuba. Mr. Calhoun said:

"Whether you will resist or not, and the measure of your resistance—whether it shall be by negotiation, remonstrance, or some intermediate measure, or by a resort to arms—all this must be determined and decided on the merits of the question itself. This is the only wise course. We are not to have quoted on us, on every occasion, general declarations to which any and every meaning may be attached. There are cases of interposition where I would resort to the hazard of war with all its calamities. I am asked for one? I will answer. I designate the case of Cuba. So long as Cuba remains in the hands of Spain, a friendly power, a power of which we have no dread, it should continue to be, as it has

been, the policy of all administrations ever since I have been connected with the Government, to let Cuba remain there; but with the fixed determination, which I hope never will be relinquished, that if Cuba pass from her it shall not be into any other hands but ours. This, not from a feeling of ambition, not from a desire for the extension of dominion, but because that Island is indispensable to the safety of the United States, or rather because it is indispensable to the safety of the United States that this Island should not be in certain hands. If it were, our coasting trade between the Gulf and the Atlantic would, in case of war be cut in twain, to be followed by convulsive effects. In the same category I will refer to a case in which we might most rightfully have resisted, had it been necessary, a foreign power; and that is the case of Texas."

I shall conclude by inserting two extracts from a letter of Mr. Everett to Lord John Russell, dated September 17, 1853. This letter together with another by the same author, may be read in Wharton's Digest of International Law, Vol. I, pp. 571. They both refer to the project of a convention of England, France and the United States to guarantee the permanent possession of Cuba to Spain. The United States declined to enter into any such agreement. Mr. Everett writes:

"Consider, too, the recent antecedents of the powers that invite us to disable ourselves to the end of time from the acquisition in any way of this natural appendage to our continent. France, within the past century, to say nothing of the acquisition of Louisiana, has wrested a moiety of Europe from its native sovereigns; has possessed herself, by force of arms and at the time greatly to the discontent of England, of six hundred miles of the northern coast of Africa, with an indefinite extension into the interior; and has appropriated to herself one of the most important insular groups of the Pacific. England, not to mention her other numerous recent acquisitions in every part of the globe, has, ever since your dispatch of the sixteenth of February was written, annexed half of the Burman Empire to her overgrown Indian possessions, on grounds—if the statements in Mr Cobden's pamphlet are to be relied on—compared with which the reasons assigned by Russia for invading Turkey are respectable."

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"You will not, I hope, misapprehend the spirit in which this letter is written. As an American citizen, I do not covet the acquisition of Cuba, either peaceably or by force of arms.

When I cast my thoughts back upon our brief history as a nation, I certainly am not led to think that the United States have reached the final limits of their growth, or, what comes to very much the same thing, that representative government, religious equality, the trial by jury, the freedom of the press, and the other great attributes of our Anglo-Norman civilization are never to gain a farther expansion in this hemisphere. I regard the inquiry under what political organization this extension is to take place as a vain attempt to penetrate the inscrutable mysteries of the future. It will be in virtue of the peaceful arts by which well-governed states extend themselves over unsettled or partially settled continents. My voice was heard, at the first opportunity, in the Senate of the United States, in favor of developing the almost boundless resources of the territory already in our possession, rather than seeking to enlarge it by aggressive wars. Still I cannot think it reasonable—hardly respectful—on the part of England and France, while they are daily extending themselves on every shore and in every sea, and pushing their dominions, by new conquests, to the uttermost ends of the earth, to call upon the United States to bind themselves, by a perpetual compact never, under any circumstances, to admit into the Union an Island which lies at their doors, and commands the entrance into the interior of their continent.”

This documentary review does not give sufficient prominence to our financial interests in Cuba. In times of peace the United States transact a profitable business with Cuba, amounting to many millions of dollars. The Island has been, in fact, a paying colony to this country, without entailing upon us the responsibilities and the duties of colonial administration. But we are very much mistaken if we think that this convenient arrangement is going to last forever. The stream of plenty is stopped now, and will never return if Spanish domination is to be continued, because the Island will be in a perpetual state of war. The Cubans will not accept Spanish domination in any form. A temporary triumph of the Spanish arms, if at all possible, will be only a breathing spell. The liberal concessions that Spain would be obliged to grant would all tend to facilitate the next uprising of the people, if it is possible for a popular movement to be accomplished with greater ease than the present formidable revolution. It is not in vain that the sentiment, and the interests of a whole continent are at once aroused against the perpetuation of Spanish wrongs on American soil.