

the English proposed to plant colonies on this coast, what respect did they pay to the prior discovery of Spain, or the title derived from Alexander VI.? And, when the French entertained the project of planting a colony on the St. Lawrence, and on the Mississippi, what attention did they pay to the claim, whether of the Spanish or English monarchs? Again, when the Dutch chose to plant a colony at the mouth of the Hudson, did they listen to the claims of those who had visited this continent before them? The same inquiry may be made in regard of the Swedes, who planted themselves at the mouth of the Delaware.

If the claim of Spain to the whole western coast of this continent—a claim neither better nor worse than her claim to the eastern coast—remained for a long period unquestioned, it was simply because no European power thought of establishing settlements, or even of trading on that coast till late in the last century. But that European nations regarded in the same light the claims of Spain to the western coast, as they did those to the eastern coast of North America, is obvious from the fact that in the charters of several of the English colonies in this country, a territory is granted extending across the whole continent to the South Sea or Pacific Ocean. How, then, can Mr. Buchanan consistently, with the facts of the case, assert that the title of Spain was “acquiesced in by all European governments?” It was in no other way “acquiesced in” than the exactly similar claim of Spain to the eastern coast of the continent was acquiesced in for more than a century, till the English, French and Dutch resolved to extend their trade and send their colonies to this side of the Atlantic. Until near the close of the last century there was no practical utility in contesting the Spanish title to the unsettled portion of the western coast. And yet even before any motive arose for questioning this title, we find that it was treated as nugatory in the charters granted by England to her colonies in this country—treated with the same disrespect as the title to the eastern coast, granted by the same Bull of Alexander VI.

When the English, at the close of the last century, began to extend their trade to the northwestern coast of this continent, they treated the exclusive claims of Spain in that quarter, as equally chimerical with those which she had formerly asserted to the eastern coast. This conduct of England was resisted by force on the part of the Viceroy of Mexico, and by argument on the part of the