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THE MONROE DOCTRINE.

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FOR some months past, the world, the Anglo-Saxon world at least, has been excited over the revival and extension of a doctrine or theory which has hitherto been considered, even by American authorities, an utterly untenable principle in International Law. This doctrine named as you all know after James Monroe, President of the United States from 1816 to 1824, has a history. It is this history, together with the position of this theory in International Law, which I propose to briefly discuss. And here, I may say, I find my task at once easy and difficult—*easy*, because so much has been written on the question during the last three months; *difficult*, because little or nothing new can be said on the subject. Nevertheless, it is possible that some of you may not have had the leisure or opportunity to give the matter much attention, and it will be to these that my remarks will have special application.

First as to the Genesis and History of this now famous doctrine.

The United States began its career as a nation under circumstances with which you are all familiar. The struggle with the Mother Country, and the assistance given by France, gave the young Republic a strong bias against England, and an equally strong bias

towards her great enemy, France. French ideas of equality and fraternity among all classes of men moulded and permeated the opinions of early American statesmen, such as Jefferson, Madison and Monroe. The condition of Europe during the last years of the 18th century, was such as to give encouragement to those who fondly hoped for the emancipation of the masses from the thralldom of monarchical government. With the spread of the democratical principles enunciated by the French Republicans all classes in the United States were in sympathy. To them it was a compliment to the young American Republic, and an endorsement of the stand the American people had taken in throwing off the yoke of the Mother Country. Hence we find that a deep interest was excited in the United States in the events that crowd the pages of the history of Europe at this period. The triumph of republican principles, everywhere, was for a time confidently expected, and their apparent defeat when Republican France became the bond slave of the Emperor Napoleon, and when the liberties of Europe were placed under the iron heel of the conqueror and tyrant, left a deep impression upon the minds of the Americans.