

**THE INTER-OCEANIC  
CANAL AND THE  
MONROE DOCTRINE**

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The Inter-Oceanic Canal and the Monroe Doctrine by Alfred Williams

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**ALFRED WILLIAMS**

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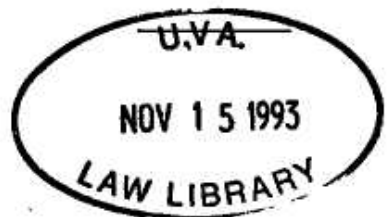


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THE  
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AND  
THE MONROE DOCTRINE.

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"AT AN EPOCH WHICH WE MAY CALL NEAR, SINCE IT CONCERNS THE LIFE OF A PEOPLE, THE ANGLO-AMERICANS WILL COVER ALL THE IMMENSE TERRITORY COMPRISED BETWEEN THE POLAR ICE AND THE TROPICS—THEY WILL SPREAD FROM THE SHORES OF THE ATLANTIC OCEAN EVEN TO THE COASTS OF THE SOUTHERN SEA."  
DE TOCQUEVILLE.



NEW YORK :  
G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS,  
182 FIFTH AVENUE.  
1880.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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THE appearance upon the Isthmus of Darien, at the outset of the year 1880, of M. Ferdinand de Lesseps, the renowned French engineer and diplomatist, to whom the nineteenth century owes the inception and completion of the Suez Canal, has startled the thinking people of this country into a sudden but most desirable state of anxiety as to the effects likely to be produced upon the interests, the prestige, and the prosperity of the United States by the opening, under other auspices than ours, of a great waterway between the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans. Though the question of opening such a waterway has occupied the minds of American statesmen and of American engineers at intervals, ever since the foundation of the republic, and though it has of late years acquired an unprecedented gravity and importance for the American



people, through the establishment of our vast empire on the Pacific, and the immense development of our internal railway system between the Great Lakes and the Gulf, it has been so much obscured by exciting domestic issues, now happily coming to an end, that for Americans of the present generation it may be treated as a question almost absolutely new. It cannot be intelligently considered without quickening the enlightened patriotism of the American people, by making it more than ever apparent how vitally important it is to the prosperity of every State and every section of our beloved Union, that the primacy and predominance on this continent of the united republic should be jealously guarded against invasion from any quarter, no matter under what pretext or in what form attempted.

In considering this question, as in considering all questions which arise out of or affect the relations between the United States and the powers of Europe, it must always be borne in mind that but little more than fifty years have elapsed since the United States took their place definitely in the system of Christendom as a power to be "counted with," to be considered, and to be respected. As we shall hereafter see, it was not until the ministers of the Holy Alliance, after the death at St. Helena of Napoleon I., had undertaken to consolidate throughout

the world the system of government by divine right, that England, in her own interest quite as much as in the interests of liberty, called upon the government of the United States to proclaim the close on this continent of the period of European colonial experiments. The response of the American government to that call gave birth to what has ever since been known as the Monroe doctrine; and the unyielding assertion of that doctrine against every attempt to evade or to impair its force has ever since, with reason, been regarded by American statesmen of all shades of political opinion as essential to the position, the prestige, and the prosperity of the United States.

It will be shown in the course of this treatise that any attempt to construct an inter-oceanic canal between the Atlantic and the Pacific, under European auspices and with European capital, must inevitably lead to a very serious invasion of the position, to a very serious assault upon the prestige, and to very mischievous consequences to the prosperity of the United States. Had any one or more of the independent republics, called into existence by the disruption and destruction, during the first quarter of this century, of the vast American empire of Spain, acquired strength and stability enough to make the construction possible of an inter-oceanic canal through Spanish-American territory by Spanish-

American citizens with Spanish-American funds, all that it would be seemly or necessary for the government of the United States to do in regard to such a canal, doubtless, might be shown to be that it should secure for the citizens and the commerce of the United States the free and unrestricted use of the facilities of such a canal, on at least equal terms with the citizens and the commerce of all other nations. But no one pretends that this is the case; and the conditions under which alone any canal enterprise either has been attempted, or is likely to be attempted in our time by European capitalists in Spanish America, involve the virtual surrender to such capitalists, or to the governments of the countries to which they may belong, of the independence of the State or of the States through the territory of which the canal projected is to be carried. In other words, no canal enterprise in Spanish-American territory can be planned, organized, and carried out by European projectors and capitalists, without practically reopening on this continent that period of European colonial experiments which the United States, under President Monroe, distinctly and solemnly declared to be closed forever. It is vital to our greatness, and our honor as a nation, that this declaration shall be maintained. We do not doubt that it will be so maintained, at any cost, by the people of the United States.