

from the first held the same view as to the extent of territory which they are entitled to claim as a matter of right. It comprised the coast-line up to the River Amacura, and the whole basin of the Essequibo River and its tributaries. A portion of that claim, however, they have always been willing to waive altogether; in regard to another portion, they have been and continue to be perfectly ready to submit the question of their title to arbitration. As regards the rest, that which lies within the so-called Schomburgk line, they do not consider that the rights of Great Britain are open to question. Even within that line they have, on various occasions, offered to Venezuela considerable concessions as a matter of friendship and conciliation, and for the purpose of securing an amicable settlement of the dispute. If, as time has gone on, the concessions thus offered diminished in extent, and have now been withdrawn, this has been the necessary consequence of the gradual spread over the country of British settlements, which Her Majesty's Government cannot in justice to the inhabitants offer to surrender to foreign rule, and the justice of such withdrawal is amply borne out by the researches in the national archives of Holland and Spain, which have furnished further and more convincing evidence in support of the British claims.

The discrepancies in the frontiers assigned to the British Colony in various maps published in England, and erroneously assumed to be founded on official information, are easily accounted for by the circumstances which I have mentioned. Her Majesty's Government cannot, of course, be responsible for such publications made without their authority.

Although the negotiations in 1890, 1891, and 1893 did not lead to any result, Her Majesty's Government have not abandoned the hope that they may be resumed with better success, and that when the internal politics of Venezuela are settled on a more durable basis than has lately appeared to be the case, her Government may be enabled to adopt a more moderate and conciliatory course in regard to this question than that of their predecessors. Her Majesty's Government are sincerely desirous of being in friendly relations with Venezuela, and certainly have no design to seize territory that properly belongs to her, or forcibly to extend sovereignty over any portion of her population.

They have, on the contrary, repeatedly expressed their readiness to submit to arbitration the conflicting claims of Great Britain and Venezuela to large tracts of territory which from their auriferous nature are known to be of almost untold value. But they cannot consent to entertain, or to submit to the arbitration of another Power or of foreign jurists, however eminent, claims based on the extravagant pretensions of Spanish officials in the last century, and involving the transfer of large numbers of British subjects, who have for many years enjoyed the settled rule of a British Colony, to a nation of different race and language, whose political system is subject to frequent disturbance, and whose institutions as yet too often afford very inadequate protection to life and property. No issue of this description has ever been involved in the questions which Great Britain and the United States have consented to submit to arbitration, and Her Majesty's Government are convinced that in similar circumstances the Government of the United States would be equally firm in declining to entertain proposals of such a nature.

Your Excellency is authorised to state the substance of this despatch to Mr. Olney, and to leave him a copy of it if he should desire it.

I am, &c.,  
(Signed) SALISBURY.

*Lord Chamberlain's Office, St. James's Palace,  
December 16, 1895.*

NOTICE is hereby given, that the State Apartments of Windsor Castle will be open to the Public on and after Thursday, the 26th instant, on every week day, Wednesdays excepted, under the usual Regulations, until further orders.

*Windsor Castle, December 12, 1895.*

THE Queen was this day pleased to confer the honour of Knighthood on Robert Bannatyne Finlay, Esq., Q.C., M.P., Her Majesty's Solicitor-General.

*Windsor Castle, December 12, 1895.*

THE Queen was this day pleased to confer the honour of Knighthood on Harry Bodkin Poland, Esq., Q.C., Recorder of Dover, one of Her Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the County of London.

*Windsor Castle, December 12, 1895.*

THE Queen was this day pleased to confer the honour of Knighthood on Henry Hicks Hocking, Esq., Attorney-General for the Island of Jamaica.

*War Office, December 17, 1895.*

THE Queen has been graciously pleased to give orders for the following appointment to the Most Honourable Order of the Bath:

To be an Ordinary Member of the Civil Division of the Third Class, or Companions, of the said Most Honourable Order, viz. :—  
Colonel Augustus Charles Frederick FitzGeorge,  
Private Secretary to His Royal Highness the late Commander-in-Chief.

*War Office, December 17, 1895.*

THE Queen has been graciously pleased to confer the Volunteer Officers' Decoration upon the undermentioned Officers of the Volunteer Force, who have been duly recommended for the same under the terms of the Royal Warrant, dated 25th July, 1892 :—

**NORTH-EASTERN DISTRICT.**

**ARTILLERY.**

*1st Northumberland Volunteer Artillery (Western Division, Royal Artillery).*

Major Joseph Nicholson Guy.

*1st North Riding of Yorkshire Volunteer Artillery (Western Division, Royal Artillery).*

Surgeon-Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas R. Pearson,  
M.D.

**ENGINEER.**

*1st West Riding of Yorkshire (Sheffield) Volunteer Engineers.*

Major and Honorary Lieutenant-Colonel John Stanley Watson.

**RIFLE.**

*3rd Volunteer Battalion, The Northumberland Fusiliers.*

Major and Honorary Lieutenant-Colonel David McStephens Macdonald.