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THE DIVISION OF AFRICA.

AFRICAN affairs have recently been settled by a series of strange events hitherto unexampled in the domain of international law and diplomacy. First, we have seen the spontaneous generation of a state five times the size of France; secondly, the founding in the very heart of Africa of a neutral zone, stretching from shore to shore of the dark continent, where the humane principles of philanthropy, from which Europe is farther and farther receding, are successfully practiced; thirdly, mutual grants of immense expanses of territory made to one another by several European states under the novel name of "spheres of influence," over which the contracting parties had no right whatever, and on which, in fact, no European had ever set foot, as Lord Salisbury himself, the principal author of this remarkable arrangement, ironically remarked. We have witnessed an ingenious and economical application of the maxim "*Do ut des*"—one giving another what is not his to bestow—as was the case in the recent Anglo-German treaty, when Berlin and London allotted themselves shares, not only of the region near the great lakes, but even of some possessions of the Sultan of Zanzibar, who was most courteously deprived of his sovereignty over them.

This system of international treaties, till now quite unknown, has been the result of long and difficult negotiations which must

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be followed step by step. M. Emile Banning, the author of "The Political Division of Africa," says:

"The annexation of Africa to the civilized empires of the world, the dividing of its vast territories among the nations of Europe, the initiation, under their guidance, of millions of savages into higher conditions of existence, will certainly be one of the most momentous events of our age."

Let us first examine the origin of the Congo Free State. We may say that it sprang complete from the head, or rather from the heart, of the King of the Belgians, like Minerva from the head of Jupiter. It came into existence in a far more marvelous manner than the Indian Empire, the object of Tocqueville's great admiration. It was born in Brussels, not in Africa, and was the outcome of a series of cleverly-combined diplomatic transactions, being in no way due to conquests or to violent annexations.

When Belgium was separated from Holland, in 1830, she lost the magnificent colonies which her northern neighbors had brought as a dowry when the kingdom of the Netherlands was founded, in 1815. As the population of Belgium is denser than that of any other country, and as her industries are more extensively developed, there was a fear that outlets for her trade would be lacking in these times of protectionism, when all countries are raising their import duties. Since Leopold II.'s accession to the throne, his great object has been to secure colonial possessions to Belgium for her excess of population and production. To this end he founded, in October, 1876, with the aid of eminent African explorers, the International African Association. Its object was to form committees in several countries, with a view to the collection of funds, and to the establishment of a chain of stations across Africa, passing by Lake Tanganyika, to assist future explorers. Accordingly committees were formed, whose presidents were as follows: in England, the Prince of Wales; in Germany, the Crown Prince; in Italy, the King's brother; in France, M. de Lesseps; and in Belgium, King Leopold. Sums of money were subscribed, and stations were opened from Bogamoyo (just south of Zanzibar) to Lake Tanganyika; but when, toward the close of 1877, Stanley reappeared on the Atlantic coast and revealed the immense length of the marvelous Congo River, King Leopold at once turned his attention in that direction. That he might not

treaties or concessions of territory, on which upward of two thousand chiefs had placed their marks in sign of adhesion. At a cost of many months of transportation, necessitating the employment of thousands of porters, light steamers were placed on the upper river which was explored as far as Stanley Falls. Its numerous tributaries also were followed up as far as the rapids that interrupt their courses. Many young Belgian officers and other adventurous explorers established themselves on the banks of the Congo and the adjoining river, the Kouiliou, and founded a series of stations, each occupied by one or two Europeans and by a few soldiers from Zanzibar. In this way the country was insensibly taken possession of in the most pacific manner, without a struggle and with no bloodshed whatever; for the natives, who are of a very gentle disposition, offered no resistance. The Senate of the United States, which was called upon, in 1884, to give an opinion on the rights of the African Association, made a careful examination of the matter, and recognized the legality of the claims and title deeds submitted to them.*

A little later, in order to mark the formation of a state, the Congo Association adopted as its flag a gold star on a blue ground. A French lawyer, M. Deloume, in a very well-written pamphlet entitled "*Le Droit des Gens dans l'Afrique Equatoriale*," has proved that this proceeding was not only legitimate, but necessary. The embryo state, however, lacked one essential thing, namely, recognition by the civilized powers. It existed only as a private association, or, as a hostile publicist expressed it, as "a state in shares, indulging in pretensions of sovereignty." Great difficulties stood in the way of realizing this essential condition. Disputes, on the one hand with France and on the other with Portugal, appeared inevitable.

The well-known explorer Savorgnan de Brazza, following the river Ogoue, had reached the northern bank of Stanley Pool, and having obtained a concession of land from Makoko, a native chief, had hoisted the French flag, thus obliging Stanley to found his station, the present Leopoldville, on the southern bank. France, already occupying the Gaboon, purposed to extend her possessions

* See the report of Senator Morgan in behalf of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, March 26, 1884.

at least to the northern bank of the Congo. On the south, Portugal claimed rights of sovereignty, dating from the earliest discovery of the country, over the whole western coast of Africa, and over the inland region lying between latitude $5^{\circ} 12'$ and 8° south. This claim included the mouth of the Congo, thus cutting off from the sea the future state of King Leopold. A struggle with these countries would have been hopeless. What could the African Association, so far merely a private company, not existing from an international standpoint, do in opposition to the claims of two nations who could, if necessary, take possession of the disputed territory and defend it by the sword?

In spite of all this, King Leopold did not lose heart. In 1882 he obtained from the French government an assurance that, while maintaining its rights to the north of Stanley Pool, it would give support to the International Association of the Congo. With Portugal it seemed very difficult to come to an understanding. The King endeavored to gain the support of Germany and England, and thought he could count on the latter power, when, in the month of February, 1884, Lord Granville signed a treaty with the Lisbon cabinet, in which, in exchange for important commercial concessions, Great Britain recognized the sovereignty of Portugal over the entire western coast to which she laid claim. This seemed to be a death stroke to the plan of King Leopold, who appeared to have lost all access to the sea for his colony. Fortunately France, Germany, and public opinion in England were all hostile to this treaty, and the English cabinet withdrew it. In order to insure the good will of France, the King had given her a right of preference in case he should realize his plans. Just at this time Prince Bismarck took part in the matter, and in the German Parliament praised highly the work of the African Association. In April, 1884, he proposed to France to come to an understanding, and to settle all difficulties by general agreement. From this proposition sprang the famous Berlin conference, the remarkable decisions of which we shall mention later. At the same time, before the conference opened, Germany signed an agreement with the International Association of the Congo, in which she agreed to recognize its flag as that of a state, in exchange for an assurance that her trade should be free, and that

German subjects should enjoy all the privileges of the most favored nations. Similar agreements were entered upon with nearly all the other countries of the globe. The delegates of the Association were accepted at the conference on the same footing as those of the different states that were represented there, and on February 26, the day on which the act was signed, Bismarck expressed himself as follows :

“The new State of the Congo is destined to be one of the chief safeguards of the work we have in view, and I sincerely trust that its development will fulfill the noble aspirations of its august founder.”

Thus the Congo International Association, hitherto only a private enterprise, seemed now to be recognized as a sovereign state, without having, however, as yet assumed the title. But where were the limits of its territory? A map had been attached to the agreement made with Germany, on which the association was allotted 684,897 square miles, embracing unexplored regions where it was easy enough to trace the frontiers on paper; but, in point of fact, there were the pretensions of both France and Portugal to contend against. With France it was not difficult to come to an arrangement. All the territory north of the Congo and of one of its tributaries, the Mobangi, was conceded to her, and she thus took possession of the basins of the Ogoue and the Kouiliou, and of the stations the association had founded on the latter river. Portugal, however, was more difficult to manage, for here the contested point was the possession of the mouth of the Congo. Thanks to the interference of France, after prolonged negotiations an understanding was arrived at on February 15, 1885, by which both parties were satisfied. They agreed that Portugal should take possession of the southern bank of the Congo up to its junction with the little stream Uango, above Nokki, and also of the district of Kabinda, forming a wedge that extends into the French territory on the Atlantic Ocean. The International Congo Association—for such was still its title—was to have access to the sea by a strip of land extending from Mananga (west of Leopoldville) to the ocean, north of Banana, and comprising, in addition to this port, Boma and the important station of Vivi. These treaties granted the association 931,285 square miles of territory, that is to say, a domain eighty times

the size of Belgium, with more than 7,500 miles of navigable rivers. The limits fixed were, on the west, the Kuango, an important tributary of the Congo; on the south, the sources of the Zambesi; on the east, the Lakes Bangweolo, Moero, and Tanganyika, and a line passing through Lake Albert Edward to the river Ouelle; on the north, a line following the fourth degree of latitude to the Mobangi River on the French frontier. The whole forms one eleventh part of the African continent.

The association became transformed into a state in August, 1885, when King Leopold, with the authorization of the Belgian Chambers, notified the powers that he should assume the title of Sovereign of the Independent State of the Congo, the union of which with Belgium was to be exclusively personal. The Congo is, therefore, not a Belgian colony, but nevertheless the Belgian Chambers have recently given valuable assistance to the King's work; first, in taking, on July 26, 1889, 10,000,000 francs' worth of shares in the railway which is to connect the seaport of Matadi with the river port of Leopoldville, on Stanley Pool, and, secondly, by granting a loan of 25,000,000 francs to the Independent State on August 4, 1890. The King, in a will laid before Parliament, bequeaths all his African possessions to the Belgian nation, authorizing the country to take possession of them after a lapse of ten years.

Colonial history offers no other example of such rapid development as that of King Leopold's enterprise. Thanks to the stations established along the banks of the river, there is perfect order and safety as far as Stanley Falls. Twenty-seven steamers, fourteen of which belong to the State and six to the *Compagnie Belge du Haut Congo*, ply the waters of the upper river and its tributaries, and Catholic and Protestant missionaries have stations there, under the protection of the flag with the gold star. Lower down the river there is even an administrative and judicial system, well organized and perfectly established. The value of the exports—ivory, india-rubber, palm oil, copal, sesame, etc.—amounted in 1885 to nearly 9,000,000 francs, and the expenses of the State were 3,000,000 francs. Commerce cannot fail to increase prodigiously as soon as the railway from Matadi to Leopoldville is opened. At present all goods

have to be carried by porters from the upper Congo to the sea coast, which necessitates such heavy expense that the colonial produce cannot compete with other produce in the European market. When the railway is built all this will be altered. The whole of central Africa will be opened up to trade, for the Congo will be the only river of the dark continent that will give access to it, the courses of all the others being checked by rapids and falls. On the plateau beyond Stanley Pool the climate is less detrimental to Europeans than that of India or that of the Dutch Indies. There are already plantations there, and the natives apply themselves willingly to agricultural pursuits. We see, then, that King Leopold's enterprise, whose international existence was first recognized by the United States Congress, is destined to have a great future.

It is not less interesting to study the manner in which the civilized states have sanctioned in Africa those humane principles which they are more and more abandoning in Europe, namely, free trade, equality for all nationalities, neutrality, perpetual peace, and arbitration. King Leopold's scheme had attracted general attention to Africa; and France, Portugal, England, Italy, and Germany were anxious to extend the limits of their possessions or to acquire fresh ones. Conflicting interests and rival ambitions threatened serious difficulties. To avoid these, France and Germany proposed a conference at Berlin, where all the powers interested in African affairs should be represented. The object of this conference, where, as we have seen, the rights of the International Association were recognized, was not to limit the possessions of the different states, but merely to insure the peaceful development of colonial and commercial enterprise in Africa. Having frequently written on the Congo question since the year 1876, I tried to prove in 1883* that the Congo should be neutralized, and that a special international commission like that of the Danube should be formed, composed of representatives of all interested states, with a view to the superintendence of the river, its maintenance in navigable condition, the care of beacons and lights, and the enforcement of trea-

*"Contemporary Review"; and "*Revue de Droit International*," XV., p. 254.

ties. The devoted president of the Red Cross Society, M. Gustave Moynier, completed the program by urging free navigation, free trade, the complete suppression of the slave trade, and a limit to the sale of spirits. In spite of the many conflicting interests represented, the deliberations and resolutions of the Berlin conference were inspired by a sentiment of the joint responsibility and fraternity of nations. Nothing can more clearly mark the progress recently made in international law and in civilization.

The zone to which the decisions of the Berlin conference apply, comprises, on the Atlantic coast, all the basin of the Congo, and, toward the Indian Ocean, the region extending as far as the great lakes, between the fifth degree of north latitude and the mouth of the Zambesi. Throughout this region commercial liberty is absolute. All vessels, without distinction of nationality, even those of states that took no part in the conference, have free access to all ports and to all rivers. Goods imported by sea or by land are free from all entrance duty or transit duty, save a small tax to be levied under certain conditions as compensation for sums laid out in the interest of navigation. Any differential treatment with regard either to vessels or to merchandise is forbidden. No privileged monopoly can be granted, and citizens of all nations may enjoy the same civil rights. Freedom of conscience and of worship is guaranteed to all, and missionaries, learned men, and explorers are objects of special protection. The slave trade is forbidden, and each of the powers undertakes to use all possible means utterly to abolish it, and to punish those who carry on the traffic. The territory comprised within the zone of commercial liberty is considered neutral. In case of war between the signers of the agreement, no hostilities are to be carried on within these limits, and this zone is to be considered as belonging to a non-belligerent state. If differences should arise, the various states agree, before having recourse to arms, to refer the case to the decision of friendly powers. An International Congo Commission is created, composed of delegates from all the states interested, the representative of each having one vote. The duty of this commission is to look to everything that concerns the navigation of the river; and the various governments, in the event of difficulties with respect to

the application of the principles of the convention, may have recourse to its services. The regulations referring to commercial liberty, to free navigation even in time of war, and to the equality of foreigners and natives, are equally applicable in the basin of the Niger. The convention, anticipating that cases are likely to become frequent when European states will take possession of fresh territory in Africa, agreed, in order that these occupations may be valid, that any power so doing shall at once inform the others, who can then make objections if they so desire. All friends of humanity can but admit that these regulations are most admirable. Why should their application be confined to a certain zone of the dark continent?

The delegates of the powers concerned in the Berlin convention met in 1890, at Brussels, to consider what measures should be adopted definitely to abolish the slave trade, and to put a stop to the burning of villages, the massacre of their inhabitants, the laying waste of vast tracts of land, and all the abominations attendant on this odious traffic. More than one difficulty arose in the course of the conference, and more particularly with regard to the right of searching vessels at sea, which France refused to admit; but in the end humane feeling predominated, and, by means of a few reciprocal concessions, an agreement was arrived at. All the powers undertook to do what they could to suppress the slave trade, and to this end rigid supervision is to be maintained on the coasts and at all ports. The dhows, or vessels usually employed for the transport of slaves, may be stopped and taken to a neighboring port to await judgment, whatever may be the colors they fly. In order to check the trade at its source, the conference recommended the creation of strongly-fortified inland stations, the organization of flying columns, the construction of roads, railways, and telegraph lines, the establishment of steamers on the lakes, and the prohibition of the importation of completed arms and ammunition into the territories where the slave trade exists. Even the Mohammedan states, where domestic slavery flourishes, have undertaken to forbid the importation and transit of African slaves. Finally, the conference decided to adopt certain measures in order to lessen the amount of distilled liquors imported. The trade is entirely forbidden on all territory where it has not

already a footing, and elsewhere it is subjected to a duty of fifteen francs per hectoliter, which duty is liable to be raised to twenty-five francs after a lapse of three years. This legislation is, however, clearly insufficient. European distillers should not be allowed to poison and stupefy the poor natives under pretense of freedom of trade. The importation of intoxicants ought to be absolutely forbidden, or a prohibitory tax ought to be put upon them. At Berlin the conference did not dare to attack his diabolical majesty King Alcohol, but he was wounded at Brussels, and let us hope that at the next meeting he will receive his death blow.

The way in which the European states have divided Africa between them is not less worthy of attention than the facts we have already noticed. As Mr. David Dudley Field remarked in the recent congress of the Peace Association at London, these possessions might have been disputed by force of arms, with bloodshed on all sides; but instead of this, all has been settled peaceably. Certainly this has not been done without some degree of difficulty or without occasional offense in some quarters; but still the peace has never been threatened. Diplomats have taken the place of generals and admirals, and the pen has been substituted for the sword.

Some new principles of international law governed these arrangements; among others, that of the "protectorate," that of the "zone of influence," and that of the "*hinterland*." A protectorate simply means the taking possession of a province belonging to another state, and the administration of it at pleasure. It is, in point of fact, annexation, though the rights of the suzerain are respected nominally. Protection in this sense is synonymous with spoliation. For instance, the French acted on this principle in Tunis, and the English at Zanzibar. The zone of influence is a concession, made to a given state by other states, of a territory over which no one of them has any right. The theory of the *hinterland* (backland) is of German origin. According to this theory, when a state occupies the coasts of a certain region, this occupation may be extended inland to an indefinite distance, until it comes into contact with the *hinterland* of another power. Such principles necessarily induced conflicts and difficulties,

for as there was nothing to prevent any given country from allotting to itself, on the map, a zone of influence or a *hinterland*, shocks could not be avoided between different nations. If serious conflicts have been prevented hitherto, credit is due to the spirit of conciliation and to the love of peace which have inspired all the treaties which we must now consider.

The first of these, dated May, 1885, is between England and Germany, and limits the sphere of action of the two powers in the Gulf of Guinea. England, because of the enterprise of her explorers and merchants, had long a strong position—which has since been secured—on the lower Niger and the Benue; and the port of Lagos had grown into an important town. Farther east, English missionaries had established the station of Victoria in the mountainous region of the Cameroons. On the other hand, various Hamburg houses had trading stations there. In the month of May, 1884, the cabinet in London sent an order to Consul Hewett to hoist the English flag in this region, and to proclaim its annexation to the British Empire; but the well-known German explorer Nachtigal proclaimed the sovereignty of Germany over the district of Togo, west of the Niger, on July 5, and on the fourteenth of that month over the Cameroon territory. The English consul, who reached the spot five days later than the Germans, could do nothing but protest, and assert the prior rights of the British crown. In October of the same year, Bismarck gave notice of the establishment of a German protectorate over the entire south-west coast of Africa from the Orange River to Cape Frio, with the sole exception of Walfish Bay, which was occupied by England. Germany was thus clearly encroaching in a very decided manner on territory apparently reserved to England. But the question arose whether it was worth while to quarrel over a few strips of land in the dark continent, and whether the friendship of the great military power was not well worth some small sacrifices on the part of the English government. After prolonged discussion an understanding was arrived at, which took the form of a mere exchange of letters, not of a treaty. Each of the two powers undertook not to acquire territory, not to accept protectorates, and not to impede the extension of the other's influence in

the regions reserved to it. This is now the sort of formula employed for arrangements of this description.

Germany thus commenced her colonial career in Africa by a masterly stroke. By a mere scratch of the pen she became possessed of three colonies, namely, the district of Togo (a narrow strip of land which gives her access to the upper Niger); the Cameroons, with the *hinterland* as far as Lake Tchad; and, finally, the district of the Namaquas and the Damaras, bordered on the north by the river Counene and on the south by the Orange River; making altogether ten degrees of coast, with the *hinterland* as far back as the approach to Lake Ngami. Such great successes, so easily secured, served only to stimulate the colonial appetite of Germany, and in the month of September, 1884, some explorers, under the guidance of Dr. K. Peters, advanced into the heart of eastern Africa toward Lake Tanganyika, and concluded treaties with the local chiefs, by virtue of which the foreigners took possession of about 60,000 square miles of land. They offered this vast territory to the German government, who proclaimed a protectorate and assumed sovereignty over it.

A little later, the German protectorate was further extended to Vitu and to the coast of the Somalis. This sudden and audacious step awoke the Sultan of Zanzibar, who at once laid claim to all the *hinterland* as far as Lake Tanganyika. It also aroused England, whose influence was predominant at Zanzibar, and whose project was to acquire a zone of influence on Lake Victoria, and to connect it with the coast by a railway. But here, again, the firm attitude of Germany induced the English cabinet to waive its claims. Two agreements were signed between the two powers, one dated November 1, 1886, the second July 1, 1890. The following situation is the result: Germany possesses in east Africa a vast expanse of territory, bounded on the south by the Portuguese possessions, that is to say, by the river Rovuma; on the west by Lake Tanganyika and the frontier of the Congo State; and on the north by a line starting from the mouth of the river Umba, on the Indian Ocean, following the Kilimandgero chain, and reaching Lake Victoria at about the first parallel of south latitude. The zone near the coast, and the ports reserved at the outset to the Sultan of

Zanzibar, have just been taken possession of by the German government for an indemnity of 7,000,000 marks. In east Africa, Germany obtained from England a long and narrow strip of land which gives her Namaqua territory communication with the upper Zambesi. This arrangement, which cuts in two what is known as the "Wasp's Waist," deprived England of the means of connecting, as she hoped to do, her possessions on the upper Nile with those of the austral region north and south of the Zambesi. In exchange for this concession, she obtained only the protectorate of Zanzibar, and the possibility of extending her zone of influence north of Lake Victoria and the river Umba, in the direction of Egypt and Abyssinia.

By abandoning first Khartoum and afterward General Gordon, the English government committed an offense against civilization. To maintain and protect the sovereignty of Egypt, which extended along the Nile from the mouth of the river to the province of Wadelai, on Lake Albert, not one half the exertions and the money would have been requisite that were spent on the unfortunate and tardy expedition for the relief of Gordon. The celebrated African explorer, Cameron, had already explained that, by establishing telegraphic communication between the last Egyptian station on Lake Albert and the cape, England's zone of influence might, without much difficulty, be extended from the northern to the southern part of the continent, and, as I have shown in another article,* civilizing influences would have penetrated to these regions. The competition with Germany and the sacrifices that will have to be made some day to regain lost ground, would all have been avoided. The error then committed is now so apparent that, as I write these lines, there is some question of dispatching an expedition from the English army in Egypt to reconquer Khartoum, and consequently the Soudan. This will be done sooner or later.

The territories taken possession of by Germany in Biafra Bay and in the Gulf of Guinea were in contact with French possessions. In September, 1884, Prince Bismarck made an effort to come to terms, and in so courteous a manner that it deserves

* "Egypt for the Egyptians," in "The Fortnightly Review," December, 1882.

special reference. "If," he said, writing to the French cabinet, "our possession of certain territories in Africa is not in accordance with the rights or the political aims of France, it is not our intention to maintain our hold there." And, in point of fact, on December 24, 1885, the limits between the possessions of the two countries were definitely fixed, without the smallest difficulty with regard to either the Togo or the Cameroon district. Between France and England various questions remained to be solved with regard to Madagascar, Zanzibar, the basin of the Niger, and the coast of the Gulf of Aden. These have all been settled by three different agreements, dated respectively December 17, 1885, June, 1887, and August 5, 1890. England recognizes the protectorate of France over Madagascar, and France reciprocally that of England over Zanzibar. On the Gulf of Aden, France remains in possession of the north side of Tandgoura Bay, with the *hinterland*; while England has the south side, with the ports of Zeilah, Boulkar, and Berbera, and eventually will have also the *hinterland*. In the north-west, the zone of influence of France extends over the Sahara, from Algeria and Tunis to a line connecting Say, on the upper Niger, with Bari, on Lake Tchad. England has a right to the basins of the Niger and of the Benue, to the south of the aforementioned line, as far as the coast and inclusive of the sultanhip of Sokoto. The French possessions, as we see them on the map, are of immense extent. They stretch uninterruptedly from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic coast of Senegambia, and, by a strip of land too small to be shown on the map, bordering the German Togo district, to the Gulf of Guinea. In addition to this, there is the French Congo territory, and the magnificent island of Madagascar, coveted since the time of Louis XIV.

Portugal remains to be considered. A settlement with this country was imperative; for its colonies, which dated from the earliest discoveries, adjoined on all sides the possessions so generously distributed among themselves by all the great powers. Thus several agreements were entered upon: first, one between Portugal and the Congo State, February 14, 1885, settling the confines of the latter's possessions, as already indicated; then one on May 12, 1886, with France, to fix the limits of the

Kabinda territory in French Congo, and those of Bissao in Senegambia; and, finally, some months later, on December 30, 1886, one with Germany. The confines of the German possessions on the Atlantic Ocean were determined to be the rivers Counde and Cubango, and an imaginary line terminating at the falls of Catima, on the Zambesi; and the possessions on the Indian Ocean were to end at the river Rovuma. But difficulties were in the way of an arrangement with England. On the one hand, Portugal, by virtue of her ancient rights, claimed an entire zone crossing Africa from Angola to Mozambique, Queliman, and Sofala—that is to say, the whole region of the Zambesi; and, on the other hand, England insisted on her right to a portion of territory as a link to connect Matabele-land and her southern possessions with those to which she laid claim north of the Zambesi toward Tanganyika and toward the mountainous regions of Chire and Blantyre. These pretensions were in direct opposition, and it was impossible to reconcile them, as in previously-mentioned instances, by grants of a few hundred square miles of *terra incognita*. Nevertheless, an agreement was reached on August 20, 1890, by which England secured what she wanted. She thus obtained the region north of the Zambesi, bordered on the west by that river from the point where it commences to flow southward; on the north and east by Lake Nyassa, including the Blantyre district, where are many important English mission stations; and on the north also by the German possessions and the Congo State. This agreement, as is well known, was most violently opposed by public opinion in Portugal, and up to the present moment no minister has dared to advocate it. The Abren cabinet, just now formed, has decided, it is said, with the King's consent, not to agree to it. The result of all this is a political crisis so intense that even the monarchy is threatened. In the mean time England is taking active measures, and the newspapers announce that her gunboats are proceeding up the Zambesi to take possession of the disputed territory. But it is now said that the central European powers of the triple alliance intend to interfere on the lines of the Berlin conference.

There remains also a serious difficulty between Italy and England. The Italians want their share of the African cake.

Encouraged, it is said, by the English government, they founded a colony on the coast of the Red Sea, on a spot formerly supposed to belong to Egypt, between the eighteenth degree of north latitude and the strait of Bab-el-Mandeb. The central point of this colony is Massowah, and Italy is desirous of extending it inland, for on the coast it adjoins, on the north, the possessions of Egypt at Suakin, and on the south those of France. As an unoccupied portion of territory still separates Italy from her two neighbors, no frontier regulations have so far been judged necessary. However, within the last few days we have been informed that negotiations are on foot between the cabinets of London and Rome with reference to the limits of Italy's zone of influence, or *hinterland*, but that they have been suspended because the powers have failed to come to terms as to the possession of Kassala, now in the hands of the Mahdists. "Kassala is essential to us," say the Italians, "for through it we reach the Atbara, a tributary of the Nile; and only thus can we secure an active trade for Massowah." "We quite understand this," England replies, "but we, as guardians of Egypt, cannot admit the complete alienation of an important place which she has momentarily lost, but which she will one day retake." The truth is that Kassala commands Khartoum, and Khartoum commands not only Egypt, but all that vast region lying between Lakes Tchad and Victoria and the Nile. The English hope to reach the Soudan and Darfour either by Lake Victoria or by the Nile, and have no desire to meet the Italians there. We must mention, in conclusion, that Spain has proclaimed sovereignty over the coast of the Sahara from Cape Bojador to Cape Blanco, and over the territory on Corisco Bay south of the Gaboon River.

Now if we compare the map of Africa of ten years ago with the present map, we find immense changes. No parallel can be found in the history of the world. Quite recently, save Algeria in the north and Cape Colony in the south, the European powers, even France in Senegambia and Portugal in Angola and Mozambique, possessed only a few isolated posts around the coast. At the present time the whole of the vast African continent, except the central portion surrounding Lake Tchad, has been divided up, and six states have allotted themselves immense de-

pendencies. However unprecedented the proceedings attending this partition have been, all friends of humanity can but rejoice at the result. In the first place, the most admirable principles have been admitted to govern all the central zone, including free trade, liberty of worship, equality for all alike, and peace based on neutrality. Even on soil where the states pursue their own interests, will arise centers of civilization and progress. One inestimable benefit will result from this, namely, the suppression of the slave trade, which devastates the dark continent, and which, it is calculated, condemns yearly about half a million human beings to death from ill-treatment or starvation. The Brussels conference of 1890 urged the powers to use the severest measures for the suppression of this iniquitous traffic; and as almost all the seaports are now held by European nations, the transport of slaves by sea will become impossible. There will be then no market but the Soudan, and the means of payment there are limited. The slave trade is therefore destined to succumb, for it will cease to profit those who carry it on. The United States, which abolished slavery at such immense cost, cannot fail to applaud this result. In point of fact, an entire continent has taken its place in the economic and social world, precisely as if it had just been discovered. No one can as yet foresee the consequences of these great changes.

ÉMILE DE LAVELEYE.