

## THE CONGO NEUTRALIZED.

THE Congo—named also Livingstone, in memory of that great explorer,—this splendid river, whose discovery was to have been but the means of spreading civilization, seems likely to occasion shortly rivalries and jealousies between the States of Europe. France, after having set up her flag at Stanley Pool, has now forcibly seized upon and occupied Punta-Negra, which appears manifestly to indicate intentions of conquest and annexation. Portugal claims sovereignty over all the territory on both banks of the Congo lying between the degrees 5° 12' and 8° south latitude, and also over the interior up to beyond Stanley Pool. If this latter claim were accepted, all the stations which have been founded there by two English missionary societies, and by the International Association of which the King of the Belgians is the patron, would be impeded in their development. This would at once occasion possibilities of conflicts and disputes between France and Portugal, for it would be very hard to fix boundaries between the possessions of the two nations. An African Society, recently founded in Rotterdam, has sent in an address to the Dutch Parliament, begging that the claims of France and Portugal on the Congo may be opposed. This address claims the *status quo*, maintaining that the exclusive pretensions of these two Powers interfere with the prior rights of Holland, which traded on the coast of Loango a century and a half ago, and also that the Dutch factories at the mouth of the Congo may suffer in consequence of these pretensions. The address concludes by inviting the Dutch Government to join with England, Germany, Belgium, and the United States in opposing the carrying out of Savorgnan de Brazza's treaty. This address passed the Chamber of Commerce at Rotterdam without a dissenting voice, and will, it is said, be strongly supported in Par-

liament by the members for that town. A society similar to the one just mentioned has been founded in Germany; and two German travellers, Pogge and Wissmann, are exploring the Congo. In England also several Chambers of Commerce, together with the Anti-Slavery Association and many missionary societies—in other words, those portions of the population representing essentially the interests of trade, of humanity, and of Christianity—have sent in an address to the Foreign Office, requesting the English Government to maintain the liberty of the Congo; and when Mr. Forster put his question in the House, Mr. Gladstone had already most absolutely declared that the Queen's Government would come to no decision respecting this important matter without first consulting Parliament. An English Company is now being formed in London for trade on the Upper Congo; the Germans are entering the country, and a Russian expedition is also contemplated. Finally, M. de Brazza is *en route* for the Stanley Pool, no longer as an isolated explorer, but as the representative of the French nation, empowered to dispose as he will of gunboats, of artillery, and of some hundreds of soldiers. We see then what divers interests are at stake, what rival claims and pretensions have already surged up, what elements of hostility have sprung into existence; and we are but at the outset of the undertaking, for three years ago the Congo was scarcely thought of. I should like to show in what manner all such unfortunate difficulties could be avoided, leaving these regions quietly to enjoy the benefits of peaceful competition, of free trade, of scientific explorations, and of Christian and humane missions.

The course, I think, to be pursued, would be to declare the neutrality of the Congo, entrusting the legislation of everything connected with this great river to an International Commission, as for the Danube. At all events, all the stations already founded, or hereafter to be founded, on the Congo, for the purpose of affording hospitality to travellers, or with any such humane view, should be unhesitatingly declared neutral. If I hazard this suggestion, which may at first appear chimerical, I do so because I feel assured it would be well received both in Germany and England, and because, even in France, it would have its adherents among far-seeing men, chief among whom would be the highest possible authority on such a subject—M. de Lesseps.\* When the Congo question was under discussion in the

\* M. de Lesseps, who devotes his prodigious energy to all works calculated to advance the progress of humanity, wrote to me as follows:—"The idea of neutralizing the Congo seems to me excellent. The realization of such a project would be worthy of our age, and would be a noble reward to the heroic men who have thrown open this portion of Africa to civilized Europe. I sincerely wish you every success in your undertaking, in which the King of the Belgians has so generously taken the initiative. I should be glad to see your scheme answer." Eminent Italian statesmen, such as M. Mancini, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Minghetti, Luzzatti, Pierantoni, were very well disposed towards the project, and in France several newspapers have already approved of the idea. M. Aurelien Scholl wrote of it as follows:—"That any nation should

House of Commons, we excited no little indignation on the part of some of our French contemporaries by proposing to place the great African waterway under the regulation of an International Commission; but the suggestion has been better appreciated in Germany. Herr Gerhard Rohlfs, the well-known German traveller, has published recently in the *Allgemeine Zeitung* (April 22, 1883), an earnest appeal to the Government at Berlin to unite with England in internationalizing the Congo. He says:—

"To internationalize the Congo would perhaps present more difficulties than to subject the mouths of the Danube to common control; but it ought to prove feasible were England and Germany to throw their whole influence into the scale. If Germany join England, France, Italy, and Portugal can but follow their example, and the Congo will be saved. Let liberty for every one, under the protection of laws settled by international agreement, be our watchword. Some French papers may object, but the motive that underlies this objection—the desire of conquest—is a very cogent reason why the other Powers who do not desire annexation should insist on applying the precedent of the Danube to the regulation of the Congo."

But before discussing the feasibility of this scheme it would be well to examine what has been already done in Central Africa, what is the present condition of the country, and, more especially, what may be looked for in the future, if free course be allowed to the enterprise of science, trade, and humanity, unimpeded by any ambitious schemes of conquest or annexation.

When, in August, 1877, the King of the Belgians graciously invited the most eminent geographers of Europe, together with all who by their studies or philanthropy had identified themselves with schemes for the civilization of Central Africa, to partake of Royal hospitality and to attend a conference to be held in his palace in Brussels, the letters of invitation clearly explained the end for which this conference was assembled. Previous to that date there had been many heroic expeditions to the interior of Africa, the expenses of which had been defrayed by private subscriptions. The King approved of these strongly, as emanating from Christian feeling and from a desire to spread civilization. To abolish the slave trade in Africa, to pierce through the darkness which now clouds it over, and throw open to the world its resources, which are apparently enormous, is, said

think of confiscating the Congo for its personal profit, to the exclusion of other nations, would be an act of folly verging on impudence. Between Stanley and Brazza there is an individual rivalry, but the question is far above the personal disputes of these gentlemen. After an international congress of geographers, held at the palace in Brussels, at which were present learned men and great travellers of all nationalities, the International African Association was founded, with a view to establish hospitable and scientific stations in Central Africa from one coast to the other in the direction of the Equator. It was agreed, that in order to effect this there should be an understanding among European nations in general. The great things to be avoided were petty rivalries and jealousies, and rapacity (said to be national) which must fatally lead to disagreement, and these collisions very naturally would take all confidence from the native population. What can be their opinion of a civilization heralded by disputes and conflicts? What must they think of peacemakers who commence by firing at each other!"

Leopold II., a crusade well worthy of this nineteenth century. "But," added the King, "all these attempts have hitherto been isolated, and proposals are now being made on all sides that they should be united, and that a conference should be held to decide as to the course of conduct to be taken, in the future, in Africa, as also to fix certain landmarks and the limits of the territory hitherto unexplored, so that henceforth no expedition need be wasted."

Sovereign of but a small country, Leopold II. is naturally led to interest himself considerably in the affairs of the world in general. Too young at present to be, like his eminent father, the counsellor of nearly all the crowned heads of Europe, and their adviser in secret negotiations, Leopold II. takes very deep interest in the future of the far East. Before ascending the throne he travelled in Egypt, India, and China, studying these countries with attentive observation; and he returned thence fully convinced that, taking into consideration the immense strides that are being made in the development of European industry, it has become a matter of necessity that fresh openings should be created in view of its further spread, and that these openings ought to be made in the immense continents which are inhabited by a large proportion of the world's population. The present lengthy economic crisis proves but too clearly the justice of these opinions. North America, guided by a most narrow and mistaken policy, refuses to accept our produce. We are therefore forced to look further, and must seek fresh markets in Asia and Africa; the latter is the more interesting, because there a humane work may be carried on at the same time. The slave trade may be suppressed, and with it the abominable wars which so sadly depopulate these fertile regions. The King suggested three chief points for the consideration of the conference of 1877; they were as follows:—First, to draw up a basis of operations to be pursued on the coast of Zanzibar and near the mouth of the Congo; secondly, to fix the tracks for eventual roads by creating posts and stations between the coast and the interior, where Europeans could settle, with a view to offering hospitality to travellers, conducting scientific researches, acting as arbitrators between neighbouring chiefs, and endeavouring to abolish slavery and to inculcate ideas of justice amongst the native population; and thirdly, to form a central international commission for the carrying out of this project, and to explain the end to be attained to the general public of every nation, soliciting, at the same time, patronage and funds.

This elevated and generous idea of the King of the Belgians excited warm and universal sympathy, and the conference was attended by travellers and geographers of all nationalities. France was represented by Admiral de la Roncière Le Noury, President of the Geographical Society of Paris, by M. Maunoir, Secretary of the

same society, by M. Henry Duveyrier, the explorer of the Sahara; and by M. le Marquis de Compiègne, who had recently returned from a perilous expedition in the unexplored regions of the Ogowai. Germany sent three illustrious travellers, Messrs. Gerhard Rohlfs, and Schweinfurth, and Dr. Nachtigal, who had just obtained the chief medal given by the Geographical Society of Paris. Italy was represented by Commander Negri; Prussia by the Baron Richshofen, President of the Geographical Society of Berlin; Austro-Hungary by M. de Hochstetter, President of the Geographical Society of Vienna, by Count Edmond Zichy, Baron Hoffmann, Financial Minister, and Lieutenant A. Lux, who had returned from visiting the unknown basin of the Kwango. England sent Sir Rutherford Alcock, then President of the Geographical Society of London, Sir Bartle Frere, Sir Henry Rawlinson, Colonel Grant,—who with his friend Speke first announced the existence of the great lakes of Central Africa,—Commander Cameron,—whose expedition from the east to the west coast of Africa by Lakes Tanganyika and the Lualaba was so much talked of,—and several eminent philanthropists,—Sir Harry Verney, Sir John Kennaway, Sir T. Fowell Buxton, Mr. W. Mackinnon, and Admiral Sir Leopold Heath. Belgium, possessing no noted travellers, was represented merely by persons whose assistance in their own country might be of service in making the project known; among these was M. Emile Banning, who afterwards published an excellent work on Central Africa, summing up all that was then discovered with regard to it and giving also the results of the Brussels conference and the programme there agreed upon.\* After four days' deliberations, presided over with great tact by King Leopold in person, it was settled that a line of stations should be established between the Zanzibar coast and the interior.

But what should be the character and mission of these stations? They should not be at all of a military character; all travellers are agreed as to that. Their mission is to act with gentleness and persuasion, and to make use of that ascendancy which a civilized man possesses over a mere savage. Any show of armed force would at once excite the hostility of the natives, and this could but terminate in an outbreak which, if resisted, would lead to open war and to conquest, things to be studiously avoided.

Again, the stations created by the International Conference must not be missionary; not because missionary zeal is not duly appreciated or its power doubted, but because subscriptions are received from members of many different denominations and opinions. While, therefore, sympathizing with the efforts that are being made in Central Africa to spread the Gospel, the emissaries of the Inter-

\* "L'Afrique et la Conférence géographique de Bruxelles." Par Emile Banning. Bruxelles, 1877.

national Association must themselves remain strictly secular. The great aim of these stations is to serve as starting-points and as resting-places for travellers who contemplate advancing or have advanced to unexplored regions. To-day, when the explorer leaves the coast, he is obliged to load himself with provisions, implements, and especially with means of exchange, for months and years; he must therefore take quite a train of porters, who are not only an immense expense, but who frequently desert *en route*, causing no end of additional worry and delay. The whole aspect of Central African exploration would be altered, if the traveller could supply himself with the necessaries for his journey in the very heart of the country, and if, instead of having to commence his perilous journey at Bagamoyo or St. Paul de Loanda, he could provision himself at Niangwe or at Ujiji. In case of sickness or non-success, these stations would be harbours of refuge; and the sufferings endured by Livingstone, Nachtigal, Grant and Cameron, which prevented their pushing their discoveries further, would be spared, or at all events greatly mitigated, to future explorers. The chiefs of these posts or stations, having received scientific instruction, would soon learn to know the resources of the country, and could act as guides to the explorers. Thus a fresh opening would be made for European commerce; European workmen would go out there, and the natives would soon learn their trades and teach these to each other; thus civilization would spread rapidly, and while accomplishing a good work in enlightening these poor savages, European industry would be benefitted.

What are the results hitherto obtained by the International Association? The most important in the eastern part of Africa is the foundation of a central station at Karema, near Lake Tanganyika. Karema, founded in 1879 by Cambier, had attained at the close of 1880 so great a development that his successor, Captain Ramaeckers, states it to be the most important station in Africa. He writes: "Mr. Cambier's work is finished, and he may well be proud of it. My admiration for him is equal to my pride at having been selected for the honour of succeeding him. The position of Karema is  $6^{\circ} 49'$  south latitude and  $28^{\circ} 11'$  east longitude of the Paris Observatory. It is situated on a slight elevation, which in 1879 was bathed by the waters of the lake; but as these have considerably fallen, it is now about 1600 feet distant. The residence of the Europeans is built of brick, and is situated in an enclosure of about 600 feet, within which are also stables, warehouses, shops, &c. A regular contract ensures to the settlement about 240 acres of land. The mean temperature, thanks to the breezes from the lake, is about  $25^{\circ}$  Cent. ( $77^{\circ}$ — $78^{\circ}$  Fah.). The land is exceedingly fertile; European vegetables, which have been introduced amongst the tropical plants, are abundant, and thrive well, as do also the cattle hitherto imported. Two

explorers have already taken advantage of the hospitality offered at Karema—Mr. Thomson, stopping there on his return from Lake Nyassa, and the Abbé Debaize, on his way to Ujiji, which was his last excursion.”

European influence is most beneficial to the natives, who, in the neighbourhood of Karema, are well disposed to submit to and even to appreciate the presence of men who can instruct them and generally raise their social condition. The population of the village of Karema has increased one-third; it now numbers fifty dwellings, inhabited by as many families, and the area of cultivated soil has doubled. The community is now clothed and in possession of tools. The international flag is hoisted on a little steamer on Lake Tanganyika.

But Karema is situated quite in the centre of Africa, and a chain of such stations is sorely needed to connect it with the coast; this is the only means by which rapid and regular communication could be established. Both France and Germany have already been instrumental in furthering this project, with the assistance and consent of the African association; and there is now a French station at Condoa in Ousagara, about 150 miles from the coast, founded in 1880, by Captain Bloyet, who resides there with his wife. The dwelling is situated in the midst of plantations, and a grant has been obtained of the land. More than one traveller has already partaken of the hospitality offered here.

The year following, in 1881, Captain Van Schoeler, in conjunction with Drs. Boehm, Kayser, and Reichard, founded a German station in the very heart of Africa, on the road from Tabora to Karema. This work was successfully continued by his companions after the return of Mr. Van Schoeler to Europe, and the station is now about to be removed to Gunda, the residence of the Queen of Uganda, an understanding having been come to with that sovereign, by which the natives themselves undertake to erect the buildings for the German mission, and that the latter shall be their arbitrators in any differences they may have with the neighbouring tribes. Both these stations accept the programme of the International Association, and have been aided by its funds, the Germans having received 40,000 francs (£1,600), and the French 20,000 (£800).

We have but to look eight years back, to the time when Cameron was in Africa, to see the great changes which have taken place in the conditions attendant on the exploration of the dark continent, and also to see how widely our information as to those regions has extended. The traveller can now calculate his halts, in spite of the difficulties as to climate and the hostile feelings displayed by some of the natives; he can look for help by the way, as at the end of his journey.

Starting from Bagamoyo, the mission station of the Pères du Saint

Esprit, he finds 150 miles further the French station of Condoa, and further on again the English missionary establishment of Mpwapwa. The next halt is at the Belgian station of Tabora; then comes the German settlement of Kakoma (Gunda), and on the banks of Tanganyika he can now rest at the Belgian station of Karema. One-third of the total depth of Africa is thus crossed. It needs but a multiplication of these settlements, and a road might then be attempted to connect them; and this once opened, Central Africa would by-and-by be transformed.

We see then that the efforts of the International Association have rendered Eastern Africa more accessible to scientific, religious, and commercial influences, and Karema is there as an undeniable witness of the success of these efforts. Two most important results must still be mentioned. Thanks to the numerous expeditions that have been sent during the last five years by the Association to these regions, the road from the coast to Lake Tanganyika is well known, and has become "a well-trodden highway," as the President of the Geographical Society in London recently stated.

The consequence of this is that the length of the journey decreases continuously. It took Cameron eleven months to reach the lake; Cambier, who was frequently stopped by the way, and who did not take the most direct route, took fourteen; while Captains Popelin and Ramaeckers successively accomplished the same distance in the space of five months; and Cambier, returning after them, has done it in fifty days. It must be recollected, in connection with these figures, that the road is still in a most primitive condition, and that the progress of the caravans is naturally very slow; but at the same time very decided progress has been made, and the great sacrifices that these explorations have necessitated have not been unrequited.

The explorations of the Congo have not been directly conducted by the International Association, but by the "Comité d'études du Haut Congo," who nevertheless have adopted the Association's flag. It is ceaselessly repeated in France that this "Comité d'études du Haut Congo" is a merely commercial society. Nothing of the kind is the case. It was formed on November 25, 1878, and began with a capital of a million of francs (£40,000). Belgians and other foreigners were among the first subscribers; but the expenses of Stanley's expedition considerably surpassed the capital subscribed, and funds have since been supplied by the boundless generosity of One whose sole interest can but be to advance the progress of civilization in Africa. The Royal Patron of the Association is, indeed, the only person in Belgium who can have nothing to do with commerce.

As soon as Stanley returned to Europe, after having made his splendid discoveries on the Congo, the Promoter of the enterprise begged him to undertake to throw open the river to European civilization, and to this intent placed unlimited funds at his disposal.

The ends aimed at by the society are essentially philanthropic and scientific; they undertake experiments, attempt explorations, and assist travellers and traders, but do not trade themselves. The summary of their labours, published in November, 1882, in Brussels (page 20), says: "No one could cite a single mercantile operation that has been carried on either through or by the 'Comité d'études du Haut Congo.' But the stations founded by this society will doubtless lead to divers nations opening commercial depôts in these newly discovered regions; such a result was foreseen when the Association was formed, and would indeed be in accordance with its intentions."

The Congo is navigable for a distance of 110 miles, from the mouth of the river to the Falls of Yellala. The next 213 miles of its course run through very wild and broken country. The great river traverses this, forming now insurmountable falls and now rapids, which may be taken by courageous efforts and in very light crafts, and which may, in fact, be compared to the first falls of the Nile, below Philæ, which are indeed merely rapids. The waters of the Upper Congo, pent in by a barrier of rocks, have formed a sort of lake, and this is what is known as Stanley Pool. Thence to the Stanley Falls, below the equator and 25° east, a distance of about 900 miles, the river is navigable, laying open the great valley of Central Africa, 900,000 square miles in extent. In order to reach this splendid basin, it was necessary therefore to pass the 200 miles between the Falls of Yellala and Stanley Pool. Stanley, aided by his royal protector, accomplished this in the space of two years, at the cost of enormous labour and of great sacrifices of every kind.

Before commencing the task, Stanley returned to Zanzibar to fetch his former fellow-travellers, and to these he added seventy-two Kabindas and about fifty natives of Lower Congo; these latter engaged by the day. It was necessary, before anything else could be done, to establish headquarters on the lower and navigable portion of the river. Stanley selected Vivi, on the northern bank, a post about ten miles above the European station then established, and about eight miles below the Falls of Yellala. This post is most important. The land was granted on a sort of perpetual lease. The natives, far from appearing hostile, have frequently aided the building gratuitously and of their own accord. The establishment consists of houses for the employés, of warehouses, workshops, and an elegant chalet for the chief of the settlement. A little bay, at the foot of the hill on which Vivi is situated, serves to shelter the boats. The site for the second station was fixed about fifty miles farther up the river, also on the north bank, just beyond the cataract of Isanghila, whose name it bears. It is situated on an elevation of about 150 feet, and quite in a creek. This station also comprises dwellings for the employés and large stores and warehouses. A

road has been made between Vivi and Isanghila, the tremendous cost of which may be imagined without much difficulty.

Between Isanghila and the great Falls of Ntombo-Mataka the river is again navigable, although there are several rapids. A third station, Manyanga, has been established about a mile below the Falls, which present a most formidable appearance. Grants have been obtained from the native chiefs of a good deal of territory on both sides of the river.

From Manyanga to Stanley Pool the river is a series of rapids and falls, and navigation is wholly impossible. Here again a road has been made, covering a distance of about ninety miles. The making of this road was exceedingly difficult, as many ravines were encountered on the river banks. When Stanley started for Stanley Pool, in July, 1881, he met, near Manyanga, M. de Brazza, who in the previous October had obtained from the native chief Makoko a grant of land on the northern shores of the lake. Stanley therefore crossed to the southern side, where he established his fourth station, on lands ceded to him by the chiefs of the country. He named this settlement after the noble Promoter of the enterprise, the King of the Belgians. Léopoldville, founded in February, 1882, won at once the favour of the natives, and has already become a centre of culture and civilization.

Thanks to an active and well-trained service of carriers, the indefatigable explorer succeeded in transporting to Stanley Pool all the pieces necessary for constructing a little steamer, the *En Avant*, which is now ready to carry into the Central African basin, not the Belgian colours, but the flag of the International Association. Stanley has already made use of this little vessel to proceed further up the Congo, which is easily navigable at this point; and in March and April, 1882, a fifth station was founded, named Gobila, at the meeting of the Congo and Quango flowing from the south; followed, in the month of September, by a sixth at Bolobo, just above Chumbiri. The "Comité d'études" possesses four excellent little steamers, two of which, *la Belgique* and *l'Espérance*, carry on the traffic of the lower portion of the river between Banana, where ships come in from the sea, and Vivi. *Le Royal*, although built of wood, answers well; it runs between Isanghila and Manyanga, crossing rapids which, though difficult, are passable, while the glorious mission of exploring the Upper Congo with its many affluents, including the Darkura, which flows from a large lake in the interior, the existence of which was revealed by the natives, is reserved exclusively to the *En Avant*.

The results already obtained are considerable. They are a just and glorious recompense to the generous devotion of the Promoter; a recompense also well deserved by the heroic men who have thus successfully carried on so great an undertaking. The advantages which may be hoped for on the Congo surpass anything

to be expected from the Tanganyika stations. Here no Arab jealousy is met with. The natives, having suffered no ill-treatment from slave-traders, are well disposed towards Europeans, and willingly assist them for a mere trifle, at times even gratuitously. The climate also is less fatal to white men. It is but five days' march from Vivi to Isanghila, and six or seven from Manyanga to Léopoldville. When these two portions of road are straightened and in order, the transport will be effected by waggons, and then it will be possible to dispense with all these legions of porters, the expense and trouble of which at present, on the eastern side, prevent any produce except ivory being brought from the interior to the coast, or *vice versa*. All the riches of the central basin could be easily brought to the coast by the Congo, when once it is made navigable and a regular steamboat service established there. As the International Association, without trading itself, is disposed to aid every legal trade, the whole of European commerce, without any distinction as to nationality, would benefit by the opening of this immense field for enterprise and profit; and it must be remembered that this glorious result has been attained without a combat, that not a single drop of blood has been shed.\*

In the year 1881 the English Baptist Mission established four stations on the Congo. The first, at Mussuca, about 100 miles up the river on the south bank, serves them as headquarters; the second is at San Salvador, about eighty miles from Mussuca, but much further inland; the third at Isanghila, about fifty miles from Mussuca, on the north bank of the Congo (this station is reached by Stanley's road from Vivi); the fourth is at Manyanga, rather more than 100 miles farther up the river than Isanghila, also on the north bank. In 1882 the station of Isanghila was exchanged for that of Baynesville, and the station of Mussuca for another at Wanga-Wanga, which was named Underhill. The Mission have founded another new station near Léopoldville, called Arthington, on land ceded by the International Association. The site of this

\* Stanley has been blamed, especially in England, for having made use of arms during his first journey down to the Congo. This accusation is most unjust, for his one aim was to reach the coast as quickly as possible, to avoid perishing. When canoes manned by savages shot arrows at him, to prevent his advancing, what could he do but force his way through them as best as he was able? An Italian traveller, Louis d'Albertis, who followed the course of the river Fly, in New Guinea, resolved not to fire a shot; but he was nevertheless obliged to do so when the natives in their canoes tried to prevent his regaining the sea. ("Tour du Monde," November 25, 1882.) Protestant missionaries, who are not generally predisposed in favour of Stanley owing to his reputation for violence, admit that he has quite won the friendship of the natives by his cordial intercourse with them. The November number, 1882, of the "Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society," published in London, gives an analysis of a letter written on the 4th of the previous August, by Mr. Comber, the head of the Baptist mission, and dated from Ntombo (Léopoldville) on the Congo. Mr. Comber, it says, expresses his warm gratitude to Stanley for having opened a way to Stanley Pool by the river. He and his colleagues had made several attempts to reach this point by land, but always unsuccessfully, owing to the armed resistance of the native ivory traders. Mr. Comber praises very highly Stanley's manner of treating the natives; he says that to Stanley's tact, kindness, and firmness with the chiefs is due our having opened up this great way for commerce, without a single armed combat. This is the language of an eyewitness, which is confirmed by the Catholic missionaries.

station is magnificent; and they have another on the south bank of the river at Manyanga, also near the International settlement, which they have named Wathen. This latter is of special service to them. It is proposed to start another on the Upper Congo, so soon as the Mission's new steamboat *Peace* is launched on the Stanley Pool, which will cost a whole year of hard work. The Livingstone (Congo) Inland Mission was commenced in 1878, with a view to evangelizing, by means of industrial mission stations and self-supporting missionaries, the valley of the Upper Congo, 900,000 square miles in extent. The following stations have already been founded:—first, Cardiff, near Opobo, which was however abandoned after a time as unhealthy; second, Banana, where there is an excellent house, containing seven rooms, built of iron and lined with wood, situated in about nine acres of land. There is here a landing-stage for the steam launch *Livingstone*. Opposite Stanley's station of Vivi, on the Lower Congo, the Mission have a third station, Mataddi Minkanda. The spot was found too unhealthy for a place of residence, but there is a house where travellers can pass the night. The first Christian church on the Congo has been built at Palaballa, where there are a school-house and large stores, the whole enclosed in several acres of land, which are under cultivation. At the fourth station, Banza Manteka, there are also a house and outbuildings and a large garden, while at the Mission's fifth and large station, Bemba Manyanga, there is a landing-stage for canoes. There are also missionaries at Mukimbungu, Luckenga, and Matihu's town. The mission have a steamer built for the Upper Congo, *The Henry Reed*. The expenditure has amounted to nearly £30,000, and the present staff is fourteen men and two women; ten have fallen victims to the climate, and many more have been invalided home. M. de Brazza has founded, besides Franceville on the Ogowai, a station on the Stanley Pool, to which he has given his own name, Brazzaville.

In the documents laid before the French Chambers, in support of the demand for funds for the De Brazza expedition, the following list of stations to be founded is given:—Eight principal ones, five first and three second class, connected by twelve posts, and forming, so to speak, a double road to Brazzaville, from the Gaboon by the Ogawai and the Alima, and from the sea by the Quiliou and the Valley of the Niari. These posts and stations are to form three groups, the first of which, on the Ogowai and the Alima, would comprise four posts and a first-class station, Franceville; the second group, starting from the Congo, would consist of a first-class station, Brazzaville, a second-class station and two posts; and, finally, a third group, comprising a first and second-class station and six posts, would connect Brazzaville with the Atlantic. Two first-class stations to be founded on the coast, Mayombé and Punta-Negra, would be connected with those mentioned above by a second-class station.

As we have already stated, the best way to prevent all disputes and contentions in the future would be to subject the Congo, like the Danube, to common control, neutralizing the mouth of the river and its banks, and placing the administration in the hands of an international commission. If this course were adopted, it might then be proposed to connect the Upper Congo with the sea, by a railway between a given point on the coast and Stanley Pool, a distance of about 200 miles, the revenue of the capital to be guaranteed by commercial nations, each of which would pay in proportion to its population, trade, and riches. It would not be a heavy charge, for the most severely taxed would perhaps pay about £200,000. Precedents of this sort are not wanting; France and England have more than once agreed to guarantee Turkish and Greek loans. Would not this arrangement between civilized nations for the carrying out of a great enterprise, which would be a gain to all humanity, be a magnificent manifestation of the principle of the real fraternity of nations, the bonds of which are daily being drawn closer? The African races would benefit by the suppression of slavery and of the exterminating wars which this abominable trade provokes, while civilized countries would be enabled to extend their commerce, fresh markets being thrown open for their produce.

It would be truly a pleasant sight to see States, which are, alas! too often divided by prejudices, jealousies, apprehensions or military rivalry, join thus in a common labour for the good and progress of mankind in general. But if this project remain a mere utopia, there is still a measure which it depends only on England to carry out, and which would enable this civilizing Mission to be effectually pursued on the Congo. This measure would consist in recognizing all the stations founded by the International Association, and also the mission settlements, as neutral and independent. Some French newspapers, published both in France and in the United States, pretend that such a step is impossible, because the Association represents no nation in particular, not even Belgium, although its head-quarters are in that country. But the international and disinterested character which permits of the Association calling together, without distinction of either nationality or religion, all who are willing to co-operate in the great work of exploring Central Africa, of contending against the extension of the slave trade and of introducing civilization to these dark regions—is not this precisely its greatest merit?

As a recent very able work of M. Gustave Moynier, the President of the "Red Cross" Society, shows, thirty-three States, or, in other words, all civilized nations, admit the neutrality of this admirable institution's ambulances, because the foundation of this society was rightly attributable to general Christian and philanthropic feeling. The International African Association is a second "Red Cross Society," which selects for its sphere of action the unexplored regions

of Africa instead of the battle-fields of Europe. It is a civilizing institution, comparable to the Order of Malta, and still more nearly resembling the Teutonic Order which, in the Middle Ages, induced the barbarous inhabitants of the shores of the Baltic to become subject to the influences of Christian Europe.

"A company of pious souls—compassionate Lübeck ship-captains diligently forwarding it, and one Walpot von Bassenheim, a citizen of Bremen, taking the lead—formed themselves into a union for succour of the sick and dying, 'set up canvas tents,' medical assuagements from the Lübeck ship stores, and did what utmost was in them, silently, in the name of mercy and heaven.

"On the whole, this Teutsch Ritterdom, for the first century and more, was a grand phenomenon, and flamed like a bright blessed beacon through the night of things in those northern countries. For above a century, we perceive, it was the rallying-place of all brave men who had a career to seek on terms other than vulgar. The noble soul, aiming beyond money, and sensible to more than hunger in this world, had a beacon burning (as we say), if the night chanced to overtake it, and the earth to grow too intricate, as is not uncommon."\*

The native chiefs have given up a certain amount of land to the Association, by contract; and these contracts must be considered to hold good, for they are precisely similar to the one held by M. De Brazza from King Makoko with respect to the land on which the French stations, Franceville and Brazzaville, are built. Nor is England in a position to dispute the validity of such contracts, for in the documents recently laid before Parliament by the Government (Africa, No. 2, 1883, pages 87 to 95), we find thirteen treaties concluded between the Queen and various local chiefs. The chief aim and end of these "engagements" is to obtain the suppression of the slave trade, free trade, and liberty for missionaries.†

An incident, which has occurred recently, incontrovertibly establishes the validity of treaties concluded between native chiefs, strangers to the concert of civilized nations and free companies, or even individuals. In 1878, the Sultans of Brunei and De Sala, in the island of Borneo, gave up to an Austrian, Baron Overbeck, and an Englishman, Mr. Dent, all rights to a considerable portion of their territory situated at the south of the island. They were to receive in return a permanent annual payment.

The grantees handed over this land to an English society, which latter obtained a charter of incorporation from the Government in

\* "Frederick the Great," B. II. chap. vi.

† The following is an example of the treaty, signed March 19, 1877, with the King of Mellalla:—

"ART. I. The export of slaves to foreign countries is for ever abolished in my territory.

"ART. IV. The subjects of Her Britannic Majesty and all white foreigners may always trade freely with my people.

"ART. X. Missionaries or other ministers of the Gospel are to be allowed to reside in my territory, and those of my heirs and successors, for the purpose of instructing the people in all useful occupations."

In some treaties, as for instance in one with Jumbo, Prince of Malimba, the adhesion of France is foreseen and provided for in these words:—"Power is hereby reserved to the French Government to become a party to this treaty, if it should think fit, agreeably to the provision of Art. V. of the convention signed in London, the 29th May, 1845."

1881. The granting of this charter gave rise to a discussion in the House, which is most interesting, as touching the question of the Congo grants of land. The Opposition accused the Government of having been guilty of disguised annexation, in thus assuming control over the rights of sovereignty of the company. The Cabinet replied that they found themselves in presence of an accomplished fact; a legally constituted association was in possession of foreign territory, and in exchange for certain control to be exercised there by the Crown, in the interest of the native population, and also of general peace, the Government accorded them the advantage of commercial recognition, but that this act entailed no fresh responsibilities for England.

"These rights," said the Attorney-General, Sir Henry James, "were granted to, and legally became the property of the company. . . . Her Majesty's Government had no power to enter into the general expediency of a trading company occupying Borneo. It would have been confiscation of their property if, after what had occurred, the Government had attempted to take away the rights they had acquired. . . . The simple matter which the Government had to decide was, he repeated, whether they should leave the company to act unfettered and entirely without control or not." And Mr. Gladstone's statement was not less affirmative. He said:—"There is not a single privilege given to it by the charter over and above what it had already acquired upon a title sufficient to enable it to enter into the exercise of all its powers."

Finally, the statements made by Lord Granville in the House of Lords, on the 15th of March, 1882, prove that the protestations, made in the first instance against the company by Holland and Spain, were made in consequence of these two Powers considering themselves to be possessed of prior rights in the northern part of Borneo; but neither they nor Germany, which the British Government formally consulted on this occasion, had ever thought of questioning the rights of individuals or companies to obtain for themselves, from uncivilized monarchs, concessions of rights implying an exercise of sovereignty.

Is it not clearly apparent that the object of treaties between England and the chiefs of the Congo—i.e., the suppression of the slave trade and free liberty of commerce and of religion—would be better guaranteed by a proclamation of the neutrality of all the stations founded on the Congo by the emissaries of the International African Association, than in any other manner? In declaring this neutrality, England would remain faithful to the policy she has pursued for long years in these regions; and, as she would be supported by both Germany and the United States, it may be safely affirmed that all other nations would accept the arrangement, as they have done for the "Red Cross Society." To show that the idea

of neutralizing the world's great highways is daily gaining ground, I here quote a summary of Sir George Elliot's views with respect to the project of a second canal being made between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea. Sir George entertains a strong opinion that the existing situation is capable of being met without resort to any new canal or railway. The widening and deepening of the existing canal he regards as the best and most economical way of meeting the requirements and difficulties of the time, because no canal, in his view, could be better situated than the Suez Canal. But for that canal to become all that it should be, it should be made an international concern.

The grand idea of the King of the Belgians, to unite in a great International Association all, without any distinction as to either nationality or religion, who are willing to do what they can towards advancing the work of civilization in Central Africa, is an enterprise at once so noble, so disinterested, so worthy of our age, that no nation could find grounds for refusing to recognize the neutrality of the stations founded by this Association in the sole interest of general humanity. England has but to say a word, and the work is done; the future of this great enterprise is assured. I do not hesitate to say that it would be a crying shame for the age in which we live, if one of its most noble conceptions were doomed to succumb through the indifference or hostility of States from which but a very simple thing is required—viz., to recognize an admirable institution which has been created by private zeal and the disinterested love of humanity and science. It is only from the French Government that any opposition can be apprehended. But as a Member of the International African Association recently remarked, in an open letter which was published at Brussels:—

"France can do much to quiet present apprehensions, and she has already given too many proofs of her devotion to the cause of progress not to understand the grandeur of the part she would be called upon to play if, while maintaining the advantages of her own position there, she do her best to prevent particular interests becoming opposed to the general interests of civilization, which latter are represented in Africa by a flag whose chief merit consists in its being no nation's colours. Would France's position on the Congo be preferable if the African Association, goaded to the last limit by direct and indirect aggressions, imitated the example of the first grantees of Borneo and sold their rights either to a company or to a power. In the latter hypothesis M. de Brazza would, it is true, be in contact with the representatives of a European Government. But I do not see what France would have gained by the exchange."\*

EMILE DE LAVELEYE.

\* "Le Congo," article du "Courrier des Etats-Unis," sur M. de Brazza, et l'Angleterre et réponse d'un membre de l'Association Internationale Africaine. Bruxelles: Mucquardt. 1883.