

forced a passage into the mysterious solitude, and behold ! instead of wastes of burning sand and inhospitable deserts, they have found plains of luxuriant growth watered by majestic streams and mighty rivers, broken here and there by immense lakes and inland seas comparable only to our own Ontario, Huron and Superior. The products were among the most sought after in commerce, and several of the tribes were found to be tranquil, meek and industrious.

What enthusiasm did not the startling discoveries of the Stanley expeditions evoke in Europe, and what civilizing movements did they not give rise to? It was no exaggeration on the part of the president of the London Geographical Society to affirm, that since the great discovery of Vasco de Gama Christian civilization has seen no vaster fields opened out to the zeal of its apostles and the gains of its merchants. All of a sudden, Europe, which hitherto had been seeking fields for colonization across oceans in the torrid climes of the Indies, or in the Northern regions of the St. Lawrence and Hudson Bay, cast her eyes on the Dark Continent revealed to her at her door, and began at once to divide its zones among her crowned heads and princes. States and kingdoms were mapped out along the banks of the rivers and in the territories spreading away behind them ; exploring expeditions were equipped ; railway lines surveyed ; and large sums of money invested.

At the present moment, Europe is so taken up with her newly discovered prize, that there is no danger of its slipping from her hold. And well it were so, for, as a Catholic missionary writes, the Mussulman yoke is beginning to loosen, light is penetrating into the darkness, the black is becoming acquainted with the white, and though uncertainty still hangs over the future, as the nineteenth century draws to a close, the signs betoken a change favorable to Catholicity.