

of mankind.

Dorner was early called to a chair of theology in Tübingen, then to several other universities, until at last he occupied the chair of Schleiermacher in Berlin till his death. In 1881 and 1882 he published his "System of Theology," translated into English in four volumes. It is likewise a classical work which can never die. He was *facile princeps* among the philosophical divines of the age, and one of the profoundest expounders and defenders of the Christian faith in all ages. He was a pure, humble, modest, and amiable man—one of the best I ever knew.

Dr. Dorner's health had been failing for the last few years. In June he visited his son, who is professor in the theological seminary at Wittenberg, and went with him and his wife to Wiesbaden for his health. On a visit to the great monument of Germany's victory over France at Niederwald, he was seized by a hemorrhage and died soon after his return to Wiesbaden, just as he was to be carried from the cars to a cab to drive him to a hotel. He was well prepared for the great change, and now sees Him face to face whose person and character he devoutly studied and traced through the ages as the central object of theology and piety.

THE CONGO CONFERENCE.

About the middle of last month there gathered in Europe a Council of explorers, diplomats and men of official station, who are to solve the question, now urgent, how the civilized States are to stand related to the barbarous tribes which people the heart of Africa. One of the marvels of our time is the unveiling to the world, a gaze of the vast interior plains and broken hills through which the Congo river flows.

It is just about a quarter of a century since the real explorations of Central Africa began, and it is only fourteen years since Dr. Livingstone stood on the bank of a great river sending down its floods, and supposed that he was looking upon the upper course of the Nile.

Seven years later Mr. Henry M. Stanley followed the course of the same river westward and southward until, after immense difficulties and trials, he saw its waters pouring themselves into the Atlantic Ocean. Since that time Mr. Stanley and many others have entered this stream from the ocean, and passing up-

ward have measured its breadth and gauged its depths, floated over its calm waters and battled with its rapids. It begins to be known as one of the great rivers of the world.

The country through which it flows also begins to be known. The rocky hills through which its rapids flow, and the ravines which run among these hills, have been so far levelled and bridged that the well-defined road, though imperfectly made, now opens the way into the interior as far as the circular expense in the river known as Stanley Pool. But above that point we are told that "the great river can be navigated for close upon a thousand miles with steamers equal to the largest of those that ply upon the Mississippi; from hence too, its tributaries, in comparison with which many of which the Thames at London Bridge, or the Elbe at Magdeburg, is an insignificant stream, offer four thousand five hundred and twenty miles of open water, giving access to an area of nine hundred thousand square miles of country, perhaps the most fertile on the globe." In the basin of the Congo are now found, according to Mr. Stanley's estimate, nearly fifty millions of people, of countless tribes and in various stages of barbarism.

These vast and populous lands, so suddenly made accessible, have moved the curiosity, the ambition, possibly the greed of the old European nations. The "craze" of the day among the old European powers is colonial extension, and in Central Africa there is a wide and fresh field for that "expansion" of the populous kingdoms of Europe, at least for the extension of their influence and their trade. Competition has sprung up. Associations for the purpose of exploration and the establishment of trading posts have been formed, and an International African Association was organized in 1876 in Brussels, which proposed to superintend and support certain large philanthropic and scientific enterprise in the heart of Africa. This Association has become a powerful one, and has certainly been a most useful one. It has been gradually assuming political power. But national rivalries have been intensified, instead of diminishing by the progress of events, and seizures of important points have been made by agents of different European powers. The "land hunger" grows by what it feeds upon, and the Congo basin and the surrounding coasts and plains seem destined to be speedily parcelled out to the eager and jealous nations of the civilized lands.