

by the Portuguese, and is therefore a closed port to free trade and free travel. The question, however, of obtaining easy access to the Zambesi-Shire route to Central Africa is so absolutely important that it will soon be solved, with or without the help of a power that has forfeited its claim of priority through its utter incapacity and shiftlessness. The fate of African progress cannot be sealed by an effete power that nominally professes to be able to close the natural entrance gate.

To the north of the Zambesi lies Mozambique territory, which has belonged to Portugal more or less—and principally less—since 1497. But as on the Western—so on the Eastern—coast of Africa the Portuguese have effected nothing for good. They have levied taxes on trade, they have cooperated with the Arab slave dealers, and they have made themselves thoroughly hated by the natives; their official system is debased and rotten to the core; their missionary efforts have proved failures, and their civilizing influences have never been felt. In point of fact, after claiming the major part of coast and inland country from Zanzibar to Zululand for several centuries, they really hold a few isolated trading stations for the benefit of certain plundering officials. What Portugal has not done in the many decades during which she has possessed the country, has been actually accomplished on a small scale by independent Britishers. The Nyassa Lake districts were altogether unknown to the world until Dr. Livingstone proclaimed their discovery. Since that time the Scotch and English have succeeded in planting missionary and trading settlements in the interior. The African Lakes Company and the British East African Association have been principally active in this work. The Church of Scotland has done great things also, and such settlements as Livingstonia, Blantyre and Bandawe testify that with real earnestness of purpose and determined energy the British have been able to accomplish in less than a score of years more real good in East Central Africa than the Portuguese have ever done. The other day the Portuguese claimed Blantyre, an independent colony of Scotchmen founded in 1876, and it is high time that England awoke to the serious necessity of settling the recurring question of Portuguese claims. Blantyre and the other Nyassa settlements are growing and prospering. The settlers have turned the wilderness of wild waste to good account, and already wheat, coffee, sugar, potatoes and other food products are raised. The natives are being taught by example that honest productive labour is far nobler than idleness and war. Christianity hand in hand with peaceful labour has had wonderful effects on the heathen, and already slavery, witchcraft and tribe feuds are being driven away before the smoke of the settlers' homes and the bells of the mission church. This work has been done by private persons, without the aid of Government money or protection. It was an independent attempt to realize the teachings of the great Livingstone; an effort to prove that his life and life-long appeal to his fellow-countrymen were not thrown away. The result so far has been successful; the germ of East African civilization has been implanted, and, if this policy of peaceful labour and Christian example be pursued, the growth of that civilization will rapidly spread. Portugal foresees this, and is endeavouring by claiming the land to repress an influence that will be fatal, and properly fatal, to her own life in East Africa. As a matter of honour England is bound to prevent Blantyre falling into the hands of a robber; in the interests of Christianity and civilization England is bound to prevent the natives, who wish to exchange war for peace, slavery for freedom and heathenism for the true religion of Jesus Christ, from falling into the hands of men who have helped the slave-trade, fostered tribe warfare and prevented the spread of the Gospel. The duty of England is clear and unmistakable, and every man who is interested in the British stations in East Africa, whether by actual possession or admiring sympathy, expects England this day will do her duty.

Another factor in East Africa is the German East African Association which, in 1886, took possession of about 600,000 square miles of territory by a treaty effected with the Sultan of Zanzibar, who modestly retained some fifteen miles of coast land as a pillow for his crown.

Regarding the competing forces in East and West African colonization, the Portuguese are not likely to increase their influence, or to extend their territory. A country that has failed for 400 years to carry out anything but slaves, ivory, and a most sordid policy, and which has never exercised a good influence over the natives is not likely to succeed against more active and spirited nations.

The Germans, in spite of rapid and pretentious movements and the acquisition of certain valuable coast-points and vast territories are not likely to long remain a permanent power in Africa. Although possessing administrative and executive ability, to which it would be impertinent to compare the official sloth and disease of the Portuguese; German colonization is distinctly an effort of the home government to prevent the loss of Germans to the Empire and to increase the foreign trade of Germany. It is artificial, and therefore likely to fail in arriving at either result. The German colonist would still be amenable to all the laws of the Empire, and the odious military system would certainly follow any Bismarckian policy. In America the German citizen is more free than in the Fatherland, and can more easily make a livelihood. The chances of his making more than a livelihood are also much greater. Socialism is more at home in Chicago, at least theoretically, than in Berlin or Somali-land. It is not likely, therefore, the German emigrant will select the imperial colonies in Africa in

preference to a land where the Kaiser's master has no authority. Moreover, the German method of colonization is semi-military and semi-bureaucratic. The type and its results were seen in the Samoan fiasco; it is reproduced in East and West Africa. This kind of colonization is not likely to produce good results, either from a point of commerce or of civilization. The German East African Company, with its 600,000 square miles, has had to be subsidized by the Government; at present it cannot pay its current expenses. It is a matter of speculation whether Germany will continue to pay for working unremunerative colonies, to which Germans will not go. The total trade of Germany with Africa is about one-half per cent. of its entire foreign commerce. In case of trouble with the natives on a large scale (it has already been developed in several minor degrees), the German army could not spare troops from Europe, and the experiment of organizing native troops is not likely to find favour among the desired recruits. Nevertheless, Krupp guns and the most modern breechloaders are being sent in large quantities from the Fatherland, and the military character of the modern German Empire is being grafted on the colonies. Experience, however, has proved that it is dangerous to trust weapons that may explode in the hands of those who may direct them against you. German colonization has started with startling rapidity, and is liable and likely to end in as sudden a manner.

Of the aptitude of the British for colonizing it would be idle to speak at length at this day. If figures and facts are good witnesses the possession of some 9,000,000 square miles, with a population of over 316,000,000, testify that success follows the footsteps of the Celt and Anglo-Saxon when they are turned abroad. There is every reason to believe that the British would be as successful in Central Africa as elsewhere, and it is to be hoped that the British Government will afford at least protection to those of her children who may seek a home in the Dark Continent. It would be better perhaps for Africa if the British Government did more.

Montreal.

SAREPTA.

ODE TO BEN LOMOND.

BEN LOMOND, once more
I have sought Scotia's shore,
Through the track of the desolate sea,
(Before I pass on
To the awful unknown)
To take my last farewell of thee;
With a heart running o'er
I behold thee once more
Stand forth in thy garments of blue;
Unchanged thou'rt by time,
Every feature sublime
That so well in my boyhood I knew.

Over land, over sea,
Thou hast haunted me—
Yea, hung o'er my head like a spell;
When I heard some old air
Lo! behold, thou wert there,
Of the haunts of my boyhood to tell;
The sunlight and air
Of life's morning were there,
And the tale and the ballad that thrills—
Once more o'er the main,
A young rover again
Mid the glory that dwells in the hills.

Yes, back thou didst bring
All the joy of life's spring!
I breathed in youth's passionate air!
Inhaled the perfume
Of the bud and the bloom,
And knew naught of sorrow and care.
Oh, joy of all joy!
When a happy schoolboy
Aloft on thy bosom to climb,
Among the fresh bloom
Of the rich golden broom,
The wild myrtle, heather and thyme.

At morn how I'd shout
When I saw thee start out
Of the great, rolling, vapouring sea;
Thy head in the blue,
While the purple dawn threw
Such garments of glory round thee;
Well-remembered that dawn
As I gazed from the lawn,
Such purples thy bosom hung o'er!
The delight of my heart
To such rapture did start
That a song leapt to life from its core.

Then, in gloaming, how weird
Unto me you appeared
In thy mystical mantle of grey!
While the moon, with her train,
Through the magic domain
Came forth their mute homage to pay;
And how thou didst shout
When the tempests were out,
And the lightnings around thee did leap!
I still hear thy voice
With the thunders rejoice,
While around thee their revels they keep.

Then, as with a shock,
In my spirit awoke
Great thoughts that lay there all asleep—
In a moment of time
Inner regions sublime
Athwart my roused vision did sweep;
And how thou didst draw
Admiration and awe
As a garment my spirit around,
Till I felt we are here
In a magical sphere,
Floating, mist-like, above the profound.

The green earth supernal
With beauty is vernal;
Encompassed with glory are we!
Tho' strangers in time,
Our whole being's sublime,
And awful as death and the sea—
Yea, in travail through time,
All I've felt of sublime
In the firmament, earth or the sea,
Ev'ry colour and sound,
Ev'ry heart-leap and bound
Were somehow related to thee.

Amaranth.

ALEXANDER MCLACHLAN.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DR. RYERSON AND OUR SCHOOL SYSTEM.

To the Editor of THE WEEK:

SIR,—In THE WEEK of the 31st ult., you mention "a number of minor educational evils" which have grown up from the same root, viz., "the transfer of public education into the arena of party politics," and you very properly observe that the unveiling of the Ryerson Monument "offers a fit and tempting occasion" for comparing the educational system of the Province as it is now administered with the same system under the administration of Dr. Ryerson.

I hope that a number of the leading educational authorities will embrace the occasion to discuss these evils and come to an agreement in regard to the remedies that ought to be applied. We seem at present fast approaching a time when the ukase of the Minister of Education will have all the force of an Act of Parliament, when every changing whim of his fickle mind must be at once obeyed by the thousands of trustees and teachers who are placed under his autocratic power. Sometimes the venerable Doctor was accused of exercising despotic authority; but let it be carefully remembered that he always had behind him a representative Council of Public Instruction, whose sanction was necessary to all radical measures. This Council became towards the close of its history a thoroughly representative body, and initiated a number of the best reforms ever introduced into our system. Let it also be kept in mind that Dr. Ryerson was the lifelong friend of the teachers, and with all his faults and failings, never deserted their interests on a single occasion. He laboured through sunshine and storm to elevate the status of teachers and to educate public opinion out of the European and into the American conception of the dignity and importance of the teacher's work for the nation. He never ceased to his latest hours to agitate for the most ample provision for the training of teachers on a generous scale, and he established a superannuation fund for worn-out members of the profession which is still doing a work of philanthropy, notwithstanding the ruthless hands that have since been laid upon it. He established and for many years edited an educational journal which reached the remotest log schoolhouse in the Province, and spread his own contagious enthusiasm. He built up a Normal School system that commanded the respect of the country in its time, being the result of his own careful study of the systems of Prussia and New England, and he laid plans for the extension and improvement of that system commensurate with the growing wealth and importance of Ontario. He faithfully collected and reflected the best light then obtainable on methods of teaching, construction of schools, organization, discipline, etc., and he provided that a lecture on education should be given every year by every local superintendent in every school section in the country. He was an educationist first and last, and served with efficiency under both political parties, whatever his own personal predilections might have been. Dr. Ryerson educated the people of this Province to take a deep interest in educational matters and to take pride in spending money for the improvement of schools to the utmost extent of their resources. His influence was felt in the House, and the powerful representations of his reports were answered by increased grants to the schools of all kinds.

Quite true it is that in his old age his wonderful vigour was somewhat abated, and his judgment somewhat impaired. He wrote two or three text-books, and the conspicuous failure of them ought to have been a beacon to his successors in office, to warn them against stepping out of their proper sphere and intermeddling with matters beyond their special qualifications. As senility crept over him he grew more and more conservative; he resisted necessary reforms proposed by the Council, and vainly attempted to restrict the grammar schools to an inflexible list of text-books. The total collapse of that cast-iron system might have served as a warning to his successors not to perpetuate the increased folly of personally attempting to edit a series of school books. He sanctioned a