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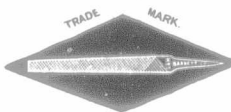
The recent announcement that the Belgian Government has ceded Great Britain a strip of land in the Congo marks an important step towards the completion of the Cape-to-Cairo Railway. This strip will make it possible for the railway to traverse British territory over the whole of its length of 6,944 miles, that being the distance from Cape Town to Cairo, or 7,074 miles, if we include the journey to the sea at Alexandria. The astonishing progress which is being made with this scheme for opening up "darkest Africa" to civilization and commerce may be gauged from the fact that rails have already been laid to Bukama, right in the heart of the Congo, though at present passengers can only travel as far as Elizabethville, some 2,325 miles north of Cape Town.

—(Montreal Herald.)

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The soothing effects of the Count Montijo's and his friends' cigars were observed in high places, and the Government introduced the tobacco state monopoly to manufacture them ad libitum after a model purchased in Spain. The police saw to the distribution of the new comforter, and cigar smoking became a feature in Paris life before the disaster of Leipzig. The aides-de-camp salon at the Tuileries reeked with cigar smoke. There was then no prejudice against the cigar. There was against the pipe, which the fine gentlemen—all snuff-takers—left to the common people.—London Truth.

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