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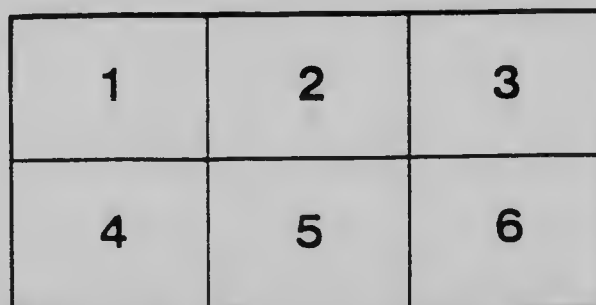
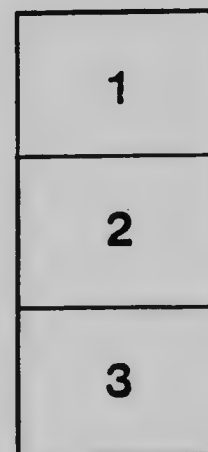
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THE GERMANS IN  
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BY

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**MAP OF AFRICA**

**Between pages 16 and 17.**

# THE GERMANS IN AFRICA

## I.—THE COLONIAL MOVEMENT IN GERMANY

IN an article which appeared in the *Kölnische Zeitung* on April 22, 1884, three days before it was announced officially that Germany's first colony in Africa had been placed under the protection of the Imperial Government, Africa was compared with a large pie which the English had prepared for themselves at other people's expense. 'Let us hope', said the writer, 'that our blue-jackets will put a few peppercorns into it on the Guinea coast, so that our friends on the Thames may not digest it too rapidly.' It is the purpose of this pamphlet to show how Germany, after some years of careful preparation and in spite of much opposition, finally succeeded in peppering the African pie by establishing four important colonies upon the African continent.

The growth of the colonial movement in Germany coincided with the remarkable outburst of patriotic feeling which heralded and followed the wars in which the Germanic States achieved their political unity. It was essentially a modern development of the growing national spirit, for although in the seventeenth century a German trading colony under the patronage of the Great Elector of Brandenburg had been attempted on the Guinea coast, the experiment had been unsuccessful, and after a short and chequered career the Brandenburg settlements had been abandoned. Germany was not then ready for any form of colonization. The country

was divided into a number of States having little political cohesion, in which the ruling classes were animated by the narrow spirit of provincialism and were unwilling and unable to unite for any national object. The little State of Brandenburg, afterwards to develop into the Kingdom of Prussia and to form the nucleus of the future German Empire, was alone capable of pursuing an active policy. But at the outset the efforts of its sovereign were frustrated owing to the lack of sea-power and the fact that other and stronger countries had already acquired large interests in the then profitable Guinea trade. France, England, Denmark, and Holland regarded the intrusion of a new and petty State upon their African domain with jealous interest. The Dutch in particular, upon whom the Elector had mainly to rely for the supply of seamen and officials, proved irreconcilable, and owing to mismanagement and speculation the settlements at Gross-Friedrichsburg, near Axim, and at other places, were abandoned and passed into the limbo of almost forgotten adventures, only to be fetched therefrom to serve the needs of patriotic exponents of the colonial theory.

For one and a half centuries there was no German settlement upon the African coasts. Britain, the great colonizing nation, in spite of the fact that Germany was rapidly becoming the foremost military Power in Europe whilst her commerce was extending to every quarter of the globe, refused to read the signs of the times and paid no attention to the growth of a movement which was ultimately destined to lead to such tremendous results. Even when the colonial party in Germany had secured a strong and influential following and Bismarck had practically made up his mind to enter upon the colonial scramble, the British Ambassador in Berlin, Odo



Russell, afterwards Lord Ampthill, wrote that 'the German Government feel more the want of soldiers than of colonies' (Sept. 18, 1880), believing that when Bismarck had stated that 'this colonial business would be for us in Germany like the wearing of sabres in the noble families of Poland by men who have no shirts to their backs', he meant exactly what he had said. When Bismarck was convinced that the time for action had arrived he was as eager for expansion as the most advanced exponents of colonialism.

Four main causes drove Germany to seek for overseas territorial expansion: (a) the steady and increasing economic pressure at home which compelled Germans to search for new markets for their surplus manufactures and for new sources of supply of the tropical products needed for their growing industries; (b) the need to establish colonies which might absorb the large number of Germans who annually left the Fatherland to find economic salvation in new countries, and who by settling in the United States or South America were lost to the nation;<sup>1</sup> (c) the belief of patriotic Germans that their country, by becoming a maritime Power, might share in the benefits to be acquired from sea-power and might in her turn dominate the ocean; (d) the attention that was then being focused upon Africa owing to the discoveries of Livingstone, Stanley, and other explorers, English, French, German, and Italian. In Germany the movement was cleverly engineered by a number of brilliant thinkers

<sup>1</sup> 'A German who can put off his Fatherland, like an old coat, is no longer a German for me,' said Bismarck. The Chancellor was quite right. Most of the emigrating Germans, of whom over three and a half millions left Germany during the nineteenth century, became Americans first and foremost, and only retained a sentimental interest in their Fatherland.

and writers. The creation of colonies was considered by the leaders of the movement as indispensable if the prosperity of the nation were finally to be achieved and its dignity and prestige to be upheld.

Friedrich List, a disciple of Adam Smith, was one of the earliest exponents of the movement. He taught that a nation is united by material interests rather than through any feeling of unity arising from a common origin or a common language; and he formulated an economic programme which included the creation of a customs union for Germany, the establishment of a network of railways and the building of a mercantile marine, the appointment of consular representatives common to the whole of Germany, and the acquisition of colonies and the concentration therein of the surplus German population. Nearly all his ideals found realization save the last. The ideas of List were further elaborated by Ernst Friedel in 1867, who in a work advocating the establishment of 'Prussian-German colonies' in the Far East and the Pacific Ocean, stated that 'maritime commerce, ships of war, colonies, are three complementary terms. The value of each is diminished if one of the three be wanting', and suggested that the rich island of Formosa, since acquired by Japan, should be taken in order that Germany might rival the commercial enterprise displayed by Great Britain at Hong Kong. The ideas put forward by List and Friedel represented the views of a considerable section of the thinking populace which was soon to acquire great influence throughout the country. In particular they met with the approval of Heinrich von Treitschke, the great apostle of force, whose ideas were subsequently to be taught in every university and school in the country. Treitschke, whose doctrines prepared the way for the brutal frankness of

writers like Bernhardi, Bülow, and von der Goltz, took a wide view of German destinies and stood for the Pan-Germanic doctrine in its widest extent. 'Whatever one may think of British liberty,' he wrote, 'her power is clearly an anachronism. . . . England is to-day the shameless representative of barbarism in international law.' Like others who have written of our national perfidy, Treitschke believed that Germany ought to take advantage of British weakness. 'In the south of Africa,' he wrote, 'if our Empire has the courage to follow an independent colonial policy with determination, a collision of our interests with those of England is unavoidable.'

Treitschke was by far the most serious advocate of German colonial expansion because he was the most dangerous. The doctrines he taught were not unknown to other writers, who believed that Germany was justified in appropriating whatever other nations were unable to hold. But most of the German writers believed that Germany should acquire her colonies in a legitimate way. Dr. Fabri, for example, who exercised so great an influence upon the movement that when he died in 1891 he was referred to in the German press as the Father of German colonization, uttered a sane and vigorous plea for the entry of Germany upon the colonial sphere in his now celebrated pamphlet published in 1879.<sup>1</sup> Whilst recapitulating the favourite arguments of the colonial party, he deplored the error committed by Bismarck in following a continental to the exclusion of an overseas policy, and stated that Germany lacked an important element in her greatness, because colonies were necessary for the economic development of the Empire and the growth of her commerce.

<sup>1</sup> *Bedarf Deutschland der Kolonien?* Gotha, 1879.

In the period from 1870 to 1884 many other writers insisted upon the necessity for colonies. A wave of enthusiasm was sweeping over Germany. Merchants and political thinkers, economists and theological professors, missionaries and travellers, in fact all sections of the population who cared to think of the future, with the exception of the purely official classes who were fearful to foster a movement the fruition of which might lead to international complications, gave it their support. Emigration societies engaged in the work of forwarding Germany's surplus population to America—a migration which reached its maximum in 1882, when over 250,000 Germans left the Fatherland, and which has since become almost a negligible quantity—turned their attention to the possibility of finding regions where Germans might settle under their own flag. Chambers of Commerce, and particularly those of Hamburg and Bremen, took up the movement; the former forwarding a lengthy report to the German Foreign Office in 1883, in which special attention was directed to the continual growth of German interests in Africa and to the number of German trading firms which had established relations with the natives. Societies were formed specially to direct and foster the movement, such as the *Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft*, founded in 1881 under the Presidency of Prince von Hohenlohe-Langenburg, which organized meetings that were addressed by the foremost travellers and merchants. All this activity, carefully directed and fostered, not positively discouraged by the Chancellor and at a later period secretly and afterwards openly supported by him, and representing a perfectly legitimate and natural desire to achieve a triumph where other nations had succeeded, led naturally and inevitably to the events of 1884 which plunged Germany into the stormy waters of colonialism.

II.—GERMAN EXPLORATION AND THE GERMANS  
IN SOUTH AFRICA

Germans have never taken an active part in maritime exploration. Whilst Spanish and Portuguese navigators were crossing the Atlantic or exploring the coasts of Africa ; and British, French, and Dutch explorers were traversing the unknown seas, founding new settlements in America, the East, and Australasia ; Germans remained in the Fatherland, unable to organize maritime expeditions because they lacked the mercantile marine necessary for the prosecution of overseas adventures and possessed few seaports from whence to fit out expeditions. The activities of the Hanseatic League had been mainly confined to commercial enterprises of a lucrative rather than of an experimental nature, and by the time the maritime nations of Western Europe had firmly established themselves in the New World, on the coasts of Africa, or in India, the Hansa had practically ceased its commercial activities owing to the disastrous series of European wars during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which had brought about the downfall of the mediaeval German commercial system. Thus there has been no German Columbus, Cabot, or Magellan in the Atlantic and no German Vancouver, Cook, or Bougainville in the Pacific.

But in Africa, Germans seized and utilized the opportunity that occurred during the nineteenth century to organize exploring expeditions, and their explorers and travellers performed a notable service in opening many portions of the Dark Continent to European enterprise. In the work of scientific exploration they were perhaps unequalled, and German agents travelling in every part of the Continent laid the foundations of the German

colonial empire, whilst British and French explorers were engaged upon a similar work. Germans realized with pride that their countrymen had been instrumental in solving many geographical problems, and that their explorers were active agents in the establishment of German influence in countries that were as yet unoccupied by any European Power and where there was ample opportunity for the foundation of German plantation-colonies.

So long ago as the beginning of the eighteenth century individual Germans, generally in the employment of other countries, had been fired with the desire to acquire fame in the Dark Continent. In South Africa the talented but mendacious Peter Kolbe, a German pastor in the service of the Dutch, had won renown through his excellent account of the Hottentots, whilst at a later period Heinrich Lichtenstein, Professor of Natural History in the University of Berlin, travelled in the Sub-Continent where he wrote one of the best and most scholarly works on the country. But neither of these writers was in any sense an explorer, and it was not until the nineteenth century was well advanced that Germans began to take an active part in the penetration of Africa. The first German to win imperishable renown in Africa was Friedrich Hornemann, who entered the service of the African Association in 1796 and made a remarkable journey from Tripoli to the Niger, dying in the country of Nupe which had not hitherto been visited by Europeans. He was followed by Heinrich Barth, a citizen of Hamburg, whose great expedition in North Africa marched under British auspices. Starting from Tripoli, Barth crossed the Sahara by a new route, reached Lake Chad, visited the mysterious city of Timbuctoo, and helped to fill up gaps in our knowledge of the central Niger regions.

Following in his tracks, Vogel arrived in 1856 in the Sudan State of Wadai, whilst Carl Moritz von Beurmann also reached Wadai a few years later. Other Germans performed notable work in Northern Africa, especially Alexander Ziegler and Georg Schweinfurth, a German born in Russia, who revealed to the world the extensive Bahr-el-Ghazal and other upper waters of the Nile.

But it was in Eastern Africa that the Germans made their most profitable discoveries. In 1860 Baron Karl von der Decken made a remarkable survey of Mount Kilimanjaro, which had been seen twelve years previously by the missionaries Krapf and Rebmann, and continued his exploration of the coastal regions between Cape Delgado and the River Jub. Von der Decken was one of the first to conceive the idea of a German colony in East Africa. 'I am persuaded', he wrote, 'that in a short time a colony established here would be most successful, and after two or three years would be self-supporting. . . . It would become of great importance after the opening of the Suez Canal. It is unfortunate that we Germans allow such opportunities of acquiring colonies to slip, especially at a time when it would be of importance to the navy.' But although von der Decken had stated that he would not hesitate to buy Mombasa from the Sultan of Zanzibar, it was left for others to carry out the enterprise he had suggested, and the final establishment of German East Africa was due to the unceasing labour of Dr. Karl Peters, Count Joachim Pfeil, and the gallant Hermann von Wissmann.

In South Africa also, German explorers were extremely active. In 1869 Eduard Mohr undertook his journey to the Victoria Falls, and at the same time Karl Mauch travelled in the Zambesi regions, visited

the Mashonaland goldfields, and discovered the Zimbabwe ruins, those wonderful architectural remains of a long-past civilization. Mauch was one of the most active exponents of German enterprise in South Africa. 'Would to God', he said on his return from the Transvaal, 'that this fine country might soon become a German colony.' Two names, however, stand prominently as evidence of German activity in Africa—those of Gerhard Rohlfs and Gustav Nachtigal. Both were active in all parts of the Continent. The former first attracted attention by his daring and perilous journey from Morocco to Tripoli by Taflet, Tuat, and Ghadames, and at a later period, as will be seen, was active in the Kameruns and Western Africa generally. Like von der Decken and Mauch, Rohlfs dreamed of the time when Germany would be ready to take her place in the African sun. 'Is it not deplorable', he asked in a lecture delivered after his return from the Kameruns, 'that we are obliged to assist, inactive and without the power to intervene, in the extension of England in Central Africa?'—a sentiment which accurately represented the feelings of the then powerful colonial party in Germany. Nachtigal, who had been sent in 1870 with presents from the King of Prussia to the Sultan of Bornu, continued his explorations in the Sudan and connected his discoveries with those of the explorers of the valley of the Nile.

The activities of these and of other German explorers who in the sixties and seventies of the last century were traversing the unknown wilds of Africa found full and ready recognition in the Fatherland, and the movement for geographical exploration received a national impetus in Germany and formed an important factor in solidifying public opinion in favour of the cherished



schemes of the colonial party. Quite apart from the political motives which animated many of its supporters, it was associated with economic interests ; and German citizens, with a keen eye to the commercial possibilities of Africa, recognized exploration as one of the methods of fostering the economic interests of their country. Under the influence of von der Decken, Otto Kersten in 1868 founded one of the most important of the societies for the promotion of German interests abroad—the *Centralverein für Handelsgeographie und Förderung deutscher Interessen im Auslande*. the main objects of which were the study of those countries in which organized German settlements already existed, the promotion of emigration to districts where the conditions were favourable to German settlement, and the establishment of trade and navigation and the *acquisition of colonies*.

But in 1876, through the initiative of Leopold, King of the Belgians, the movement received its greatest impetus. Posing as the friend of the oppressed, the Belgian King summoned an international conference at Brussels for the purpose of discussing the problems connected with the future of Africa. After lengthy discussions, in which Nachtigal, Rohlf, and Schweinfurth took part, a scheme was drawn up for concerted and co-ordinated action with respect to the exploration of the immense districts covered by the term Central Africa ; and the immediate outcome was the foundation of the International Congo Association, which afterwards developed into the Congo Free State and degenerated into one of the most awful instruments for the degradation of mankind and destruction of personal liberty that the world has ever seen.

It would have been thought that, with the opening

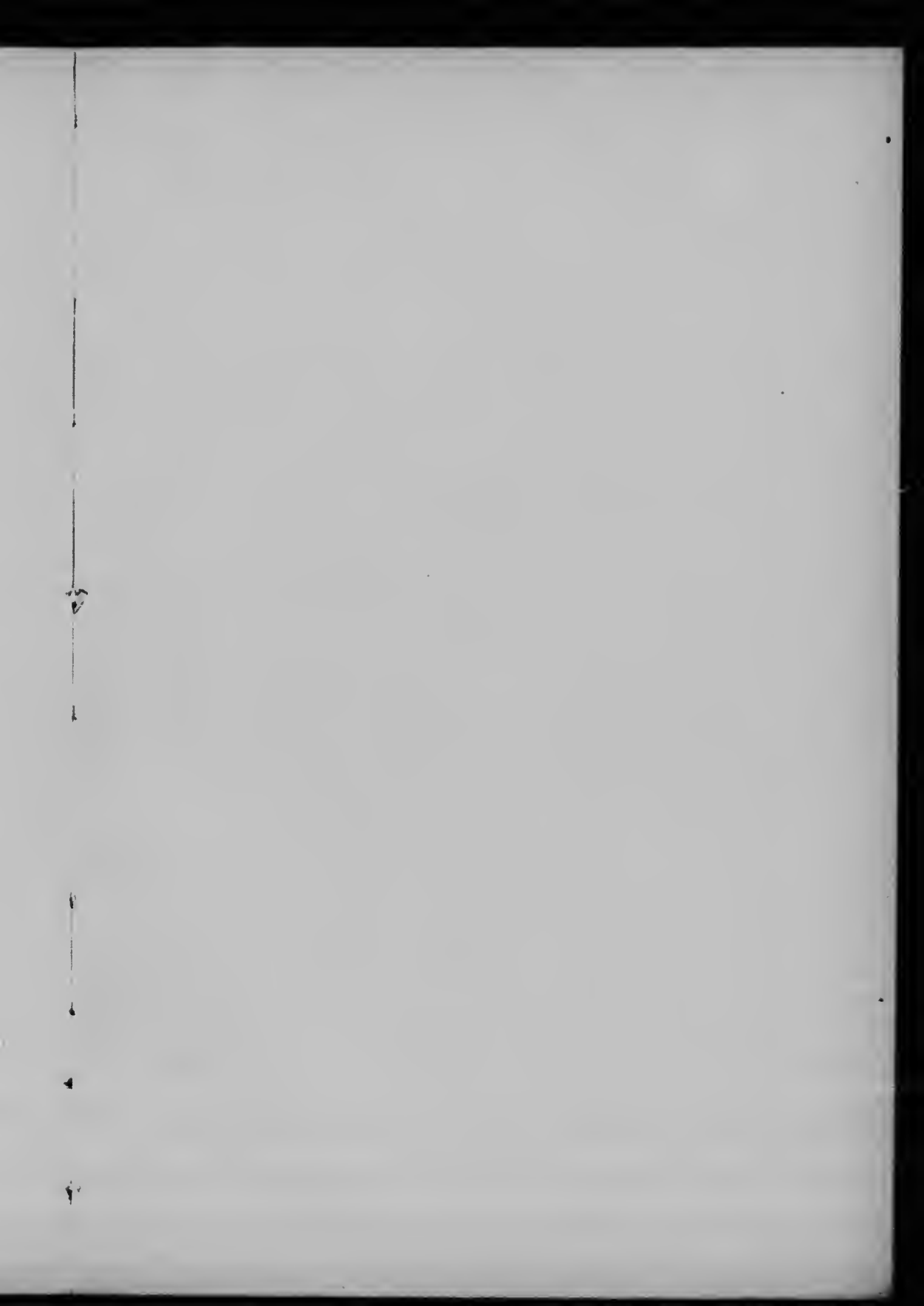
of Africa, opportunities would have been presented for cordial co-operation between the chief European Powers in the great work of civilizing the Continent. Unfortunately, however, the Germans, instead of pursuing an open and straightforward policy, descended to methods of intrigue unworthy of a great nation, whilst Great Britain, and more particularly the mercantile community, were unwilling to welcome the presence of an intruder in regions where British interests were already well established. The result was an unfortunate and undignified scramble for territory, marked with considerable ill-feeling on both sides, which led to a series of misunderstandings and incidents that might have been avoided if the initial steps had been less open to misconstruction. In the founding of colonies there must inevitably be clashing of interests, especially when other nations have acquired or are seeking to acquire territories in the neighbourhood. True statesmanship consists in the reconciliation of these divergent interests and in the conciliation of conflicting claims and apparently irreconcilable desires. At the period in question, there was scarcely any part of the African littoral in which the substantial interests of one or other of the Great Powers were not involved, whilst those of Great Britain, who had been first in the field, were paramount in most of the coastal districts that were worth appropriating. Although there were then many portions of the coast that had not been officially annexed, it was a matter of great difficulty for any Power to acquire fresh territory without paying the most careful attention to the national susceptibilities of some other country. Portugal, resting upon her historic past, sprawled lazily along the African coasts, claiming to exercise control over the most valu-

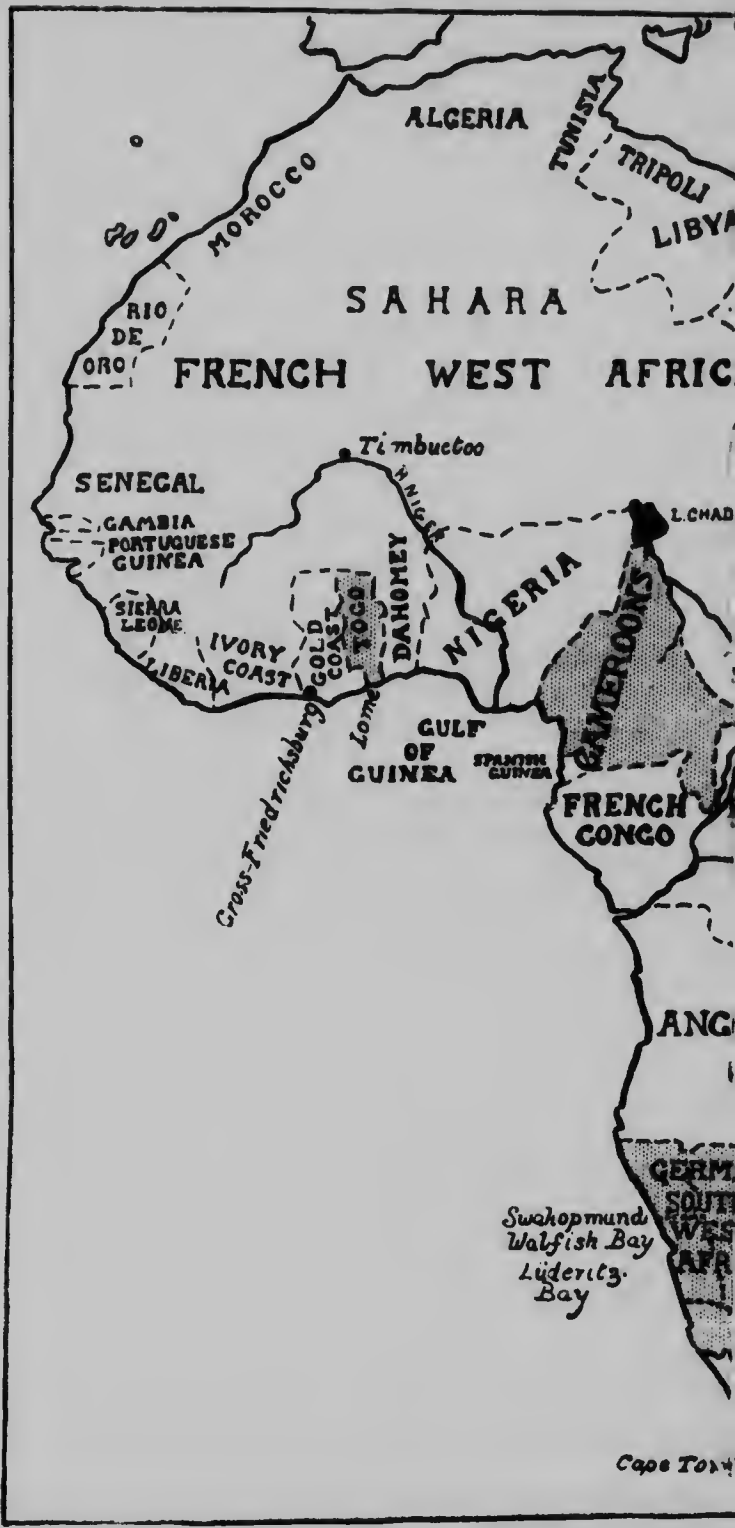
able portions of South Central Africa. From the north of the Congo River to the southernmost limit of Angola on the western littoral, and from the River Rovuma to Delagoa Bay on the east coast, she claimed sovereignty on the strength of past discoveries and present occupations, and attempted to secure the vast interior districts separating the two coasts. The basins of two of the largest waterways—the Congo and Zambesi—were within the regions claimed by Portugal. To the north the Sultan of Zanzibar held a precarious and often disputed tenure of land stretching from the limits of Portuguese territory to the coasts of Soma<sup>li</sup>land, and claimed that his territories, which were in reality only effectively controlled at the ports on the eastern coasts, reached inland as far as Lake Tanganyika. On the western coasts British, French, and German traders were struggling to oust each other from points of vantage, whilst the basin of the Niger and the upper waters of the Nile had fallen under the influence of both France and Britain.

Prior to the acquisition of German South-West Africa, Germans, acting with or without the secret support of the German Government, were intriguing to obtain territory in the neighbourhood of the British colonies in South Africa. Ernst von Weber, writing in 1879, had called attention to the opportunities which existed for obtaining a footing on the Sub-Continent, owing to the supposed affinity of the Boers to the German population of the Fatherland. He uttered in writing the opinion held by a not inconsiderable section of German residents in South Africa, and from the practical standpoint elaborated the theories which were held by Treitschke. Ignoring the possibility of German intervention in Damaraland, he concentrated his atten-

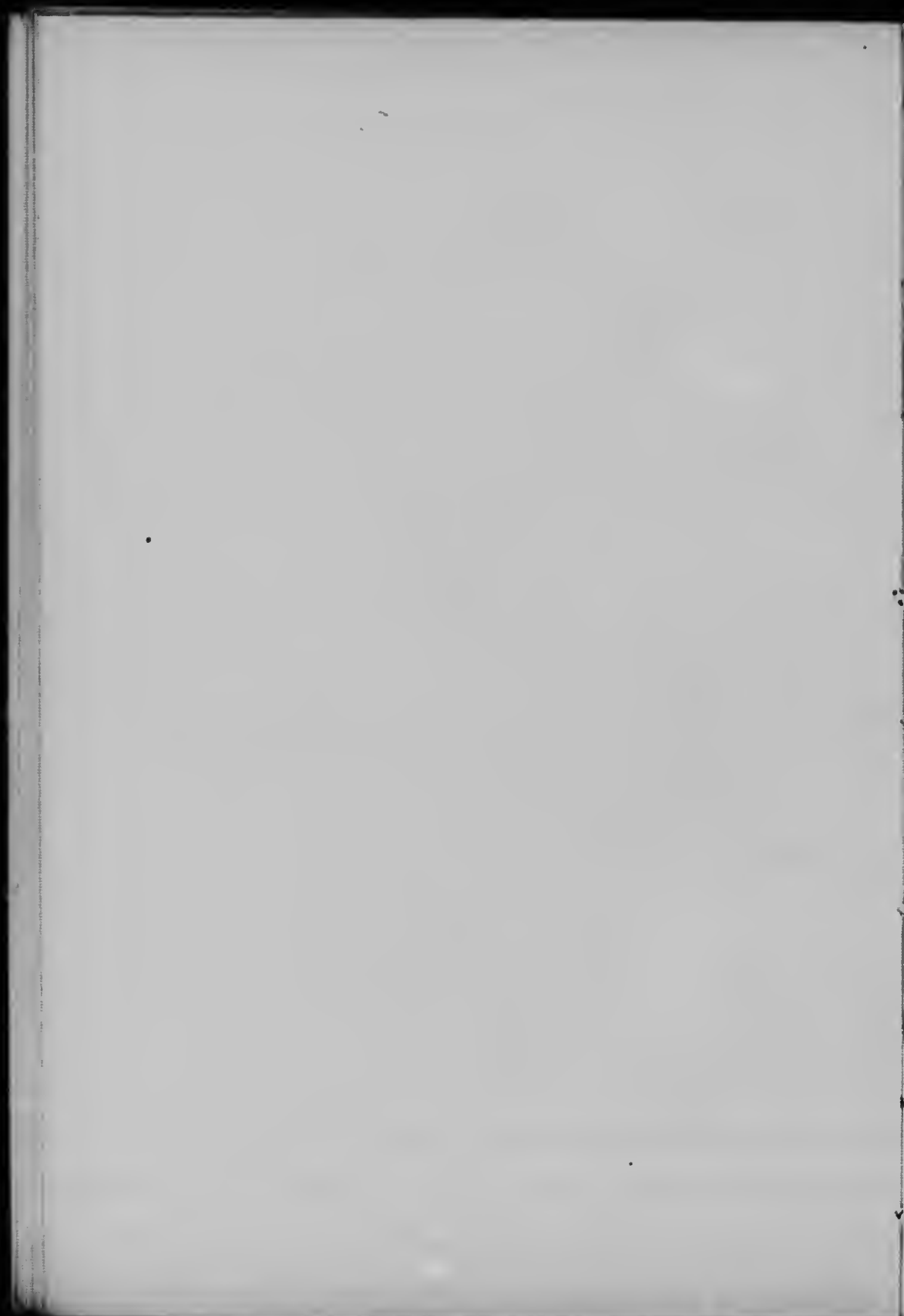
tion upon the opportunity which existed for acquiring a German settlement on the south-east coast of South Africa and of obtaining from Portugal the invaluable harbour at Delagoa Bay—the maritime key to the Transvaal. It has always been a favourite theory with the Germans—a theory which has lately been put into active practice—that the Boer population, smarting under the injustice of British rule, would be prepared to welcome German intervention and to foster, apparently blinded to the real objects of the movement, the establishment of a powerful German colony in their immediate neighbourhood. To put the matter frankly, von Weber and his associates advocated the flooding of South Africa, and especially the Transvaal, with German immigrants, so that eventually the country might become a German province and, when fully ripe, fall into the German net.

In an article in the *Geographische Nachrichten*, von Weber stated that ‘a new empire, possibly more valuable and more brilliant than even the Indian Empire, awaits, in the newly discovered Central Africa, that Power which shall possess sufficient courage, strength, and intelligence to acquire it’; and he continued that, ‘in South-East Africa we Germans have a peculiar interest, for here dwell a splendid race of people nearly allied to us by speech and habits . . . pious folk, with their energetic, strongly marked, and expressive heads, they recall the portraits of Rubens, Teniers, Ostade, and Vaneyck . . . and one may speak of a nation of Afrianders or Low-German Africans which forms one sympathetic race from Table Mountain to the Limpopo. What could not such a country’, he exclaimed, ‘become if in the course of time it were filled with German immigrants? The constant mass immigration of Germans











would gradually bring about a decided numerical preponderance of Germans, and of itself would by degrees affect the Germanization of the country in a peaceful manner.'

At the time of the first British annexation of the Transvaal, Kruger, afterwards President of the South African Republic, and Dr. Jorissen, had made a pilgrimage to Berlin with the object of obtaining German intervention; and at a later period, after the Boer War of 1881, another deputation, consisting of Kruger and Dr. Du Toit, again visited Berlin (1884), where they were most cordially received by Bismarck and the Emperor. At the time of the Jameson Raid similar efforts were made to secure German support. But these intrigues, as is well known, were fruitless. In South Africa itself, however, three determined efforts were made to establish a footing—at Delagoa Bay, St. Lucia Bay, and Pondoland. At St. Lucia Bay, a shallow harbour on the coast of Zululand, Herr Lüderitz, who successfully established himself at Angra Pequena on the opposite coast, endeavoured to found a trading settlement. Through his agent, Herr Einwald, he obtained from Dinuzulu a grant of a considerable tract of territory; but the British Government, forewarned, hoisted the British flag before Lüderitz could bring his intrigues to a successful conclusion. Sir Donald Currie, speaking before the Royal Colonial Institute on April 10, 1888, stated that 'the German Government would have secured St. Lucia Bay and the coast-line between Natal and the possessions of Portugal, had not the British Government telegraphed instructions to dispatch a gunboat from Capetown with orders to hoist the British flag at St. Lucia Bay. It would be easy for me to give particulars', he continued, 'of the

pressure which had to be put on the late Government to secure this result.'

In Pondoland an attempt was made by a Dresden merchant to establish one of the trading settlements favoured by Bismarck; but here again the British Government fortunately successfully intervened. 'You can easily imagine', said Sir Donald Currie, 'what issues would be raised by the introduction of foreign authority in Pondoland, separating as it would the Cape from Natal.'

These attempts and the long series of German intrigues in South Africa were indicative of the determination of Germans to acquire territory in a country which they believed would shortly pass from British control. They led to an embittered feeling between British and Germans in South Africa, and indirectly contributed to the unfortunate relations which were the outcome of the successful attempts of Germany to found colonies in other parts of the Continent.

### III.—HOW GERMANY OBTAINED HER AFRICAN COLONIES

'If Germany is to become a colonizing Power,' said Gladstone in the House of Commons, 'all I say is, God speed her. She becomes our ally and partner in the execution of the great purposes of Providence for the advantage of mankind.' This pious aspiration typified the conciliatory attitude adopted by the Gladstone-Granville-Derby administration after—but not before—Germany had definitely committed herself to a policy of colonial expansion in Africa. Yet it was apparently wrung unwillingly from the British premier; for Granville during the time he had acted as Foreign Secretary had done nothing to facilitate German plans for

acquiring territory in Africa, unless his policy of vacillation and his unwillingness to depart from the dilatory methods of the Foreign Office or to decide upon a forward move in South Africa may be considered as a calculated aid to the German colonial movement. In South Africa, where Germany obtained her first colony, the British Government only advanced the frontiers of British territory when strong and continuous pressure was exerted upon them. Residents well acquainted with the needs of the country were fully persuaded that, if British interests were to be maintained, a strong and vigorous policy of expansion was necessary.

But the British Government were unwilling to sanction an advance, believing that no other Power was likely to seek territory in the neighbourhood and fearing that any forward movement would lead to fresh troubles with the Boers and might bring about a further series of native wars. They had already been called upon to expend large sums of money in the suppression of the Kafir War of 1877, the Basuto War of 1879, and the contemporary war in Zululand. Sir Bartle Frere had indeed written in 1878 to Lord Carnarvon, then Colonial Secretary, that 'you must be master, as representative of the sole sovereign Power, up to the Portuguese frontier, on both the east and west coasts. There is no escaping from the responsibility which has been already incurred ever since the English flag was planted on the castle here. All our difficulties have arisen, and still arise, from attempting to evade or shift this responsibility.' But his warnings were unheeded and no attention was paid to his representations as to German designs upon Damaraland and Namaqualand. The Imperial Government wished to place the responsibility upon the Cape Ministry, who were unwilling to undertake the expense of administering the

territory which was subsequently to pass into other hands.

The attitude of Lord Granville gave Bismarck the opportunity he sought. For some years German missionaries and traders had been operating in Damaraland ; and although they, in common with the natives, had at first petitioned for an extension of British authority over the country, they subsequently and naturally turned to Berlin, where it was felt that their representations would be more sympathetically received. All the British Government had done to meet their wishes had been to sanction the sending of Mr. Coates Palgrave as Special Commissioner to the tribes north of the Orange River. He on his return to Cape Town reported in favour of an immediate annexation. In the meantime, whilst the Cape Government hesitated and whilst the Foreign Office definitely stated in reply to the German Government that British responsibility in Damaraland and Namaqualand was strictly limited to Walfish Bay, the weapon was being forged at Berlin with which the South African oyster was to be forced open. It cannot be doubted that Herr Lüderitz, before establishing his trading settlement at Angra Pequena, now known as Lüderitz Bay, had carefully sounded the German authorities ; whilst it is quite certain that he had the enthusiastic support of a large section of the German colonial party.

It is not possible to describe here the negotiations which led to the hoisting of the German flag in Damaraland.<sup>1</sup> It is sufficient to state that they were unduly prolonged and reflected little credit upon the diplomatic ability of the British Foreign Office. They at once revealed to the world the ability with which Bismarck

<sup>1</sup> A full account is contained in my article 'The First German Colony', in the *Nineteenth Century* for November, 1914.

had turned to German advantage a situation which, but for British procrastination, might have ended very differently. They also demonstrated the strength and intensity of the German colonial movement, and showed that Germany had at length determined to play an important part in the opening of Africa to European civilization. The official announcement that Germany had definitely entered upon the colonial scramble was made at Cape Town on April 25, 1884. Two months later Prince Bismarck defined his policy in connexion with the founding of colonies. Acting on the principle that 'the flag follows the merchant', he stated that, whilst it was not his intention to found provinces, he would extend the protection of the Empire to German trading establishments in territories not already in the occupation of any European Power. 'The whole question of German colonization', he said, 'has necessitated a thorough examination of the subject. He was entirely opposed to the creation of colonies on what he considered the bad system of acquiring a piece of ground, appointing officials and a garrison, and then seeking to entice persons to come and live there.' His policy was to found 'mercantile settlements which would be placed under the protection of the Empire'. Moreover, he complained that he had not been treated fairly by Britain, a feeling which 'was strengthened by the explanations which several English statesmen have given, with the purport that England has a legitimate right to prevent settlements by other nations in the vicinity of English possessions and that England establishes a sort of Monroe Doctrine for Africa against the vicinage of other nations'.<sup>1</sup>

The foundation of German South-West Africa was the

<sup>1</sup> German White Book, June 10, 1884.

signal for an immediate scramble for territory. Even before the official announcement had been made, Dr. Nachtigal, charged with a special mission, owing to 'the evident need felt that the interests of German commerce should not be left to the protection of trading consuls',<sup>1</sup> left Kiel in the gunboat *Möwe*, accompanied by the African traveller Dr. Buchner, in order to hoist the German flag in West Africa. He arrived at the settlement of Little Popo, and after making arrangements with the paramount chief of Togoland declared the country a German Protectorate on July 5, 1884. He then proceeded to the Kamerun country, a district in which British interests were firmly established, and where the two chieftains King Bell and King Acqua had frequently petitioned for British protection, and succeeded in persuading the natives, by means of substantial payments of money, to agree that their country should be placed under German control. When the British consul arrived on July 19, it was to find that he had been forestalled, for the German flag had been flying for five days and the Kamerun colony had been definitely acquired by Germany.

This action, in a country which British traders had long regarded as their own peculiar sphere, aroused keen resentment amongst the mercantile community. British Chambers of Commerce, and particularly those at London, Glasgow, Bristol, and Liverpool, as well as the African Association, passed vigorously worded protests; but Lord Granville was obliged to accept the situation, and on October 23 he wrote that the Government 'being solely actuated by the desire to secure freedom of trade for all countries in the Cameroon district, are far from

<sup>1</sup> *Nord-Deutsche Zeitung*, April 21, 1884.

viewing with distrust the recent movements of German agents', and suggested that 'the Protectorate already acquired by Germany in the neighbourhood of the Cameroons should be extended over the adjoining rivers in a southerly direction'. Lord Granville was aware that continued opposition to German designs would only lead to a close colonial understanding between Germany and France to the ultimate detriment of British interests. At the same time he was unable to pursue a vigorous policy owing to the threatening position of affairs in Egypt.

Britain and Germany were about to advance upon converging lines, and it was apparent that questions of the greatest moment would arise when and if these lines of advance should cross each other. Britain was then establishing herself in Egypt, and the ideal of a great British territory stretching from north to south—an object which Cecil Rhodes had at heart when he worked for the acquisition of the countries to the north of the Transvaal—was incompatible with the secret desire of Germany to establish a Central African empire, with harbours on the western and eastern coasts and occupying the territory that was then being explored in the Congo regions. The idea underlying the prophecy of Gladstone (in 1877) that 'our first site in Egypt, be it by larceny or be it by emption, will be the almost certain egg of a North African empire that will grow and grow . . . till we finally join hands across the Equator with Natal and Cape Colony' appealed with peculiar force to patriotic Britons, but its accomplishment was naturally fraught with grave dangers.

A question of this magnitude could not be settled by founding coastal establishments without eventually leading to international complications. Lord Granville

attempted to checkmate German plans by negotiating a treaty with Portugal and recognizing the claims of that country to the mouth of the Congo ; but Bismarck successfully intervened, and acting on a hint from Lisbon, and in concert with France, he issued invitations to an international conference to consider the whole question involved in the partition of Africa. The British Government, smarting under their initial diplomatic defeat and fearful lest Germany and France should already have come to some arrangement prejudicial to British interests, did not immediately accept the invitation but afterwards agreed to discuss the question with other interested Powers. The celebrated Berlin Conference met under the presidency of Prince Bismarck on November 15, 1884, and after lengthy discussions agreed to a General Act, approved by the representatives of Germany, Belgium, Denmark, Spain, the United States, France, Great Britain, Italy, Holland, Portugal, Russia, Sweden and Norway, and Turkey. The Conference laid down certain rules that should be followed when new territory was acquired in Africa ; recognized the important principle that all occupations on the coast in order to be valid should be effective ; and established the doctrine of 'spheres of influence'—a convenient term that came into use at this period to designate territory which, whilst not precisely under the control of any European Power, was yet of importance as an area of communication with other regions, or whose inhabitants were more or less under European influence, commercial or missionary as the case might be. The decisions of the Berlin Conference at once relieved the diplomatic tension.

Whilst the Conference was sitting, three of the most active workers on behalf of German oversea expansion, Dr. Karl Peters, Dr. Jühlke, and Count Pfeil, were



journeying under false names and as third-class passengers from Trieste to Zanzibar, with the secret object of founding a colony in East Africa. They acted on their own responsibility and with little active encouragement from the German Government. Peters, the leader of the expedition, had at first suggested to Bismarck that they should acquire the Comoros, a group of islands to the north of Madagascar; and when the Chancellor, desirous of maintaining the most friendly relations with France, had warned him that he could not permit any interference with the French 'sphere of influence', Peters had suggested that, as the French had not thought it worth while to fight for the recovery of Metz and Strassburg, they were not likely to do so for the Comoros and Sakalaland. The three associates, however, were determined to secure a new territory for the Empire. Within a few weeks after their arrival at Zanzibar, they had obtained cessions of territory from several native chieftains on the mainland (who were generally quite unaware of the consequences of their acts and in any case preferred unlimited spirits to legal documents), and by means of duly attested papers they acquired a considerable block of country with full rights of sovereignty.<sup>1</sup> The society of which they were the representatives received an Imperial Charter of Protection on February 17, 1885. In the meantime the British Government had become alive to the dangers of the situation, especially when Gerhard Rohlfs was sent to Zanzibar early in 1885, charged with a special mission as Consul-General. During the year British and German expeditions were

<sup>1</sup> The Society for German Colonization (*Gesellschaft für deutsche Kolonisation*) was formed by Dr. Peters, Count Pfeil, and Count Behr-Banddin early in 1884, and afterwards developed into the German East Africa Association (*Ostafrikanische Gesellschaft*).

active in every part of East Africa. No less than eleven German expeditions left Zanzibar for the mainland, and in spite of the opposition of the Sultan secured enormous tracts of territory. After negotiations at Zanzibar, during which Colonel, now Viscount, Kitchener represented the British Government, the territories of the Sultan were defined; and by the important agreement of 1890<sup>1</sup> the boundaries of German and British East Africa were settled so as to include in German territory the fertile district around Mount Kilimanjaro, a country which was also claimed by Britain, whilst Witu,<sup>2</sup> a country to the north of the Tana River, which had been acquired by two Germans named Denhardt, was recognized as within the British sphere. The rights of the Sultan of Zanzibar over the coast lands were also recog-

<sup>1</sup> Under this important agreement the respective British and German spheres of influence in Africa were clearly defined, and the island of Zanzibar was recognized as a British protectorate. It was in recognition of this 'friendly' action of the German Chancellor (Caprivi) that Lord Salisbury made the fatal mistake of ceding Heligoland to Germany, behind the shelter of which her navy is able to remain in comparative safety. Germany had been anxious to secure Heligoland as early as 1884, when certain 'clever people' had suggested to Bismarck that Britain might be willing to exchange it for Damaraland. A suggestion for the cession of Heligoland was actually made by Count Münster, then German Ambassador, to Lord Granville on May 17, 1884. Under this agreement Germany also secured what is known as the 'Caprivi strip', a block of territory stretching inland from the north of German South-West Africa, ostensibly obtained to give the Germans access to the upper waters of the Zambesi, but in reality intended to form a wedge dividing the Bechuanaland Protectorate from Angola and North-Western Rhodesia.

<sup>2</sup> In a memorandum from Count Münster to Lord Granville it was asserted that in the year 1867, Sultan Simba of Witu had requested the Prussian Government, through the African traveller Richard Brenner, to take him under its protection.

nized, although under pressure he was compelled to lease the littoral to the contending parties.

Thus, within less than a year, Germany had obtained four important footholds on the African continent, which by the process of accretion were developed into the enormous territories over which she held undisputed sway until the outbreak of the present war. Her empire in Africa, acquired through the foresight and energy of her merchants and explorers and held owing to the vigorous and spirited action of Bismarck, had an area of 1,028,000 square miles, as large as Germany, Austria-Hungary, France, England, Spain, Portugal, and Italy combined, but nevertheless far smaller in extent than the African possessions of either Britain or France.

#### IV.—THE VALUE OF THE GERMAN AFRICAN COLONIES.

It has frequently been assumed that Germany in acquiring her colonial possessions in Africa only secured territories which other countries had considered more or less worthless. This may be true with regard to German South-West Africa, where the long stretch of desert coast-line—an absolutely sterile belt varying in width between thirty and fifty miles, with only one good harbour at Walfish Bay<sup>1</sup>—had supported the erroneous impression that most of the interior was useless for agricultural purposes; but it is certainly incorrect so far as Togoland, Kamerun, and German East Africa are concerned. By obtaining these three territories Germany secured most valuable tropical storehouses, where the products needed for her growing

<sup>1</sup> Walfish Bay and a small surrounding strip of territory were proclaimed a British possession in 1878 and annexed to Cape Colony in 1884.

industries could be successfully cultivated. It would be idle to suppose that Germany was actuated by philanthropic motives in extending her sway over the native races of Africa. Nor was the idea of some of the leaders of the colonial party, that German colonies would form an outlet for her surplus population, destined to be realized, partly because the colonies in Africa were not suited for any extensive schemes of European settlement, with the exception of South-West Africa, and partly because, owing to the great increase of prosperity in the Fatherland, emigration practically ceased. As a matter of fact the demand for labour increased to such an extent that, instead of sending forth emigrants to settle in her colonies, Germany has actually imported labour from Galicia and other provinces to serve her own industrial needs. For some years immigration into the Fatherland has largely exceeded any loss of population occasioned by emigration. In all the German colonies there were only about 24,000 European inhabitants in the year 1913; and of these over 15,000, including the military garrison, were settled in German South-West Africa. Germany's African possessions, therefore, may be almost exclusively regarded as plantations.

Taking them in their order round the African coasts, the first, Togoland, in spite of its small area of some 33,700 square miles, has long been regarded as a model colony, not only because it produces large quantities of palm-oil and kernels, cotton, rubber, and cocoa, but also because the natives, unlike those of other German colonies, have given little trouble and have been contented and prosperous. The colonial Government has always laid great stress upon the cultivation of indigenous and other products; and the country contains a network of roads which for cheapness and

excellence of construction are unrivalled anywhere in West Africa. Situated between the British colony of the Gold Coast and the French colony of Dahomey, it forms a valuable wedge of territory capable of great economic expansion; for less than one-tenth of the palm-oil that might be obtained is annually collected, whilst not one-quarter of the country has yet been geologically surveyed.

The great territory of Kamerun which stretches from Lake Chad in the north to the Ubangi and Congo rivers in the south, and a large portion of which is contained in the geographical basin of the latter river, is also of great importance as a plantation-colony, being capable of producing vast quantities of rubber, cocoa, palm-oil, bananas, and coffee. The entry of the Germans into this territory was marked by trouble with the natives, and the policy of the Government has not been altogether successful in overcoming this initial set-back. Further along the coast German South-West Africa, stretching from the confines of Portuguese territory to the Orange River, is more suitable for agricultural and pastoral settlement. Here the Germans have built important railways—not without an eye to their strategic importance in the event of an invasion of Cape Colony—but their economic progress has been hampered owing to the fact that the native labour-supply was almost entirely destroyed during the long war with the Hereros, or Damaras, when German methods of warfare were revealed in their most unfavourable aspect. As Professor Bonn, of Munich, has said:—‘In South-West Africa we solved the native problem by smashing tribal life and by creating a scarcity of labour.’ The most conclusive evidence of Germany’s failure to administer this territory for the benefit of its native inhabitants is

furnished by the fact that, prior to the year 1898, the native population was estimated by the then Governor, Colonel Loutwein, to be about three hundred thousand, whereas in 1912 it was estimated at a little over one hundred thousand, of whom the Ovambo, a warlike tribe in the north who have not yet come into active conflict with the Germans, furnished about two-thirds. Prince Bismarck foresaw the possibility of the introduction of too much 'iron' into Germany's dealings with the dependant peoples of her new colonies. In other words, being well aware of the peculiarities of the Prussian bureaucratic mind, he feared that Prussian methods were not quite suited to the sunnier clime of Africa. So far as South-West Africa is concerned, his forebodings have been abundantly justified, for the Damaras and Namaquas were practically destroyed, whilst a pitiful remnant was driven into the fastnesses of the Kalahari Desert, there to die of slow starvation. Nevertheless, German South-West Africa is the only German colony where agricultural settlers, as distinct from owners of large plantations such as are settled in German East Africa and especially in the Kilimanjaro districts, have secured any measure of success. Entirely apart from its agricultural possibilities, the country is rich in minerals, and the discovery of diamonds in 1906 at once gave a decided value to the sterile districts around Lüderitz Bay.

It is in German East Africa, however, that Germany possesses her most valuable African colony. This great country, almost twice as large as the Fatherland, possesses a number of excellent harbours, such as those at Tanga, Dar-es-Salam, Kilwa, and Lindi, and stretches inland to the four great lakes of Victoria Nyanza, Kiwu, Tanganyika, and Nyasa—an incomparable waterway for

the products of the interior. By constructing a railway from Dar-es-Salam, through Tabora, to Kigoma (near Ujiji) on Lake Tanganyika—a railway built at remarkable speed and only recently completed—Germany hoped to tap the rich interior districts and to divert to the eastern coasts much of the agricultural and mineral produce from Katanga, the southern portion of the Belgian Congo. Another railway from Tanga to Moschi is opening out the great agricultural country around the slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro. The mineral wealth of the country is as yet almost entirely undeveloped, although gold, mica, and soda have been found in considerable quantities; whilst the forest and agricultural products are capable of enormous development.

These four colonies, whatever may be their ultimate destiny, are a rich prize of ever-increasing value, and will ultimately form vast economic reserves for the production of the materials needed to feed the European industrial machine. When they and some of our African possessions were acquired, it needed the eye of faith to foresee their economic importance; but no one acquainted with the industrial system of to-day, and able to realize the vast extension of commerce that must occur as the world advances in material civilization, can now fail to understand the importance of Central Africa to the future of mankind. Central Africa, with the western and eastern coasts, will be the prize of the strongest and most fully equipped European nations.

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