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Author(s): Rutherford Alcock

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AFRICAN EXPLORATION FUND.

AUGUST, 1877.

PATRON, H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES.

MEETING AT THE EGYPTIAN HALL, MANSION HOUSE,
JULY 19TH.

WITH a view to making more widely known the objects of the AFRICAN EXPLORATION FUND, the Committee, by permission of the LORD MAYOR, held a Public Meeting at the Mansion House on Thursday, July 19th, at 3 P.M. The objects of the Meeting were fully explained in the following letter addressed by the President to the Editor of the 'Times,' and published in the issue, July 17th, of that paper.

SIR,—On Thursday next, the 19th, a Public Meeting will be held at the Mansion House, the Lord Mayor in the Chair, in aid of the "African Exploration Fund," recently commenced by the Council of the Royal Geographical Society, to promote the continuous and systematic Exploration of the Interior of Africa.

The enlightened efforts of the King of the Belgians to give a fresh impulse to the exploration of Africa—especially the central part of the Continent—and to organise means by which the energies and sympathies of all the civilised nations of the world might be combined in furtherance of a common object, have met a ready response from all the capitals of Europe. The first result of the deliberations of the Conference held at Brussels last autumn, when representatives from all the chief nations and their Geographical Societies took part, was the formation of an "International Commission" for the Exploration and Civilisation of Central Africa. In connection with this it was further determined that each nation willing to co-operate should form National Committees to collect subscriptions for the common object, and send Delegates to the Commission, thus centralising as much as possible the efforts made, and facilitating by co-operation the execution of the resolutions of the Commission.

Belgium was the first to establish a National Committee, and the

appeal made by it, in November last, to the Belgian public for subscriptions, met with great success. At the Meeting held last month, at Brussels, of the International Commission of the African Association, it was reported that, in addition to a capital subscribed for investment, amounting to some 300,000 francs, the interest from which was to be available, the annual income for employment would be over 73,000 francs for 1877, with every probability of increase each succeeding year. From other countries Reports were received that National Committees to co-operate with the International Commission had been formed; in Austria, under the presidency of the Archduke Rudolph, the Prince heritier; in France, President, Count de Lesseps; Italy, President, the Prince of Piedmont, the heir-apparent; in Spain, President, the King; Russia, with the Grand Duke Constantine as President; Holland, President, the Prince of Orange; Portugal, President, the Duke of San Januario; Switzerland, President, M. Bontheliet de Beaumont. At Berlin, in response to the views of the Brussels International Conference, a National Committee was also formed in December last, under the title of the "German African Society," the functions of which will be to carry out the same objects as the International Commission, viz.—1. The scientific exploration of the unknown regions of Central Africa: 2. The opening-up of Central Africa to civilisation and commerce; and 3, as ulterior object, the extinction of the slave-trade. This last, it is to be observed, was also on the programme of the International Conference. As with the Belgian Commission, a leading feature of the German operations will be the establishment of stations, which are to serve partly as bases of operations for travellers, and partly as centres for the spread of civilisation and commerce. The German Emperor has given to the new Society 25,000 marks from funds at his disposal, and hopes are entertained of an annual grant from the Budget. The Cortes of Portugal, some time ago, voted 20,000*l.* for the expenses of an Expedition to the Congo: while the Italian Geographical Society, aided by the Government and the Italian public, has already devoted more than 200,000 francs to enable the Marquis Antinori to carry out successfully his Expedition to the south of Abyssinia, *en route* to Central Africa and the Great Lakes. Thus earnestly, and simultaneously, the work of exploration is being prosecuted, both from the Eastern and Western coasts by several nations, and it cannot be long before many others will be equally actively engaged. A communication from New York has also been received, showing equal willingness to co-operate, and thus combining the efforts of the New with those of the Old World.

The part which Great Britain is to take in this great movement cannot be a matter of indifference to the nation that has hitherto held a leading position in the exploration of Africa, whose travellers have discovered in the present generation the sources of the Nile, and done more than all other nationalities combined to make known to the world the interior of Central Africa and the great Lake region within the last twenty years, as the sketch-map, accompanying the circular of the African Exploration Fund Committee just issued, plainly shows. The commercial and colonial interests and the territorial possessions in Africa of this country are larger than those of any other European Power, while the suppression of the slave-trade and the advancement of missionary labours have been objects of national concern for more than half a century.

It was the natural desire, therefore, of the British members, geographers, and others invited to the Brussels Conference, to take part in the International Commission, and to co-operate with it in furtherance of the excellent purposes set forth in its programme, notwithstanding some obvious difficulties touching international questions and territorial rights. But the Geographical Society could not, by its constitution, enter upon any field of operations other than that of exploration. Commercial enterprise, suppression of the slave-traffic, and missionary or other civilising agencies, will all profit by any progress in systematic and continuous geographical exploration. But these are objects out of the province of a Geographical Society, and must be pursued by independent agencies.

In view of these insuperable obstacles to a combined action with and through the International Commission, it has been determined to move in the same direction, in accord and correspondence with the various national associations and the International Commission at Brussels, in so far as the objects of exploration are common to all, in such manner as to assist mutually, and avoid any waste of force and resources by duplicating the lines of exploration or unnecessary interference. Eventually it may be possible also to contribute to the funds of the International Commission, in further token of sympathy and cordial wishes for the successful attainment of its larger scheme of philanthropic exertion.

The Council, therefore, finally resolved that the best course of action for the Royal Geographical Society to pursue was to assist, by a grant from their own income and other steps, in the establishment of a national fund, to be called the "African Exploration Fund;" this fund to be devoted to the scientific examination of

Africa, the physical features and resources, the best routes to the interior, and all such other matters as may be instrumental in preparing the way for opening up Africa by peaceful means.

To the public the Council and their Exploration Fund Committee naturally appeal for support, since it is only by a command of considerable funds, far beyond the resources of the Geographical Society, that any systematic and continuous exploration can be successfully conducted in Africa. This is the object of the Public Meeting, which will be more fully set forth at the Mansion House on Thursday next by several distinguished speakers, whose interest in a more systematic and effective plan of geographical exploration than has hitherto been possible, and in the results such efforts are calculated to bring about, for the benefit alike of the African race and the civilised world, has induced them to promise their assistance on that occasion.

I am, Sir, yours very truly,

RUTHERFORD ALCOCK.

1, Savile Row, July 16.

To the Editor of the 'TIMES.'

There was a good attendance at the Egyptian Hall, Mansion House, on the day named; the following noblemen and gentlemen being noticed, among others, as present:—His Grace the Archbishop of York, Right Hon. Lord Cottesloe, Sir Harry Verney, Bart., Sir T. Fowell Buxton, Bart., Sir Henry Barkly, K.C.B., Sir Rawson W. Rawson, Mr. S. Morley, M.P., Rev. Dr. Moffat, Mr. Donald Currie, Mr. R. N. Fowler, Mr. Francis Galton, F.R.S., Commander V. L. Cameron, R.N., C.B., Colonel J. A. Grant, C.B., Capt. Foot, R.N., Professor Tennant.

SIR RUTHERFORD ALCOCK, in opening the proceedings, explained that, owing to the detention of the Lord Mayor elsewhere on important duties, he had been requested temporarily to take the Chair himself. He also stated that Mr. Forster, to his great regret, was unable to attend and move the First Resolution, which stood in his name, he having been appointed upon the Committee of Inquiry at Christ's Hospital. He had hoped that Sir Samuel Baker would have been able to be present, but he had written from Devonshire, expressing his regret that, owing to an important engagement, he was prevented from coming to give his views on the subject to the Meeting. They were, however, to be congratulated on the presence of several distinguished travellers and speakers; and he trusted the Meeting would have laid before it so complete a statement, that it would know entirely the aim and scope of the effort that is now being made on the part of the Geographical Society. The object of the Meeting was in effect to call attention to the great movement now in progress all over Europe for the further exploration of Africa, to the present

efforts of the Geographical Society, and also to the importance of Great Britain taking its appropriate part in this great work. The increasing interest of the public, not only in African exploration and in the progress of African discoveries, but in the great results to which these are plainly tending, the Geographical Society has had many opportunities of testing during the past Session. When Captain Cameron came home last year after his marvellous tramp across the whole breadth of Africa, the reception he met with showed what intense interest the public felt in his heroic journey. Mr. E. D. Young, who launched the first steamer on Lake Nyassa, also gave to the Society a paper during the past Session recording what he had seen; as also the Rev. Roger Price, who, with a large South African experience, determined to test the possibility of driving bullock-waggons from the East Coast into the interior, and successfully carried out his experiment. In spite of the terrors of the tsetse fly, he found a practical road up to the highlands of the interior, a distance of 200 miles; and we now see that the highlands and the Lake region may be approached without spending weeks in that malarious belt of low ground that skirts the coast, in which many expeditions have been wrecked, some of the members having died, and others having lost their health. On each of these occasions the greatest interest was manifested, and there was no doubt that few explorations have been so manifestly fruitful in great results as African discoveries. Religion, civilisation, and commerce, are all involved in those explorations, which are, in truth, only the first of a large series of beneficial advances. It is the first step towards the opening up of Central Africa, or of any progress there of civilisation, of commerce, or of any efforts to spread the blessings of Christianity. It was that fact mainly which gave interest to these explorations, and it was on that ground that the Society appealed in this Hall to the greater public beyond, to take into serious consideration how much has been done for the African within the last twenty-five years, and how great are the results which the harvest promises if we only persevere in connection with the great movement now going on throughout Europe. No one can say how much may be achieved in another few years. Not only may the scourge of slavery cease by the influence of legitimate commerce and the progress of civilisation, but a new market may be opened up, of almost unlimited capacity, for our manufactures. Our country has become the great workshop of the world; and this metropolis is the great banking-centre, in which are set on foot enterprises extending to every quarter of the globe. All, however, is dependent very much upon our finding new markets to take our products in exchange. Our power of production is so vast, and goes on increasing so rapidly, that our best hope of continuing that prosperity, which makes us at once so rich and powerful, lies to a great extent in the possibility of opening up the vast regions of Africa, where millions of barbarous or semi-civilised people are ready to become customers, if they see the means of exchanging the products of their own fertile lands for our manufactures. Central Africa is capable of supplying, as Capt. Cameron has told us, the whole world with cotton and sugar, and nearly every other tropical product. All that is required is that there should be, as a first condition, peace—something of security for the fruits of labour. Now, our travellers who have come home of late years have all unanimously told us, that they have passed through many depopulated regions which had been known in Livingstone's time to be populous and full of industrious races, all willing workers, but which districts were now given over to the jungle and the wilderness, simply on account of the massacres that take place from year to year, in the slave raids made by Arabs and others, at a cost, it has been estimated, of from 50,000 to 100,000 lives annually.

Some of the narratives that we have heard are too horrible to contemplate

without an effort to put an end to such atrocities. One he remembered distinctly, when Dr. Livingstone was watching a great market on the banks of a river, where were congregated a large number of men, women and children, who had brought their produce in order to exchange it. Suddenly shots were heard. Some of these Arab slave-hunters had fired in among the unoffending people. All their produce was thrown down, and there was a great stampede; the Arabs kept firing volleys, and even shot them in the river while they attempted to escape. There was a great slaughter, and they probably captured 50 or 100, after slaying five or ten times that number. It is in this way slave-hunts were conducted. Industry and cultivation were impossible where there was no security. We are assured by all travellers that it only requires the presence of a few Englishmen and others—who have but one desire, which is to carry into the interior the benefit of civilisation in a humane and Christian spirit—to develop industry, and improve the condition of those naked savages, at the same time that they take into consumption that which we have in superabundance. Surely no Christian nation, apart from mercantile or commercial considerations, can possibly have a more powerful incentive to earnest action,—and if all the other nations of Europe are moving, as they are now, in this direction, and see sufficient motive, both in a philanthropic and commercial point of view, to take such an active part, Great Britain, which has hitherto taken the lead in everything connected with the African people and African discoveries, cannot be the only nation to remain behind. We must, however, have public support and sympathy; because this is a national concern. The King of the Belgians, with his usual enlightened philanthropy, last autumn collected the chief geographers of all nations, and travellers in Africa, in order to consult with them as to how the whole of the civilised world could best combine in a great philanthropic effort to put down the slave-trade, and to open up Central Africa to commerce and civilisation. The result has been the formation of national committees and associations in nearly every capital in Europe. There has been a hearty response from St. Petersburg to Lisbon; large sums of money have been contributed and are now being daily subscribed. The Emperor of Germany has given from funds at his disposal 25,000 marks. Belgium alone, in loyal response to its sovereign, immediately raised a capital of 300,000 francs, and has provided an increasing income, which already reaches nearly 75,000 francs. In Spain, the King himself took the lead, and determined, if necessary, to undertake some expedition, even at his own expense, if he could not find funds from among his people. In Portugal and France, and even in the United States of America, there has been a cordial and hearty promise of co-operation. The object of the appeal now made by the African Exploration Committee is to induce the British nation and the public throughout the British Empire to recognise the importance of this movement. Its simultaneous and generous character ought to show that we, who have chiefly by our discoveries opened up the central regions of Africa, only require a little further perseverance to have tramroads and access to the great inland seas. Mr. Price, with his bullock waggons, is only the pioneer of tramroads and railroads. There is already a scheme for a telegraphic line through Africa, from north to south. The Khedive of Egypt has established one as far as Khartum, and has had a survey prepared to carry it on to Gondokoro, and the vicinity of the Victoria and Albert Nyanzas. In the southern colonies we have a telegraph up to the edge of the Transvaal, which, now that it forms part of the British Empire, will soon see an extension of the line. There is thus nearly two-thirds of the work done, and it only requires a continuous effort to unite the two termini, and then Cape Colony and all intervening stations and points would be in communication with each other and Europe. This was no speculative dream, but a sober reality, lying straight before them. For what had been done in the last

quarter of a century by desultory or isolated and uncombined efforts, leads us to form well-founded hopes of what may be done in the future by more systematic effort and organisation. When Dr. Livingstone commenced his career as a discoverer, after being driven from his Mission Station by the Boers, the whole map from the upper portion of the Nile nearly to the Cape Colonies, with the exception of the coast, was a blank. Since that time not only have the sources of the Nile been discovered by Burton, Speke, and Grant, who have done so much to make their names illustrious as travellers, but Captain Cameron has traversed from east to west, and made a journey almost unexampled in the history of exploration. And there is reason to believe from Cameron's late accounts, that when we further pursue our explorations, and know what is the course of the Congo and Lualaba, there may be a means of uniting, by a canal, the great watercourses from the Eastern Coast to the Atlantic. Surely these were great and worthy objects of national concern, and such as are fully deserving of public sympathy and support! But it is not reasonable to expect that the public, or even this great metropolis of the world, with all its vast interests connected with commerce and the colonies, should move in the matter until they were fairly and fully brought before them. The African Exploration Fund Committee naturally came first, therefore, to the City of London, in order to feel the great pulse of the nation, especially in connection with the large commercial, colonial, and maritime interests that are involved in this plan of exploration. We had become great and powerful, chiefly by our commerce and our colonies, and it was only by keeping steadily in view the means of further development, and by finding new markets for our manufactures, that we could hope to maintain the position we now hold.

Sir RUTHERFORD ALCOCK concluded by moving the following Resolution:—

That the commercial interests of this country are to a large extent involved in the development of intercourse and legitimate trade with the outports to the fertile but little-known regions of Central Africa; and therefore that the scheme of thorough exploration proposed by the African Exploration Fund Committee, deserves the warmest support of this Meeting as powerfully tending to secure that end.

Commander V. L. CAMERON, in seconding the motion, said, from his experience of Africa he had found it to be one of the most fertile countries in the world. There was an archipelago in the East called the Spice Islands, but Africa might be designated a spice continent. Down the valley of the Lualaba he had walked for a long distance under the shade of nutmeg-trees, and the ground was literally covered with nutmegs, which were not like those grown in Ceylon, but were really useful as articles of commerce. He had also picked up a few on the eastern shores of Lake Tanganyika. Rice, corn, and all the products of a tropical country could be grown, he might say, in all the districts if there was proper cultivation. On very many of the high plateaux wheat had been cultivated to a certain extent by the Arabs, and the grain which was produced there might be exported from the East Coast of Africa to our Indian dominions, and this would in a great measure obviate those Indian famines of which so much had been heard. In Africa there was generally a much greater amount of produce than the people could possibly consume. A great deal was heard about the embarrassment of armies, and the great difficulty

there was in feeding them; but in many of the comparatively barren countries in Africa it was a common thing for large caravans to pass through a district with 4000 or 5000 inhabitants, who, without any idea of commissariat, could easily provide provisions for a week or ten days for all that passed through. As the goods, however, that were given in exchange had to be carried on the men's shoulders, the price of the transport was greater than in civilised countries. This showed the power of maintaining life in Africa. There was also an ivory and a copal trade at Zanzibar, and there was coffee not only at the West Coast, but it was growing wild in the centre of the country. In 1875 the exports of india-rubber amounted to 40,000% ; in 1876, 100,000% ; and this year they were expected to reach 250,000% . This was owing to the Sultan of Zanzibar having diverted some of the capital of his subjects and the people residing in his dominions from the slave-trade. All these articles of commerce would no doubt be brought within easy reach if some systematic plan of exploration were resorted to. This systematic exploration must be one of the first steps towards the opening up of the continent to missionary work, to commerce, and to civilisation. All these three should go hand-in-hand, and there should be no jealousy between the missionary and the trader, because as the missionary forced his way inwards, and increased the wants of the people by educating them, so would the trader find a more ready market for his wares. The slave-trade was something more horrible than anybody could possibly imagine. He had seen an unfortunate woman, unable to walk, lashed to a pole, and being carried towards the home of her purchasers; but as those who carried her thought they would not be able to do so much farther, they threw her, still lashed to the pole, on the roadside, ready to take her chance of being devoured by wild beasts. He had known of ten or twelve villages, with a population of 500 or 600, being depopulated in order to furnish a wretched string of 50 or 60 slaves, and all the rest of the inhabitants of these villages, if not killed there and then, had to fly into the jungles and die of starvation, or fall a prey to the wild beasts. This was the sort of thing which went on from day to day. The question of domestic slavery, therefore, was one which must be approached with some caution. It was ingrained in the whole of the native population of Africa, and would only die out by the gradual education and civilisation of the masses. The slave-trade ought to be a source of burning shame to every civilised being who did not help to put it down by systematic exploration. When the roads were opened, and bullock carts introduced as Mr. Price was doing now, the men would no longer be turned into beasts of burden, and in a few years there would be tramways up to the great lakes; and the unparalleled system of water-communication in the centre of Africa being utilised, the whole of the interior of the continent would be opened up to civilisation and trade. While at home there was depression in the maritime and commercial world, there were in Africa—one of the richest producing countries in the world—besides its vegetables, gold and diamonds, silver and copper mines, and it merely wanted enterprise to go into the centre of Africa to get them. The natives, if they saw any chance of adopting a settled form of living, would be only too glad to do so, and in two or three years it was possible to form a nucleus, round which would gather a large and settled population. Even the slave-traders, when they settled in the interior for two or three years, formed the centre of a large settled population whom they are wise enough not to disturb, because they furnish them with men and food to enable them to go on their slave-hunting raids. But if the centre was proceeded to direct, and a station was there formed with a certain code of laws to govern it, there would immediately be found a large native population. This showed that many of the stations that might be formed for the sake of systematic exploration, would be almost immediately self-supporting. At the same time the commencement of the work was necessarily a costly one. He called upon the

Meeting to support the motion, and to do their best to render it a practical success.

Vice-Admiral E. OMMANNEY, as a representative of the Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, which numbers over 3000 members, wished to express their desire to aid in promoting the movement. In the African Section of the Society of Arts, a series of valuable papers had been read by a number of London and Liverpool gentlemen, all showing the great desire they had to enter into commercial transactions with the interior of Africa. The missionary and the traveller had already done their duty, but he thought the missionary would soon come to a standstill unless he was backed up by the merchant and the agriculturist. With civilisation the African requires to be taught habits of industry, the missionary should be accompanied by the mechanic with a view to promote the great object of improving the African.

The LORD MAYOR, who at this juncture entered the room and took the Chair, put the Resolution to the Meeting, which was unanimously adopted.

His GRACE the ARCHBISHOP OF YORK moved :

That the history of the Slave Trade during the last three centuries, and the crimes yearly perpetrated in its maintenance at the present day, render it imperative on all nations who have ever profited by this trade to adopt the most effective means for its suppression ; an essential preliminary to which is a systematic effort, such as is now proposed, to obtain further information regarding the less known regions of Central Africa, and ascertain the best routes thereto from the coast.

He referred to the successful efforts that had been made by England to suppress the slave-trade generally, and said that, on the whole, the West Coast of Africa was free, in consequence of the endeavours of England, from the curse which had once devastated it. It was not so, however, on the East Coast, for, after a hundred years' expenditure of toil and treasure, he was obliged to state that at the town of Quiloa, not far from Zanzibar, there were exported annually about 20,000 slaves, which were brought from the west side of Lake Nyassa. Having described the mode in which the slave-trade was carried on, he stated that for every thousand slaves, arrived at their destination and set to labour, 1450 perished on the way, apart from the torture that was inflicted upon those who were preserved. There was a certain treaty between this country and the Sultan of Zanzibar, by which, although the slave-trade was abolished, slavery was recognised as a domestic institution ; but, without urging any private sentiments of his own, he thought that the less this country had to do in future with such treaties the better. A certain number of slaves had to be provided every year to supply the needs of the territory of the Sultan, and the number required for that purpose might not possibly amount to 4000, or even half that number, and therefore if 20,000 were exported from Quiloa under the treaty, the remaining 16,000 went elsewhere, and were exported in defiance of the other part of the treaty, which forbade slavery upon the seas. How was this to be dealt with ? He thought that the line that was being adopted was at least a thoroughly practical one, namely, the opening up of roads throughout Africa. It was a country full of

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fertility and riches, and if commerce could be planted there, the slave traffic would wither away of its own accord. It was necessary that a practical nation like Great Britain should have fuller information as to the country they were dealing with. They should not stop short until the continent of Africa was traversed in all directions by great highways. It would thus give up all its riches, and the commerce of London would not fail to profit greatly by such a result; and on the other hand it would receive freedom and justice, which would become the law of these dark communities, and the crimes which now offended Heaven so grossly would disappear before the light which the explorers would be able to carry in their hands.

Sir T. FOWELL BUXTON said he had great pleasure in seconding the Resolution, because he felt that it contained within it the doctrine that it was the duty of all civilised nations to join together, as far as may be, not only in putting an end to the slave-trade, which had been so long a grievous disgrace to the globe, but in introducing civilisation and honest commerce where nothing but rapine and ruin had prevailed. It was worthy of remembrance that along the Eastern Coast of Africa the slave-trade had not at all times prevailed. When the Portuguese first surrounded the Cape and extended their explorations to the north, they did not find any savagery prevailing, but a succession of flourishing towns filled with inhabitants, carrying on a large and flourishing trade with the coasts of India, Arabia, and Persia. In course of time, however, in consequence of the slave-trade which was by them introduced, that state of prosperity was destroyed, and for many years past there had been but little legitimate trade in that district. He could not help thinking, however, that that state of prosperity was about to be re-established, and it would be re-established, if at all, by the concurrent exertions of Europeans endeavouring to introduce higher thoughts and ideas to the natives, and at the same time the advantages of legitimate commerce. It had already been brought to notice by Sir Bartle Frere that there were round the coast a great number of Indian traders dealing with European traders, and who were perfectly prepared to take the part of middlemen. He could not but hope that the figures as to the loss of life which attended the slave-trade were rather those which were true a few years ago, and that they were not true at the present time. He thought it must be acknowledged that the Government had done a great deal in the past towards the suppression of the slave-trade. They had maintained for many years a large number of ships, and had exerted themselves by the arrangement of treaties and by placing various authorities along the coast. He thought the hearty way in which the treaty had been carried out by the Sultan of Zanzibar, and the great services in this respect that had been performed by Sir Bartle Frere, ought everywhere to be acknowledged; and to Consul-General Dr. Kirk was due very much of the measure of success which had attended the efforts of the Government. The missionary societies had also done their part, and, while not neglecting their own great work, had done a great deal of sheer material labour, which must tend to the civilisation of the countries to which it was applied. They were at present engaged in the very kind of exploration for which the assistance of the public was now asked. One party had reached the great Victoria Lake; another party was on the point of reaching Tanganyika, with the intention of establishing a civilised settlement on the shores of those lakes. They had already constructed over 100 miles of road, and the time was not far distant when there would be steamers plying up and down, and an impulse would be given to everything that would tend to legitimate trade and the spread of civilisation. He thought the time had now come when the commercial interests should do their part also in assisting to open regular communications into the interior of Africa, as such a communication would be of great benefit to the commercial interests of the whole of England.

Dr. MOFFAT, in speaking to the Resolution, alluded to the long connection he had had as a missionary with the interior of Southern Africa, and pointed out the claims of the Royal Geographical Society to be heard on such a subject, owing to the important part it had played in opening up the interior of Africa. He described the country, in which he had lived so long, as being very populous and fertile, and the inhabitants as being intelligent, capable of being taught and of teaching others, and of rising in social well-being. There were those who held that civilisation should come first, and evangelisation afterwards; but he held the opposite view, and thought the Gospel should be introduced wherever the Royal Geographical Society had laid open the country. There were missionary stations connected with the Bechuana Mission, through which passed 250,000*l.* worth of European manufactures every year, and this was the result of missionary labour, and of the efforts of the Royal Geographical Society.

Dr. LEARED, who had lately returned from a visit to the Court of Morocco, said that that country and its position in relation to the exploration of Africa attracted far less attention than it deserved. This arose mainly from the well-known fanaticism and desire for isolation of the Moors. He believed that if a well-organised caravan of from one to two hundred members, officered by Englishmen, was sent from Morocco to Timbuctoo, a vast accession would be made to science and civilisation in general, and that it would tend to the suppression of an extensive slave-trade. Such an expedition would not be very costly, and might, by means of trade, be made partly self-supporting. It was declared by people in Morocco that the Sultan would never allow a caravan of the kind to leave his dominions. But when the matter was brought under his Majesty's notice, he not only offered no opposition, but issued an edict to ensure Dr. Leared's safety wherever his Majesty's power reaches.

The Resolution was then put and carried *nem. con.*

Mr. S. MORLEY, M.P., moved,—

That this Meeting views with satisfaction the continuous and earnest efforts of the several Missionary Societies in this country, following in the footsteps of Livingstone, to spread the humanising influence of Christianity in Africa by the establishment of permanent Mission Stations in the distant interior, and considers the scheme of the African Exploration Fund Committee to be a powerful auxiliary, as tending to open up new fields for their labours.

In doing so he expressed a hope that the citizens of London would respond to the appeal made by the Royal Geographical Society. Fresh markets were wanted owing to the excessive competition that now existed among European manufacturers. There could be no doubt that if highways were opened up in the interior of Africa, and the means of easy communication were found, there would be a large increase in the demand for our manufactures in that country, and there would be more facilities for exporting African products. These were motives not only for giving expression to mere sentiment or sympathy, but for subscribing liberally to the scheme. He believed that commerce ought to be the forerunner of the missionary. He meant by that that the means of communication ought to be pushed through the energy and perseverance and determination of British traders, so that there might be an easy access for those who went on a higher mission—that of spreading, not the

interests of mere denominational churches, but the purifying and refining influence of Christianity. He thought that the investment they were called upon to make would be largely productive of good in many ways, and he was ready himself to take his share in the undertaking. By letting in light into the centre of Africa, an end would soon be put to the deeds of darkness which so long had distressed all the friends of humanity. He did not wish to push forward his name unduly, but he would gladly subscribe 50*l.* a-year so long as the Society continued its work.

Mr. E. HUTCHINSON (Secretary to the Church Missionary Society) seconded the Resolution. He said with regard to the opening up of Africa, Missionary Societies were taking possession of the eastern portion of the interior, and they were already at work. At the present moment he had reason to believe that one hundred miles of good road had actually been cut, through the agency of the Church Missionary Society, from the coast up to the highlands of Eastern Africa; such a road as would permit the passage of the bullock-waggons which he hoped would soon follow, accompanied by Mr. Price, the missionary of the London Missionary Society. The London Missionary and Church Societies had in an amicable way agreed to divide the land between them. The former were taking Lake Tanganyika and the central parts lying around it, and would probably include the Lualaba and the interesting region Captain Cameron had alluded to. The Church Missionary Society were to take possession of the Victoria Nyanza and the Albert Nyanza. For this purpose a party had been sent out, and as it had been held for some considerable time that the making of a good road across that portion of the African continent, which was a region of swamp and malaria and fever, was a necessary preliminary, not only for missionary work, but for the opening up of the interior of Africa, the Church Missionary Society considered they were justified in apportioning part of the sum of 15,000*l.*, which was placed in their hands for the purpose of making this road. They would offer it to the Geographical Society, to the London Missionary Society, and to all those who would penetrate Africa in the spirit of the present scheme. Some of the party had reached Victoria Nyanza, and had launched probably the first steamboat that had ever rested on its waters. Their presence would, he hoped, give support to King M'Tesa of Uganda, to stand up against the oppressions of Egypt. It seemed to him that the Meeting was called upon to review and express its pleasure in the work of Missionary Societies; and on that account it would be interesting to know that there was one society able to grapple with Africa from west to east. Referring to the west side of the continent, he said that, under the auspices of Bishop Crowther, the Church Missionary Society hoped to penetrate the other part of the continent. In order to do this, they had given orders for the construction of a steamer to carry their mission to the Upper Niger or Binue, and from thence the attempt could be made to penetrate to its sources; and if their theory was correct, that would bring them to within one hundred miles of the spot where Livingstone left Lualaba. He might give, as an example of the shrewdness and activity of the missionaries of the Church of England, the trade which was now carried on at Lagos. Missionary Societies and missionary agencies were at this moment exerting on behalf of the victims of the East African slave-trade that kind of protectorate which England formerly delighted to exercise, and the Christian Missionary Society had agreed to devote some of their money in feeding and clothing those whom the Government had put into their hands as rescued from the slave-trade. On the part of the Missionary Societies, he could say that they looked with pleasure and thankfulness upon the great movement. Wherever the geographer went and could show a fair field of labour, those who took upon them the missionary calling would not be slow to accept the challenge and to follow in their wake. On the West Coast they had to deal with the curse of rum and gunpowder everywhere, and what

Missionary Societies earnestly wished was that such an association as the one contemplated should take into its hands, and guide and lead the introduction of trade and commerce, and enterprise and geographical research, wherever it went into Africa.

Mr. LOVELL said he had had thirty-eight years' experience in Africa, and had visited and traded with every settlement from the river Gambia down to the West and South Coast. He cordially agreed with the object of the Meeting, but gave it as his opinion that it would be impossible for any commerce to be carried on in the interior of Africa without Government aid and protection.

The Resolution was then put and carried,

Sir H. BARKLY proposed :—

That the opening up of Central Africa by Geographical exploration, especially on its Eastern side, is of great importance to our South African Colonies, and our possessions in Western India, as having for one of its prospective results a large development of commercial activity between the respective countries.

He said that from his experience, as Her Majesty's representative in South Africa, he was convinced of the great importance, in a commercial point of view, of opening up the interior of Africa. The exports from this country to South Africa had of late years very considerably increased, owing mainly to the discovery of diamonds, and the annexation of the Diamond Fields; but it was perhaps not generally known how large a proportion of the goods that were sent up to the Diamond Fields found their way into the remote interior by means of traders. Griqua-land had become one of the greatest emporiums of native commerce, and it was estimated that already there were annually sent out from that centre goods to the value of half-a-million sterling. That trade had nothing to do with the finding of the diamonds; but he believed that the trade would increase as British influence extended further and further towards the interior, and peace and order were established. The hoisting of the British flag on the Transvaal he considered as an event of national importance. Great Britain had thus extended her permanent authority beyond the tropical line, and with that authority he felt sure that a rapid increase of civilisation, commercial activity and greater facilities for geographical exploration were sure to follow. One of the first results would be to connect Pretoria with Cape Town by electric telegraph, which, doubtless, would eventually be extended to Livingstonia. He was glad to observe that one of the recommendations of the Geographical Society was to connect the Gold Fields, by crossing the Zambesi River with Lake Nyassa. So far as the tribes south of the Zambesi River were concerned, he thought there would be no difficulty in obtaining their assent and assistance in protecting the line. The principal chiefs had been in the habit of communicating with him, as Her Majesty's High Commissioner, either for the purpose of forming close alliances or of being brought under British rule; and now that the Transvaal had been annexed, and Sir Theophilus Shepstone, whose name was known and respected throughout all Southern Africa, had the administration of the Government, he thought there would be no difficulty in getting them to accede to any proposal that might be made to them. With regard to the tribes north of the Zambesi he could not speak, but from travellers who had been there recently he had every reason to believe that our influence was very considerable and would rapidly extend. No doubt as long as the slave-trade existed obstacles would

be thrown in the way by interested parties; but he earnestly hoped that the days of that accursed traffic were over, and of this he thought they might be perfectly confident that as the British frontier advanced the slave-trade would recede.

Colonel J. A. GRANT, in seconding the Resolution, said that the account given of the natives of the south by Sir Henry Barkly was very encouraging to him (Colonel Grant), who had seen the people in the north. The races he found from the Eastern Coast to the Victoria Lake were always willing to allow travellers to pass through their country who paid taxes. If proper men, accustomed to deal with natives, were selected, undoubtedly great benefit would result, not only to Africa but also to England and Europe, by opening up the great trade routes which were now hidden. The most important route, as Sir H. Barkly had stated, was from the Gold Fields right up to the north, leading to the country which Captains Burton and Speke were the first to enter from the east, and would branch off to Lake Tanganyika. The ridge extending from the Gold Fields was very lofty, being some 4000 and 6000 feet above the level of the sea, and the whole region was a splendid one. The second and almost next important route would be to the north end of Nyassa, continuing on to the most southern end of Lake Tanganyika. Another route was along the mountain range near the coast. A few travellers had gone through the mountain passes, but it was desirable to know how near the mountains approached the sea, and how far they receded from it, in order that high elevated posts might be fixed upon as future settlements, should they be required. Afterwards two or three other routes might be found to the Victoria Nyanza. The whole of the country required to be explored in order to find out the most healthy points where people might settle, and where steamboats might be placed to navigate each one of the lakes and collect the vast products of their shores. The natives were quite ready to barter with any one who would deal with them fairly and honestly. Wherever he and those who accompanied him went, the people along the route evinced great curiosity in seeing them, and showed cleverness and tact in the management of their affairs. They would, however, be greatly improved if they were taught agriculture, and the construction of wheeled conveyances, as cattle abounded. They only raised sufficient crops for themselves and families, and did not know what it was to trade in the numerous products of the interior. With regard to the telegraphic line proposed by Mr. Kerry Nicholls, as far as he (Colonel Grant) was aware, the people were perfectly willing that it should be constructed; and if the chiefs were subsidized, they would not only protect the line, but they would punish, probably execute, any one who attempted to destroy it. Sir Samuel Canning, the eminent engineer, had told him that there appeared no physical difficulty: the only difficulty was that of finance. At present there was no telegraphic communication from the Cape of Good Hope until the Cape Verde Islands were reached, and it took fifteen days to communicate from there to the Cape of Good Hope. If the Transvaal were to bring up their line to the Limpopo, the distance from that to Gondokoro would be 1500 miles, or a cost of 230,000*l.* for a single line of telegraph, against which there was at present an annual tax of 200,000*l.* for keeping a fleet of vessels upon the East Coast for the suppression of slavery. If a through line of telegraph were established, the Government would be able to strike at the root of all slavery, and save, not this annual outlay alone, but also be the direct means of saving the lives of at least one-third of the poor people who are captured as slaves in the interior. The Africans were really a fine people, and all who joined in this great effort to benefit our fellow-creatures by extending education to them would confer a substantial boon on the human race.

Mr. KERRY NICHOLLS, in supporting the Resolution, gave a detailed account of the scheme for the proposed line of telegraph overland from Egypt to the

Cape of Good Hope, as laid before His Majesty the King of the Belgians by Colonel Grant, Mr. Arnold, and himself at the Geographical Conference held at Brussels in September 1876. Beyond the advantages which would result to South Africa from the construction of this line, and the benefits which would accrue to the development of systematic exploration in Central Africa, the advantages and benefits that would result to the native races would be unbounded, for not only would the line form a powerful civilising agent, but it would at the same time serve as a very effective barrier against the slave-trade. England had a great part to play in the development and civilisation of Africa, and he could not but think that that portion of the continent selected by the Committee as the scene of its operations formed the keystone to the whole fabric. The Victoria Nyanza, Tanganyika, and Nyassa Lakes, by reason of their favourable situation and the undoubted advantages they afforded for extended water-communication, must eventually become the chief centres of settlement and trade. It was for the people of England to say whether the great work of the Exploration Committee would be consummated, and he did not hesitate to assert that those who supported the Committee in their endeavours would not only confer a great benefit upon this country, but a lasting blessing upon countless millions of the human race.

The Resolution was put and carried.

On the motion of Sir RUTHERFORD ALCOCK, a vote of thanks was accorded to the Lord Mayor for the use of the Egyptian Hall, and for his kindness in taking the Chair.

Mr. DONALD CURRIE proposed a vote of thanks to Sir Rutherford Alcock, which was unanimously carried.

Sir RUTHERFORD ALCOCK, in acknowledging the compliment, expressed a hope that, as a result of the Meeting, the aim and scope of the Geographical Society in regard to the scheme would be made widely known throughout the Empire, and that no nation in Europe or elsewhere would be allowed to assume the lead which England had so long taken with so much honour and credit in African Exploration. He trusted that the British nation, as well as the Royal Geographical Society, would always be ready and willing to co-operate with other societies which were aiming at the same common objects of abolishing the African slave-trade, and conferring upon Africa the blessings of civilisation and commerce.

The proceedings then terminated.