

WILL AFRICA PAY?

Africa and her future is a problem that until a few years ago seemed as difficult as the untying of the Gordian knot. But slowly it has been approaching solution, and to-day, to be a Europe in development, the "Dark Continent" needs but time.

Although America has been known to the world but four hundred years, all inhabitable parts are well colonized, and the northern part of the continent, in particular, has reached a high stage of civilization. Africa, while as old to man's knowledge as Europe, is still in the infancy of development. The chief reason for this is the lack of penetrating seas and bays on which travel may be carried. Even hardy explorers have a decided aversion to traversing pathless wastes about which they know nothing, but if the exploration can be made on water, this element of dread is removed. Another difficulty is the strip of low, sandy, miasmatic coast land forming a dread gauntlet which the traveler must run before he can reach the interior.

But recent explorations have proved that the griffins so jealously guarding the "Dark Continent" may be considered, in the light of science, mere creatures of the imagination. Stanley has found that much of the trip to the interior may be performed on water; the great forests have been robbed of their horrors; the dreaded African fever has been deprived of many of its terrors, and as indicative of the fact that the era of civilization is dawning, a line of missionary posts is being established along all the principal routes of travel.

Another fact, significant because it shows the great possibilities of the country, is that Africa is remarkably rich in mineral resources. The famous Kimberly diamond mines need not be spoken of, for they have long been known to the world. Extensive gold mines have recently been discovered, and there are indications that coal beds as far-reaching in extent as those of the new world, form part of the strata of this unknown land.

The climate of the plateau around the great lakes has been found to be temperate, and equable. The soil is of prodigal fertility, and needs but tilling and planting to bring forth the richest crops. Here is the solution of the question Europe is asking, "What shall we do with our poor?" Instead of further burdening America, let them be sent to that great district around the

central lakes, and then the colonization of Africa is but a problem of time.

But somebody says, "The heat of the sun is so severe that Europeans cannot work under it." Drummond says that the African native is a model workman, and for the sacred white man he will do almost anything. So where the European cannot work, the African may be profitably employed, since, being "to the manor born," he regards the heat as nothing.

Until recently, the exporting and importing of goods has been by the slow and tedious overland method. Now it is known that there is water communication from the East coast up the Shire river to the great lakes, and thence to the West by way of the Congo.

The one great objection made to the colonization of Africa, is that the cost in life and money will be too great. Let us consider. Is not the development of any new country attended with frightful cost and hardship? Either DeSoto's or Pizarro's party could have told a tale of woe as long as can the Stanley Rear Guard. Livingstone was but the Marquette of Central Africa. If Mungo Park was killed by the Boussa natives, Captain Cook met a like fate at the hands of the Sandwich Islanders. The privations of Grant and Speke are eclipsed by those of our Puritan forefathers in bleak New England, or the Virginian colonists during the dreadful Starving Time.

Still there is a higher incentive for the development of Africa. The natives of those vast interior regions are still in the lowest stage of barbarism, and to carry the blessings of civilization to them is a duty incumbent on every Christian nation. It is a deplorable fact that the scramble for territory by England, Germany, and Portugal, results from national greed, and not from a desire to better the condition of the country.

While the labors of missionaries among the American Indians have reaped no permanent results, the efforts of Moffat and his successors will probably be better rewarded, for judging from civilized specimens, the negro is capable of great development, both mental and moral. Indeed it has been said by thoughtful students of anthropology that the black race is "the coming race."

With her boundless resources and almost unlimited possibilities, the future of Africa promises to be one of great brightness. It is safe to prophesy that one hundred years from now this comparatively unknown continent will be completely colonized. Large manufacturing towns will be