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HENRY SHELTON SANFORD AND THE CONGO.

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HENRY SHELTON SANFORD
AND THE CONGO

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree Doctor
of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State
University

By

Lysle Edward Meyer, Jr., B.A., M.A.

The Ohio State University
1967

Approved by

[Signatures]
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CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND AND EARLY LIFE

New Englanders loom large in the annals of America's foreign relations. Far flung shipping activities and a venerable mercantile tradition go far in accounting for this. Men from the northeastern states were more concerned with developments abroad than most of their countrymen because they had relatively more overseas contacts and their livelihood was more dependent upon foreign trade. They were, accordingly, more apt than other Americans to look afield for opportunities for themselves and their nation. To them the lure of the frontier, which historians have deemed a highly significant aspect of the American character, was not limited to interest in the national West. New Englanders were more like Europeans in their approach to underdeveloped regions of the world. They could see in Africa and Asia what British, French, and Dutch traders appreciated: vast commercial possibilities with probable political gain.

Henry Shelton Sanford was a Connecticut Yankee displaying such characteristics. Descended from an old New England line, a paternal forebear having landed in
Massachusetts with John Winthrop in 1630, he was born in Woodbury, Connecticut, on June 15, 1823. His father, Nehemiah Curtis Sanford, had become a prosperous industrialist engaged in the manufacture of nails and tacks in Derby, Connecticut, in partnership with a brother-in-law, Edward N. Shelton. He also profitably speculated in land locally. Like many other wealthy and successful businessmen, Sanford's father tried his hand at politics, serving two terms as Senator in the State Legislature.

Young Henry received his early education from private tutors and began his formal schooling at the Episcopal Academy in Cheshire, Connecticut. Graduating from that institution at sixteen, he then attended Washington College in Hartford. Due to eye trouble arising from an asthmatic condition, Sanford left there in 1840 after little more than a year. His weak eyes

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2 Leo T. Malloy, Henry Shelton Sanford, 1823-1891 (Derby, Connecticut: The Bacon Printing Co., 1952), p. 10. This fifty page laudatory biographical booklet was commissioned by the subject's granddaughter and was based partly upon materials provided by his descendants.

3 Now known as Trinity College.

4 Autobiographical sketch in the Henry Shelton Sanford Papers (General Sanford Memorial Library, Sanford, Florida), hereafter cited as Sanford Papers. Microfilm copies of most of these papers are housed in
which gave him much pain, were destined to prove a lifelong affliction. For a change of scene as well as to relieve his eyes from academic strain, the young man made a European trip in 1841. He undertook a more extensive cruise the following year, visiting Asia Minor as well as Europe.\textsuperscript{5} Overseas sojourns thereafter became a regular feature of Sanford's life.

While at home, he also traveled extensively. The West appealed to him for both business and pleasure. He made trips in the 1840's to Michigan, where his father owned land, and to Wisconsin. Following his parent's death in 1841, Henry began to speculate in western lands, and continued doing so for many years, at the same time investing in several western railroads.\textsuperscript{6}

In appearance Sanford was tall and handsome. He had a long, full, sandy-colored beard and wore a pincenez because of his poor vision.\textsuperscript{7} One observer in the 1860's

\textsuperscript{5}Sanford's Journals, \textit{ibid.}, Box 2, Folders 8-12.

\textsuperscript{6}Ibid., Box 3, Folders 1-5. For Western land investments, see Box 62, Folders 7-12.

\textsuperscript{7}His passports show that he was six feet one inch in height (Sanford Papers, Box 19, Folder 11). A photo-

the Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee, where the materials were processed in 1960. See Harriet Chapell Owsley (ed.), \textit{Register of the Henry Shelton Sanford Papers} (Nashville: Tennessee State Library and Archives, 1960). Film copies of selected groups of the papers are owned by The Ohio State University Library in Columbus, Ohio.
noted that he was "forward, spoke rapidly . . . and with an air of authority."^8

While still a relatively young man, Sanford gained valuable diplomatic experience. During a visit to Russia in 1847, he became Secretary of the American Legation in St. Petersburg, and a year later was Acting Secretary of the Frankfort Legation under Minister Andrew Jackson Donelson. It was at this time, also, that the novice diplomat resumed his academic studies, attending the University of Heidelberg where he was awarded an LL.D. in April, 1849. Sanford's contacts were increasing and he apparently utilized them to good advantage for, in 1849, he was named Secretary of the Paris Legation, then one of the most important diplomatic posts and certainly more to the liking of the ambitious and socially conscious young man from Connecticut. It was in Paris that he began to participate in more important diplomatic work.

In 1853, Sanford advanced to the rank of Chargé d'Affairs and, in that capacity, negotiated the first Franco-

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^9To spare his eyes, he made use of readers who enabled him to pass his final examinations at Heidelberg with honors. Malloy, op. cit., pp. 11-12.
American postal convention in the absence of the American Minister, William C. Rives who had resigned. Until a new Minister arrived Sanford headed the legation for about a year.¹⁰

A dispute over diplomatic dress prompted Sanford's resignation from the Paris Legation. The newly-appointed American Minister, John Y. Mason, required his staff to wear formal diplomatic uniform which Sanford did not consider in keeping with American democratic ideals.¹¹ Later, during the Civil War, when he had become an honorary Major General in the Minnesota Militia¹² while Minister to Belgium, he sometimes wore a very elaborate uniform, a practice which appeared hypocritical to some in view of his earlier stand.¹³

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 13-14.


¹²In later years, Sanford was commonly referred to as "General." The title was given in return for his gift of two cannon to the First Minnesota Regiment early in the war. He owned mines in the state and was a personal friend of the Governor. William W. Folwell, History of Minnesota (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society), II, 58.

¹³Sanford explained that he wore a uniform at formal diplomatic functions only because his country was then at war, but that he would never devise a uniform, as some
Inheriting his father's fortune, Sanford was able to mingle with European high society and to indulge himself in the haut culture of the Continent. This way of life evidently undermined his simple, democratic Yankee ideals. As early as the 1850's his mother, Nancy Bateman Sanford, who deplored what she considered his extravagant and ostentatious life abroad, regretfully observed this growing affection for European ways, and institutions. She wrote him: "You ridicule the idea of aristocracy and at the same time hope to reach the same point if possible."¹⁴ His high social pretensions proved offensive to some of his countrymen. One American traveler, who spent several winters in Paris while Sanford was attached to the Legation there, felt it was necessary to inform President Franklin Pierce of Sanford's "unamerican" demeanor in these terms: "I do not consider him in his feelings a democrat, but a regular toady to aristocracy."¹⁵ That Sanford had indeed developed a great admiration for Europe's aristocracy and royalty was to diplomats did, without authorization or appropriate rank. Sanford to L. S. Foster, May 16, 1861 (draft), Sanford Papers, Box 105, Folder 16.


become more obvious in his later relationship with Belgium's King Leopold II.

Returning home in 1854, Sanford took charge of an important international legal case. He represented his uncle, Philo Shelton, partner in a Boston firm contesting with the Venezuelan Government rights to guano deposits on Aves Island, lying some hundred miles off that South American country, and which was uninhabited and had not been previously claimed. This protracted case led to the official doctrine of "Sovereignty of the United States over Derelict Islands," based upon Sanford's arguments and applied to United States policy relating to Latin America. In this period (1857-1860), Sanford became involved in other Latin American affairs. He acted as agent for United States citizens in negotiations with Columbian and Honduran authorities over railroad and shipping concessions and, in his efforts to solve certain questions involving the Panama Railway, served in semi-diplomatic status, enjoying governmental encouragement and support.

These experiences gave Sanford definite opinions respecting America's foreign relations. He saw a need


17 Ibid. It was said that Sanford bought up certain claims of his clients in these cases and profited handsomely thereby. See The World (New York), Nov. 11, 1877, p. 1.
for greater United States commercial activity if it were not to be completely outstripped by European interests. His country, he thought, might do well to consider annexation of Latin American territory in order to insure access to commercial opportunities there. In general, he was developing a more forceful approach to foreign policy which was to become so marked in his work concerning the Congo.\footnote{Sanford to Lewis Cass (draft), October 30, 1857, Sanford Papers, Box 116, Folder 7.}

By 1860, then, Henry S. Sanford had traveled widely and had acquired considerable diplomatic experience. He spoke French and German fluently and was familiar with Spanish and Italian. He maintained connections in American business and investment circles and had made influential political friends. Sanford had originally been a Whig, an affiliation sometimes disadvantageous for him under Democratic administrations but, with the Whig Party's demise in the late fifties, accompanied by the rapid growth of the Republican movement culminating in Lincoln's election, a new advantageous political alignment soon emerged. It should not be surprising that one with such a background early put in his bid for a diplomatic assignment under the new President.
Although inundated by a host of impatient office seekers, Lincoln gave the Brussels post, one of his first foreign appointments, to Sanford. The latter had made himself known to the President-elect in November, 1860, journeying to Springfield to meet him and to offer advice and encouragement. Unfortunately, there is no known appraisal of his visitor by Lincoln. Sanford was, furthermore, active in Washington, where his home had become a meeting place for important men in both parties, especially during the Peace Convention in February, 1861.

These occasions must have furnished splendid opportunities for Sanford to marshal support for a desirable overseas post. But his greatest asset in this endeavor was his friendship with Thurlow Weed, prominent journalist and powerful New York Republican leader, who was close to Lincoln, and with William H. Seward, a top party spokesman who became Lincoln's Secretary of State.

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19 Sanford to Lincoln (draft), Nov. 15, 1860, Sanford Papers, Box 105, Folder 18.
20 Malloy, op. cit., pp. 18-19.
21 Sanford's correspondence with Seward, spanning twenty-five years (Sanford Papers, Box 130), attests to their warm friendship. One of Seward's fellow-Cabinet members later wrote that Sanford was "Seward's pet and able to cajole the Secretary into granting him favors." (Gideon Wells, The Diary of Gideon Wells, ed. Howard K. Beale, 3 vols., New York: W. W. Norton Co., 1960, II, 36). Other impressive support for Sanford's appointment came from Senators representing Connecticut, Rhode...
As United States Minister to Belgium, Sanford entered in upon one of the most important and controversial periods of his career. He was now to become associated with certain affairs which hinted at scandal and were to plague him for the remainder of his life. Attempted fraud during wartime was a charge frequently raised against him by his enemies. In 1861, seeking to prevent a large quantity of cloth from falling into the hands of Confederate buyers, Sanford urged one of the Quartermaster General's European agents to purchase it. Sanford's motives evidently were misunderstood and the Federal buyer refused to make the purchase because the cloth failed to meet governmental specifications. Eventually the story developed that the American Minister to Belgium had planned to involve Federal officials in a scheme of war profiteering by selling the Government low grade supplies at high prices. Sanford was also accused of pro-


22 Heppner, op. cit., pp. 115-116, explains Sanford's efforts to deprive the Confederates of badly needed supplies. For an example of later attacks upon him centering around these incidents, see The World (New York), loc. cit., and Feb. 12, 1890, p. 2.
viding the Quartermaster General with defective Belgian muskets, a charge which was never substantiated. Some American diplomats in Europe considered their Brussels colleague a meddler and a nuisance. William L. Dayton, Minister to France, frowned upon Sanford's frequent visits to that country which often included activities interpreted by Dayton as an invasion of his jurisdiction. It was said that Dayton referred to Sanford as "the diplomatic flea."23 The American Consul in Paris, John Bigelow, believed that Sanford was intentionally withholding information and interfering in Dayton's work, hoping to win the latter's post for himself.24 There was, perhaps, some truth in this. It is not difficult to believe that Sanford desired the more prominent, highly-paid Paris appointment for which he certainly was better qualified than Dayton, a party hack.25 Whereas the latter was ignorant of the French, their country and their language, Sanford was fluent in it and enjoyed many

23 The World, Nov. 11, 1877, p. 1.


25 Dayton had been the first Republican Vice Presidential candidate in 1856 and was a friend of Lincoln. He died in Paris in 1864. Dictionary of American Biography (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1946), V. 167.
important connections in Paris. Charles Francis Adams, the Minister to the Court of St. James's, likewise resented Sanford. One of his staff recorded the bitterness aroused in the London Legation by Sanford's "imper­tinent intrusions" and "treacherous" behavior. Sanford's defenders, such as Weed and Seward, on the other hand, pointed to their friend's great zeal and his enthusiasm for the Union cause--both of which, they felt, were often misinterpreted.

Seward reputedly stated that Sanford was actually "United States Minister to Europe," having performed his official duties most capably while, at the same time, carrying out a variety of special assignments during the early part of the Civil War. It was Gideon Welles, Lincoln's Secretary of the Navy, who probably most accurately described Sanford's manner and motivation dur-

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26For a discussion of Sanford's ability to accomplish things in France where Dayton failed, see newspaper clippings of 1877 in Sanford Papers, Box 65, Folder 14. Seward obtained from Sanford valuable information on French attitudes toward the North, such data being acquired through Sanford's numerous French contacts. Frederick W. Seward, Seward at Washington (3 vols. New York: Derby and Miller, 1891), II, 580.


29Heppner, op. cit., pp. 177-178.
ing this period: "Sanford is ... fond of notoriety; delights to be busy and fussy, to show pomp and power; ... for Sanford's true character is one of obtrusive intermeddling—not that he is mischievously inclined, but he seeks to be consequential, wants to figure and to do."  

Much of the other American diplomats' antagonism was rooted in Sanford's numerous special duties. The extremely active Minister to Belgium was simultaneously a part-time purchasing agent, supervisor of the Federal Secret Service in Europe and a fiscal agent in charge of large sums. His spy force actively hounded Confederate agents in England, provoking the antipathy of other Ministers. Some of Sanford's hirelings, not always recruited from among the most responsible of the Continent's unemployed, at times caused embarrassment to American officials, but his work in this field which was notably useful and effective, won praise from the

30Welles, op. cit., II, 39.

31Benjamin Moran (Wallace and Gillespie [eds.], op. cit., II, 894, 899, 908), Secretary of the London Legation and a Pennsylvanian, who detested "bouncing, ill-mannered Yankees" like Sanford, made the exaggerated claim that, if Sanford had been more careful with his "worthless and injurious espionage," English opinion would have been "all on our side."
Secretary of State. Then, too, some bitterness within the American diplomatic community certainly arose over the fact that Sanford enjoyed the disposal of a $1,000,000 contingency fund and other ministers and agents in Europe had to depend upon him for special and emergency expenses.

Finally there was the Garibaldi episode, also later used against Sanford. In the summer of 1861, on his own authority, James Quiggle, the American Consul in Antwerp, contacted the fiery Italian revolutionist whom he knew. He suggested Garibaldi contribute his abilities to the Northern cause then desperately in need of imaginative leadership. Garibaldi was led to believe that his services would be in great demand and warmly appreciated. Feeling itself committed by the Consul's independent action, the State Department followed through with a formal offer of a commission. Secretary Seward was favorable to the plan and was in no way embarrassed by Quiggle's action.

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32 Heppner, loc. cit. On this phase of Sanford's work, see Harriet Chappell Owsley, "Henry Shelton Sanford and Federal Surveillance Abroad, 1861-65," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XLVIII (Sept., 1961), pp. 211-229. She points out that Adams was able to have Sanford's espionage activities in Great Britain stopped by 1862.


34 Charles Callan Tansill, "A Secret Chapter in Civil War History," Thought, XV (1940), 216-217.
Acting under Seward's instructions, Sanford journeyed to Italy and interviewed the ex-Dictator of the Two Sicilies on Caprera, his island home. With an inflated sense of his own importance, Garibaldi stated that he would go to the United States only if he were given supreme command of the Union Army and the authority to abolish slavery. Sanford explained that he was authorized to offer him only the rank of Major General and that the Constitution reserved exclusively for the President the powers of Commander-in Chief. Apparently encouraged by his friend Quiggle to await a more attractive offer, Garibaldi declined.

Although Sanford's conduct was in strict accord with his instructions and was deemed commendable by his associates, rumors soon spread that Sanford himself had initiated contact with Garibaldi. It was, indeed, alleged that he had embarrassed his Government as well as Garibaldi by an unauthorized offer of the Union command.\(^{35}\)

This and other incidents connected with his Civil War activities came back to haunt Sanford when seeking

diplomatic appointments in later years. His critics, including important Democratic Senators such as Simon Cameron of Pennsylvania, various officials who worked with Sanford during the war, and the New York World, refused to find any defense or explanation satisfactory. In 1885, when domestic opposition to United States participation in the Berlin Conference was gaining momentum, one hostile journalist dredged up the old charges against Sanford who was then one of the delegates to the Conference. As if to sum up all the vague rumors and innuendoes, he wrote that Sanford should be known by the sobriquet "his Excellency Belgian Musket Garibaldi Sanfwar."36

In 1870, President Grant nominated Sanford as Minister to Spain. When the Senate, after a long delay, refused to accept him, he resigned the Belgian post, ex-Senator J. R. Jones already having been named to succeed him there. He felt, naturally enough, that his long service, involving many personal sacrifices and, at one point, the risk of his entire fortune in order to secure badly needed saltpeter for the Union army,37 had not been

36 Newspaper clipping, source and date unknown, in Sanford Papers, Box 65, Folder 14.

37 When the British, reacting to the Trent Affair, closed their ports to the export of military supplies, 2,000 tons of Federally-owned saltpeter were tied up in England. Realizing that his Government badly needed the
appreciated. His letter of resignation carried a clear note of bitterness, and calm survey of the records leads to the conclusion that this was justified.

In September, 1864, Sanford married while on duty in Belgium. His wife, the former Gertrude Ellen Dupuy, although American-born, had been reared in Europe by an aunt after losing her parents at an early age. She was well-traveled and had resided in England, France, and Italy, but scarcely knew the country of her birth. With typical Old World outlook, she viewed life in the United States as little better than a frontier existence. Accustomed to mingling with aristocracy, she could imagine only a comfortable, stylish life. When her husband later encountered financial reverses which called for careful management and budgeting, she provided scant aid or comfort. Constantly preoccupied with balls and extravagant dinners, often demanding unwise expenditures and frequently reproaching her husband at the most inappropriate times, Mrs. Sanford added to his other financial burdens.

material, Sanford, using his own funds, lost no time in purchasing and shipping all he could find on the Continent. He was later commended for this timely action by President Lincoln. Malloy, op. cit., p. 20.

38 Heppner, op. cit., pp. 171-172.

39 Malloy, op. cit., pp. 39-40, presents a brief sketch of Mrs. Sanford. For Sanford's problems with his wife, see Sanford Papers, Box 83-88. Amundson, op. cit.,
It should be acknowledged, however, that she was gracious, charming, popular at the Belgian Court, and undoubtedly proved a social asset to her husband. The Sanfords had seven children. Of the two sons, only one, Henry, Jr., reached maturity, and he died at twenty-six.

Returning to the United States in 1870, Sanford continued his business speculations, adding some import-

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40There is ample testimony to her beauty. John A. Kasson, friend of Sanford and United States Minister to Germany at the time of the Berlin Conference, was quite impressed by Mrs. Sanford's good looks and carried her picture. He also commented on her qualities as a hostess and on her easy, genteel, life. William W. Halligan, Jr., "The Berlin West African Conference of 1884-85 from the Viewpoint of American Participation" (unpublished Master's thesis, Dept. of History, University of Virginia, 1949), pp. 18-19.

41From this point on, he was to maintain residences in both Europe and the United States. His business interests necessitated frequent transatlantic crossings. Mrs. Sanford and their children usually remained at their Belgian home, the Chateau Gingelom, several miles from Brussels on the road to Liége.

42He earlier had invested in such projects as a water lubricating system for railway rolling stock and a redistillation process for turning cheap whiskey into a better product. He likewise held a partnership in a Louisianna sugar plantation, interests in a South Carolina cotton plantation and an Arkansas zinc mine, and was half owner of the Henry S. Sanford, a steamship with sails engaged in South American commerce. Amundson, op. cit., passim.
tant new ventures. After a visit in the 1860's, he developed an interest in Florida, which became his adopted state and the scene of his most significant domestic activities. Twenty-three miles of land on the St. Johns River known thereafter as the "Sanford Grant," was acquired in 1870. Here he established the first sizeable commercial orange groves in the state. The town of Sanford emerged in 1872, its founder's estate, Belair, being situated nearby. This land and other tracts eventually added to it became the owner's paramount interest and concern. For laborers and settlers Sanford induced Swedish and Italian immigrants to come to Florida. State politics, quite naturally, had great interest for him. He attempted without much success to become a Republican Party leader there. Efforts to win a Senate seat were, likewise, unsuccessful.\textsuperscript{43}

Sanford proved less than successful as a businessman. Along with a certain gullability and poor judgment, he suffered considerable bad luck. So long as he based his financial position upon solid investments inherited from his father and followed the practical

\textsuperscript{43}\textit{Unsigned, Some Account of Belair, Also of the City of Sanford, Florida, with a Brief Sketch of their Founder} (Sanford, Florida, 1889), passim. This booklet probably was written by Sanford himself or under his direction. See also Amundson, \textit{op. cit.}, chaps. 6-10.
advice of his uncle and shrewd friends, he remained wealthy and secure. But when projects for quick profits increasingly enticed him, reverses were assured. His friends were never reluctant to warn him of hazardous ventures but there is little evidence that he heeded such counsel. In the early 1870's, Sanford's fortune, based upon his stocks and bond holdings and salaries from his offices in several companies, stood at $922,500.44

The depression of 1873 proved a serious blow. His securities plummeted and, to make matters worse, certain patents held by a manufacturing concern in which he was a large stockholder, then expired. Desperation bred at this time impelled Sanford to seek other schemes, which would enable him to recover financial footing. He became involved in a number of mining, railroad, and marketing promotions and invested large sums in a disappointing sugar property. When each failed in turn, he was compelled to liquidate his better holdings, and stood in rather desperate straits by the late 1870's. When Leopold, King of the Belgians, announced his Congo project, Sanford was not slow in sensing opportunities for himself, not the least of which was the chance perhaps to make a lucrative investment backed by a royal fortune.

44Sanford Papers, Box 5, Folder 2.
In Africa Sanford was to seek a means to regain his lost affluence. This pursuit occupied much of the remainder of his life and provided one of its most significant chapters. Yet he was clearly not a man to be driven solely by the hope of financial gain. He needed a great inspirational cause, such as he had served in the Union during the Civil War, to absorb his restless energy and driving ambition. This, too, he would find in Africa.
CHAPTER II

SANFORD’S EARLY WORK WITH LEOPOLD II

Belgium found itself with a new ruler in 1865 when the Duke of Brabant inherited the throne from his father and assumed the title Leopold II. Few people realized that, even as heir apparent, he had already been occupied with grandiose plans for himself and Belgium. The petty, monotonous life of a small European court would never satisfy his ambitions and could only stifle his great energy. Coupled with a desire to participate in the world of investment finance and to amass a personal fortune was his obsession to become an empire builder. Leopold wished to make Belgium a colonial power.¹ Besides fulfilling his desire for personal aggrandizement, he believed that an overseas empire would provide substantial new revenue for the state, valuable experience for the army, civilization for the native peoples involved, and international prestige for Belgium.²


²Ibid.
Originally, the establishment of Belgian trading posts in West Africa appealed to him, but then his interest shifted to the Far East. During the 1850's he weighed varied schemes relating to that area, including the possible purchase of the Philippines from Spain and the acquisition of a concession on the Chinese coast or possibly in Formosa. Other regions passing under his roving eyes were Indo-China, Borneo and Latin America. In 1861, the King made inquiries about the Argentine province of Entre Ríos as a potential field for exploitation by a Belgian chartered company. Eventually, however, he was drawn back to Africa as the most promising arena for his imperialistic designs. He was encouraged and somewhat prompted to focus upon that continent by Emile Banning, a strongly imperialistic journalist who after writing for the Echo du Parlement in the 1860's, was appointed archivist in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and became Leopold's close associate for many years. Fruitless efforts to obtain concessions from

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5Roeykens, loc. cit., p. 431, n. 1.

the Portuguese in Mozambique did not prevent the eager
Monarch from envisioning other possibilities on the
African continent. Absorbing with keen interest the
growing number of books by travelers and explorers there,
Leopold ultimately narrowed his focus on central Africa.
David Livingstone's explorations, of course, had directed
his attention to that area. Indeed, by the 1870's the
Congo was replacing the Nile as the primary geographical
question in the "dark continent," since many of the
latter's secrets had been discovered in the previous dec­
ade. Verney Lovett Cameron's transcontinental trek of
1873-1874 provided much information on the Congo Basin's
economic potential and was followed closely by the
Belgian monarch. He decided forthwith that he could
afford to lose no more time launching his plans.

Leopold took the first overt step in 1876 by sum­
moning a conference in Brussels to which he invited
eminent geographers, explorers and others with African
interests from both Europe and America. The inspiration
for such a gathering seems to have come from the Paris
International Geographical Conference of 1875, at which
the King's emissary gathered useful ideas on such matters
as tropical colonization and suggestions for the forma­
tion of an international organization to launch African
explorations.7

7Roeykens, *op. cit.*, p. 83.
Extensive preparations preceded the Brussels Conference. The exploits and achievements of British, French and German explorers in Africa were analyzed and studied, while an accurate appraisal of the foreign policies of those countries with respect to Africa was undertaken. A special agent was sent to Berlin to contact German explorers and to ascertain the general feeling in German official circles toward the proposed gathering. Leopold himself journeyed to London in May to sound out British opinion. He also screened prospective British delegates to the conference, seeking to interest individuals he felt would be most in agreement with his own ideas.

Ostensibly, the King's objective in bringing together this group of experts was to discuss means of civilizing Africa. He intended the meeting to appear as a genuine response to the growing humanitarian interest in Africa arising from an increasing number of explorers and missionaries making Western peoples more aware of the continent's many problems and needs. By methodically calculated moves, however, the crafty monarch could make the conference serve his private designs, the nature of which was certainly not predominantly humanitarian.

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8Thomson, op. cit., p. 41.
On the morning of September 12, 1876, the meeting convened at the King's Palace in Brussels. Twenty-eight delegates representing seven countries were present. There were representatives from Austria, Belgium, Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Russia. Among those present were the explorers Cameron, Grant, and Nachtigal, along with leading colonial officials, geographers, and a number of public spirited noblemen. The distinguished assembly heard an opening address by Leopold emphasizing the idealistic factors lying behind the gathering and outlining the principal topics for consideration.

The group was to discuss possible locations for bases which would be acquired by treaty, purchase or lease in various areas including the East African Coast and the mouth of the Congo. It should consider the location of routes to be opened into the interior; the establishment of medical and scientific stations and bases for the abolition of the slave trade; and means for pacifying the interior. Then, of great importance, the Conference should set up an international committee and make provision for national committees to collaborate with it. These latter bodies would publicize the work and enlist public support in their respective countries.

\[10\] Boulger, op. cit., p. 81.

\[11\] Thomson, op. cit., p. 129.
Various expeditions would be sent out under common support and operations would thus be international in scope. Of all the Conference's accomplishments, the most significant was the creation of the International Association for the Exploration and Civilization of Central Africa which came, in time, to be known as the International African Association. This body was to be headed by an International Commission, composed of the presidents of the leading geographical societies represented at the Conference or in agreement with its program, and two members from each of the national committees which were to be organized. Leopold was chosen president of the Commission, an office which he modestly declared he would accept for only one year in order that it might rotate among the other member nations in the Association.\textsuperscript{12}

An Executive Committee was to direct the Commission's activities. This was composed of a president, a secretary-general and three individuals representing Europe's chief racial stocks. Those named were Sir Bartle Frere, the British diplomat and colonial administrator (Anglo-Saxon), Dr. Gustave Nachtigal, the German explorer (Germanic), and M. de Quatrefages, a French

\textsuperscript{12}Ibid., pp. 46-47. No one else ever served as president. Leopold was re-elected in 1877, but the International Committee simply ceased to exist after that point.
naturalist and Secretary of the Geographical Society of Paris (Latin). Leopold also became the Executive Committee's president and was given authority to select the Secretary-General. That post went to Baron Greindl, a scholar-diplomat then serving as Belgian Minister to Spain.

National committees were established shortly after the Conference. They were eventually set up in France, Germany, Austria, Spain, Switzerland, Holland and Portugal. They were expected to organize subscription drives and thus to provide for financing Association activities. Most of them, however, soon became preoccupied with their own national interests and ambitions and, while some small contributions dribbled into the International Association's coffers, the national committees afforded scant service to the parent body.

The British, whom Leopold strongly desired to have in close collaboration with him in the Association's work,

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13 Sanford to John H. B. Latrobe (draft), July 30, 1877, Sanford Papers, Box 29, Folder 10.

14 Thomson, op. cit., p. 46. Greindl was an orientalist of some reputation, whose abilities were long appreciated by Leopold.

15 Sanford to Latrobe, loc. cit.

16 Thomson, op. cit., p. 52, points out that only countries with no ambitions in Africa at that time sent money to the central organization.
decided to act independently of the international organization. Although their Conference delegates initially favored working within an international framework, they soon were advised against it after returning to England. Fears of possible conflicts between the Association's aims and British national interests represented the major obstacle, but other factors, such as religious considerations were involved in the decision not to form an affiliated committee. Influential Scottish Presbyterians objected to being associated with the International Association in which Roman Catholic powers had a majority of votes. An exclusively national body was set up instead. All the British delegates to Brussels were members of the Royal Geographical Society and they decided in March, 1877, to establish an African Exploration Fund to be administered by a special group within that organization headed by its President, Sir Rutherford Alcock. This development did not, however, prevent various British bodies, and individuals from rendering valuable support to the Association and Leopold. The latter,

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19 Thomson, op. cit., p. 48.
indeed, had dedicated and influential friends in Britain. For example, James P. Hutton and William Mackinnon, both leading and wealthy Manchester traders with deep interest in the opening of Africa, were to provide much assistance to their Belgian friend. 20

No Americans were present at the Brussels meeting of 1876. Leopold had invited Judge Charles P. Daly, President of the American Geographical Society, and John H. B. Latrobe, President of the American Colonization Society and long involved in creating and establishing Liberia, but both were too occupied to attend. 21 There was, however, support in the United States for Leopold's declared objectives and, after the Brussels Conference, steps were taken to establish an American committee to associate with the International Association. On May 8, 1877, Latrobe presided over a meeting of the Geographical Society of New York called to discuss Leopold's plan and possible United States cooperation and to select American

20 Ibid., pp. 65-71.

21 Although unable personally to attend, Latrobe shipped many American Colonization Society documents to Brussels for the use of the Conference since it was felt by many that the Liberian experience would prove valuable to the Association. John H. B. Latrobe to William Coppinger (Secretary of the American Colonization Society), May 28, 1876, Letters of the American Colonization Society, incoming (Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.), Vol. CCXXIV.
delegates to the next Association assemblage. This led later in the same month to a gathering at the New York City home of William Tracy, an officer of the American Geographical Society, at which a permanent organization came into being. Latrobe and Henry M. Schieffelin became President and Vice President, respectively. The latter, who was in Europe at the time, and Henry S. Sanford, were named delegates to a pending Association meeting in Brussels. Sanford sailed for Europe on June 2, having been seen off by members of the Council of the American Geographical Society. Sanford had come into frequent contact with King Leopold while serving as American Minister to Belgium during the 60's. Theirs was a close relationship from the start, though it is not clear exactly when Leopold brought Sanford into his African project. In an interview during the 1880's, Sanford stated: "... I was a delegate from the United States to the first conference at Brussels in 1876." This is at variance with official records, none of which indicate the presence of any American representatives. There is reason-

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22Latrobe to Coppinger, May 8, 1877, ibid., Vol. CCXXVII.
23New York Times, June 3, 1877, p. 3.
24Ibid.
25Ibid., May 26, 1885, p. 5.
onable possibility that Sanford may have attended meetings as an independent observer, but not in any official capacity. Having had no experience as an African traveler or explorer, and holding no office in any geographical society, he would not have received a formal invitation from the King. In fact, the American Geographical Society, the organization which took the initiative in forming the American branch of the International African Association, did not list Sanford on its membership rolls before 1877. In any case, the former American Minister would be a likely prospect for enlistment into Leopold's force of "collaborateurs." Not only did he sympathize wholeheartedly with the aims and hopes expressed by the King in his original Brussels proposals of 1876, he also appreciated the commercial possibilities of Central Africa. Furthermore, he had demonstrated that he was a capable diplomat with excellent contacts.

Sanford probably became interested in Leopold's African project soon after it was publicly announced.


27 Journal of the American Geographical Society, VIII (1876), 92; IX (1877), 104.

28 P. A. Roeykens, in a thorough study of Leopold's early African work (Leopold et l'Afrique, p. 258, n. 1), suggests that the Monarch's collaboration with Sanford began in April or May, 1877.
His appointment by the American Committee as a delegate in May, 1877, leads one to believe that Sanford and Leopold were already working together on the King's carefully conceived plans. Sanford once confessed that he knew almost nothing about Africa at that time; some influence, then, must have been exerted in his behalf so that he could return to Brussels as official representative of a national committee. Indeed, it was due to Sanford's ignorance of Africa that Henry M. Scheiffelin, who had been there and who had once served as Liberia's Chargé d'Affairs in the United States, was appointed as a fellow-delegate to assist Sanford in Brussels.

The International Commission held its first and only meeting in Brussels on June 21 and 22, 1877. Its main function was to implement the program drawn up the preceding year at the preliminary, organizational conference. An expedition was authorized to set out for Lake Tanganyika from Zanzibar, and to establish, at Nyangwe,
on the Lualaba River a station and base of operations. Then, hopefully, the expedition would proceed toward the west coast. There was much difference of opinion respecting the character of the proposed stations. It was ultimately decided that they were to be "hospitable and scientific" posts for the accumulation of various data on the surrounding country and its people which eventually would become self-supporting.\textsuperscript{32} Latrobe had recommended this and Sanford supported this view.\textsuperscript{33}

The slave trade did not receive attention at this meeting as it had in 1876. It was decided that the gradual introduction of civilization, rather than vigorous frontal attack, would be the most expedient method of dealing with this evil.\textsuperscript{34} The Conference also adopted a flag for the Association. This displayed a gold star upon a blue field, after the fashion of the ancient Kingdom of the Congo's emblem.\textsuperscript{35}

\textsuperscript{32} The scientific nature of the stations' work was to include astronomical and meteorological observations, the collection of geological, botanical and zoological specimens, and the preparation of maps and ethnographic studies. As a part of their "hospitable" functions, they would receive all "worthy" travelers and provide food, provisions, interpreters and guides. \textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{33} \textit{Ibid.}  \textsuperscript{34} \textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{35} Thomson, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 56.
Sir Bartle Frere, who had been appointed to the
International Commission's Executive Committee in 1876,
had resigned his position early in the following year upon
having been named Governor of Cape Colony. The Confer­
ence unanimously selected Sanford as Frere's successor.
It was a post made to order. No British delegates were
present and Sanford was the lone American--the sole Anglo-
Saxon at the Conference. Though "regretting that some
more competent and experienced American was not there to
bear the honor intended for our country," he felt that he
should not decline.36 Finding matters working completely
to his satisfaction, Leopold spoke warmly of his long
relationship with the former Minister to Belgium and
congratulated the delegates on their choice.37

As a member of the Executive Committee, Sanford
was kept informed of all Association activities, was
consulted on important decisions, and was called upon
to aid in solving various emergency problems. His cor­
respondence includes numerous letters, not only from
the Secretaries-General of the Association, but also from
leaders and members of the several expeditions sent out
by the Association. This intelligence enabled him to
become acquainted with the details of African exploration
and with the many questions arising from rapidly increas­

36 Sanford to Latrobe, loc. cit. 37 Ibid.
ing European penetration of that continent. He threw himself into the work with characteristic zeal, read avidly on all related subjects, and was soon able to speak with authority on African affairs. Sanford's involvement in Leopold's work now began.

It is interesting to note that President Rutherford B. Hayes nominated Sanford again to serve as Minister to Belgium, reportedly at the behest of Secretary of State William Evarts, and Assistant Secretary, F. W. Seward on November 8, 1877.\(^\text{38}\) Determined opposition in the Senate, based largely upon Sanford's controversial activities as Minister to Belgium during the Civil War, embarrassed the Administration and by February 15, 1878, his name had been withdrawn.\(^\text{39}\) Had he won Senate approval, Sanford would have been faced with an interesting conflict of interest. He would undoubtedly have felt compelled to resign his seat on the Executive Committee. While his position as United States Minister would not have interfered completely with Sanford's assistance to Leopold, it would certainly have made it much less effective. His frequent lobbying forays in behalf of the Association in Washington and, especially, his later activities as Minister to Belgium, reportedly at the behest of Secretary of State William Evarts, and Assistant Secretary, F. W. Seward on November 8, 1877.\(^\text{38}\) Determined opposition in the Senate, based largely upon Sanford's controversial activities as Minister to Belgium during the Civil War, embarrassed the Administration and by February 15, 1878, his name had been withdrawn.\(^\text{39}\) Had he won Senate approval, Sanford would have been faced with an interesting conflict of interest. He would undoubtedly have felt compelled to resign his seat on the Executive Committee. While his position as United States Minister would not have interfered completely with Sanford's assistance to Leopold, it would certainly have made it much less effective. His frequent lobbying forays in behalf of

\(^{38}\text{The World, Nov. 11, 1877, p. 1.}\)

\(^{39}\text{Ibid., and clippings, newspapers unknown, in Sanford Papers, Box 65, Folder 14.}\)
efforts in winning United States recognition of the Association's flag might well have proven impossible had he been Minister. Senatorial reaction, which was an acute disappointment to Sanford, in reality turned to the great advantage of King Leopold who now had another key agent free to serve him with complete, undivided loyalty for over a decade.\textsuperscript{40}

The successful enlistment of the right personnel to aid in carrying out his objectives was one of Leopold's greatest assets. Sanford, who was to prove so valuable in many ways, played a decisive role in the recruitment of another central figure. It was essential that the field work in Africa be directed by an experienced individual with proven capacity for leadership and with courage and imagination, but also possessing the ability to serve a superior without asking too many questions.

In August, 1877, Henry Morton Stanley, after a three and-a-half year journey originating in Zanzibar, marched into Boma on the African west coast. His expedition proved that the Lualaba River fed into the then still mysterious Congo. Stanley followed the Congo to the Atlantic, thus unlocking the last great secret of

\textsuperscript{40}For Sanford's eventual rejection of Leopold, see \textit{infra}, Chapter VI.
Africa's major river systems. What Cameron and others had suspected, that the Congo penetrated the heart of Central Africa and embraced an immense tributary system where an extensive intertribal commerce existed, was now proven. Stanley was a journalist-turned-explorer. Born in Wales, orphaned and driven to a workhouse, he had run away from his uncle's home where he had not been welcome and had come to the United States, where he served at different times on both sides in the Civil War.\(^\text{41}\) He had become a reporter for the senationalist \textbf{New York Herald}. In 1871, its enterprising publisher, James Gordon Bennett, sensing a great scoop, had sent Stanley to find the famous missionary-explorer, David Livingstone, presumed lost somewhere in east central Africa or dead at the hands of his bitter enemies, the slave traders. Stanley had carried out his mission and the subsequent "finding" of Livingstone had made him the hero of the age. But, more important, it had led him into the world of African exploration. He had proceeded to carry on the geographical work of Livingstone, who had died on Lake Tanganyika in 1873, and eventually became the foremost explorer in the field. What better man for the work

required by Leopold than this Anglo-American who had already achieved so much in the Congo country?

The first expeditions sponsored by the International Association, beginning in 1878 and limited to East Africa, had accomplished little. They had been expensive experiments, poorly planned and carried out and, due to the lack of financial support from the body's national committee, financed largely by Leopold himself. The King was willing to continue such costly expeditions, primarily because they aided in maintaining the Association's original favorable image and Leopold's ascribed objectives in association with it. However, at the same time, Leopold was anxious to undertake work more important to him in the Congo which would be effectively brought under his personal control rather than that of the Association's Executive Committee. Even before Stanley was known to have concluded his march down the

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42 Most of the personnel of the Association's East Coast expeditions were Belgians, but Sanford, always hoping to include Americans in the work, suggested the employment of a Colonel Long for the head of one group. He even spoke of organizing an "American International Expedition" in 1877. Baron Jules Greindl to Sanford, September 11, 1877, Sanford Papers, Box 24, Folder 15. Leopold at one point considered sending out an American-Belgian expedition in 1877 (Roeykens, Les Débuts . . ., p. 236), but nothing came of this.

43 Thomson, op. cit., p. 60.
Congo, Leopold was contemplating his employment for this special undertaking.  

In September, 1877, Sanford returned to the United States and met with Bennett, still officially Stanley's employer, to obtain certain information about the explorer for the King. It was considered important to procure Bennett's sympathy and support so Sanford was asked to proceed tactfully.  

Appreciating Leopold's requirements, he asked the publisher if he had been pleased with Stanley's economy, reliability and prudence.  

Although Leopold was satisfied with Sanford's preliminary reports, he kept him busy cultivating Bennett's good will until early December, when Sanford returned to Brussels to find his mission rated a great success.

Stanley, in returning from his great African adventure of 1877, landed in Italy, from where he took a train to France. By the time he arrived in Marseilles in January, 1878, preparations for courting him had been made. He was met by Leopold's emissaries, Sanford and Baron Greindl, who made the first offer of employment.

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44 Roeykens, Léopold et l'Afrique, p. 198.

45 Greindl to Sanford, Oct. 5, 1877, Sanford Papers, Box 24, Folder 15.

46 Sanford to Bennett (draft), no date, ibid., Box 28, Folder 2.

47 Greindl to Sanford, Dec. 12, 1877, ibid., Box 24, Folder 15.
under the King. That evening, Sanford had a better opportunity to discuss the proposal with Stanley at a reception and banquet given in the explorer’s honor by the Geographical Society of Marseilles. This affair and Stanley’s presence in Marseilles were part of Leopold’s shrewdly conceived plans. He wished to reach Stanley before the latter returned to England where he might prompt the Queen’s Government to exploit his knowledge of the Congo country. Back in December, 1877, a Belgian party met with Stanley in Zanzibar (where he had returned some of his prized auxiliaries), apparently instructed by Leopold to interest him in the Association’s work. The president and founder of the Marseilles Society was M. A. Rabaud, a friend of Leopold and a partner in Roux-de-Fraissinet et Cie, a shipping firm engaged in the East African trade. He had written to


49 This group, commanded by the young Belgian officer, M. Crespel, was in Zanzibar preparing to undertake the first expedition under Association auspices. Roeykens, Les Débuts . . . , p. 299.

50 Roeykens (ibid., pp. 227-228) believes that Rabaud was privy to Leopold’s general plans even before the Brussels Conference of 1876. He thinks it probable that Leopold had much to do with the creation of the Marseilles Society.
Stanley in Zanzibar and Aden, as the explorer proceeded toward Europe, trying to induce him to pass through Marseilles on his return to Europe. Stanley would promise nothing, saying that an appointment in Paris on January 15 would probably not allow him time to stop in Marseilles. But Rabaud's persistence finally yielded results. When Stanley had reached Brindisi, Italy, en route from Suez on January 9, he had found a further wire from Rabaud extending yet another invitation. This he accepted, indicating that he would arrive in Marseilles the evening of the thirteenth.51

Sanford undoubtedly was an appropriate emissary to contact Stanley. He could communicate effectively with the explorer who spoke no French and, as an American involved in the International African Association, indeed, one of its officers, he could reassure him on the propriety of participation in such an organization's work. Sanford, furthermore, bore a letter from Bennett, Stanley's employer, which he delivered to the now famous journalist.52 After meeting Stanley's train, Sanford had two hours to explain Leopold's plans and Stanley's potential place in them. Later, at the banquet the same

51Ibid., p. 299.
52Sanford to Bennett (draft), no date, Sanford Papers, Box 28, Folder 2.
evening, Sanford, who along with his colleague, Greindl, was an honorary member of the Marseilles Society, was able to engage the guest of honor in a long conversation on the issue. Sanford explained that, while Bennett and the Herald came first, if Stanley were to be freed of such a commitment, he could pursue his great African work as part of an international enterprise whose "scope and direction was worthy of so great an undertaking." All this was, understandably, too much for Stanley to evaluate properly in so short a time. He therefore declined Leopold's offer, emphasizing that he needed a vacation and time to recuperate after his long, arduous trek across Africa. To Sanford and Greindl he said: "Six months hence, perhaps, I should view things differently; but at present I cannot think of anything more than a long rest and sleep." One of Leopold's hopes was that Stanley could be induced to visit Brussels where the Royal charm could be employed to best advantage. The weary Stanley likewise declined this invitation. A rumor developed that, on the train to Marseilles, Stanley had met a mysterious Englishman who had turned him against Leopold's

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53 Ibid. It appears that Bennett had not yet decided to release the reporter who lived his own best-selling adventures—he was probably awaiting Stanley's decision. See also Stanley, op. cit., I, 21.

54 Stanley, loc. cit.
scheme before Sanford could reach him. Until this story is substantiated, which seems unlikely,\textsuperscript{55} we must be satisfied with the explanation of Stanley's position based upon his physical exhaustion and his desire, natural enough, to see how the British would react to his Congo intelligence.

There should be no doubt that Leopold was extremely disappointed with the apparent failure of the Marseilles mission. He and his associates, nevertheless, continued to work toward Stanley's eventual employment. When Sanford returned to the United States shortly after his fruitless Marseilles venture, he again discreetly made contact with Bennett to determine the latter's position since Stanley's return in view of the explorer's negative reaction to Leopold's proposals.\textsuperscript{56} The newspaper tsar was evidently not entirely unfavorably disposed toward the idea of letting Stanley go, for Leopold's plans proceeded unaltered. Sanford kept in touch with Stanley throughout the Winter, Spring and Summer of 1878, occasionally visiting him, and they eventually became quite friendly.


\textsuperscript{56}Sanford was not to seek out Mr. Bennett but, rather, make their meeting appear accidental. Greindl to Sanford, Jan. 31, 1878, Sanford Papers, Box 24, Folder 18.
It seems to have been Sanford's advice which led to Stanley's vacation in Switzerland, a country Sanford was known to have recommended to others. The Alps provided him with the restful atmosphere which he had, until then, been unable to find since his return to the pressures of civilization and it was there that he wrote his international best seller, *Through the Dark Continent*.

The explorer met with disappointment in his endeavors to interest the British Government in the Congo. His lectures and newspaper interviews attracted popular attention, but official Britain was cold to all his attempts to encourage annexation or to establish a protectorate in the area. Failing in that, and having given his publisher the manuscript of his book, Stanley turned to Leopold. In June, 1878, he appeared in Brussels for his first meeting with the King. Leopold, it appears, had nearly given up hope after failing to receive any word from Stanley. The latter's silence worried the King to such an extent that he was consider-

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When the long-desired meeting occurred, the Belgian monarch was favorably impressed with Stanley and his elaborate proposals for opening the Congo country with a railway and network of steamers. Stanley was not yet, however, signed to any formal contract. Leopold still had to complete arrangements for a new organization with a commercial orientation and to find financial supporters. Stanley gradually accustomed himself to the idea of working for the King and the African Association, unaware of Leopold's plans for a special commercial project, but he was a man who, once deciding on the direction he would take, would not long delay getting under way. To keep the impatient man-of-action occupied and to maintain a dependable link with him, Leopold asked Sanford to continue as his intermediary. The American encouraged Stanley to associate himself with Leopold and actually managed to keep matters in suspended animation until necessary arrangements could be completed. Sanford also obtained from him much useful information.


60 Greindl to Sanford, June 11, 1878, Sanford Papers, Box 24, Folder 18.

for the King. Stanley was pleased to draw upon his experience to provide Sanford with estimates of expedition costs and for establishing and maintaining stations and communications systems. He also was quite free with his criticism of the aims and methods of the African Association.62

It was no simple matter for Leopold to find backers for his new project based upon Stanley's proposals. His agents were active in Belgian, Dutch, French and German financial circles.63 Among the investors who eventually joined in the venture were some Dutchmen representing the trading firm, l'Affrikaansche Handelsvereeniging, which had long been established at the mouth of the Congo,64 and who did not approve of Stanley's plans. They put forth their own counter proposals to Leopold and sought to enlist the support of the other interested investors in their own design.65 Whereas Stanley desired to undertake an expedition to establish stations which

62Stanley to Sanford, Sept. 3, 1878; Sept. 28, 1878; Sept. 30, 1878; Oct. 19, 1878, Sanford Papers, Box 27, Folder 2.

63Greindl to Sanford, June 17, 1878, ibid., Box 24, Folder 18.

64Thomson, Fondation d'Etat Indépendant du Congo, p. 67.

could serve as bases for subsequent operations, the Dutch called for the creation of a research committee which would send out under Stanley a special scientific expedition composed of engineers and specialists to investigate conditions for railway construction.66 Stanley was interested in longlasting employment, not a brief fact-finding mission, and was convinced that engineers facing the rigors of the Congo without bases and provisions already laid out for them would quickly perish.67 It seems, too, that Stanley was slow to realize that Leopold did not especially intend his Congo project to fit into the general work of the African Association. Stanley believed that he should establish contact from the Congo to the Association's East African expeditions, lest the latter operations be useless.68 Sanford was in agreement with Stanley as to the nature of the first work, explaining to Baron Greindl that a smaller, more permanent expedition was "such in fact as I have all along from the outset had in view."69 The

66Ibid.

67Sanford to Greindl (draft), no date, Sanford Papers, Box 29, Folder 2.

68Stanley to Sanford, Oct. 19, 1878, ibid., Box 27, Folder 2.

69Sanford to Greindl (draft), no date, ibid., Box 29, Folder 2.
King's work in the Congo, thought Sanford, could keep its philanthropic and humanitarian character by following Stanley's plan while paving the way for the commercial and railway enterprise which need not be so much identified with the Royal name.70 As the historian Thomson has pointed out, the Monarch's eventual position represented a compromise between the two plans.71 The Stanley mission was to be more than a fact finding expedition but, when the stations were successfully established, it was intended that the commercial aspect rather than the African Association's objectives would predominate in the Congo, thus setting this work distinctly apart from the efforts in East Africa.72

The King did not discard the idea of a study group. On November 25, a meeting in Brussels resulted in the formation of the Comité d'Études du Haut Congo. This was an international group consisting of Leopold; M. Lambert, the King's banker; Baron Greindl, the Secretary-General of the African Association;73 several other

70Ibid.
71Thomson, Fondation de l'État Indépendant du Congo, p. 64.
72Ibid.
73Either just before the 25th, or shortly thereafter, Greindl was replaced as Secretary-General by Colonel Maximillian Strauch of the Belgian Army, who then also took over the direction of Comité affairs. See
Belgians and Frenchmen, officials of the Dutch l'AFrikaanshe Handelsvereeniging, and the two British merchant-investors, James F. Hutton and William Mac-Kinnon. The participants agreed to cooperate in extending commerce and industry on the Congo by means of study and exploration. They subscribed a total of 742,500 francs, of which the Dutch firm was, after Leopold himself, the largest investor. Political objectives were to have no place in the Comité's work, which

Greindl to Sanford, Nov. 18, 1878, Sanford Papers, Box 24, Folder 18; Stanley, op. cit., I, 28. Thomson, Fondation de l'Etat Indépendant du Congo, p. 68.

74 Thomson, Fondation de l'Etat Indépendant du Congo, pp. 65-66. Leopold had hoped to bring in other British notables, particularly those associated with railway projects of the day but, due to their fears of international political complications arising from Comité aims, they declined. See Anstey, op. cit., p. 66. Sanford did not become a member of the Comité. He probably would have participated had his financial position made him a desirable investor, but he was beginning to suffer reverses which ruled out ventures of this scale. It is interesting to note however, that Stanley regretted that there were no American subscribers to the Comité, and suggested to Leopold that royal funds be used to enter a subscription in Sanford's name. There is no evidence that this was done. See Stanley to Sanford, Feb. 27, 1879, Sanford Papers, Box 27, Folder 3.

75 Thomson, Fondation de l'Etat Indépendant du Congo, p. 66. William Mackinnon, the wealthy Scot engaged in Indian Ocean shipping, also was an investor, putting up some 25,000 francs. Strauch to Mackinnon, March 26, 1879, Mackinnon Papers, Reel VII (University of London, School of Oriental and African Studies), selected films held by the Midwest Library Center, Chicago.
was to remain secret as long as possible.  

Here one begins to suspect that emphasis upon secrecy was prompted by the apprehension that certain national interests might be opposed to the Comité's objectives which, by their very nature, were potentially political. The Comité was to be formed for a three year period after which time, providing that Stanley's expedition proved fruitful and promising, two new organizations were to be created. One would be concerned with the construction of a railroad to link the upper and lower Congos, and the other would operate along the upper river, tapping the commerce of that region.

Stanley had met most of these involved in the Comité at a preliminary meeting earlier in November; then, in conferences with them on December 9, 1878, and January 2, 1879, plans for his expedition were worked out. He received his final instructions at the latter meeting with most members present. Besides his more obvious objectives, he was authorized to acquire proper sites to erect stations and land on both sides of the route in order to prevent its falling into the hands of parties unfavorable to the Comité.  

Surely at this

76Thomson, Fondation de l'Etat Indépendant du Congo, p. 67.

77Stanley, op. cit., I, 27.  

78Ibid., I, 50.
point, Stanley, admittedly naive on political questions, must have had some doubts about the avowedly humanitarian nature of the whole operation, but he gave no clear expression of them. What mattered to the refreshed but by now considerably frustrated explorer was that, at long last, he was to be on his way. He left Europe late in January en route to Zanzibar, there to enlist experienced carriers who had previously served him before proceeding to the west coast.79

Before Stanley reached the Mediterranean upon his return from Zanzibar, the Afrikaansche Handelevereening had failed. A Dutch concern, the Pincoff Company, was involved in a financial scandal, and its ruin brought down the other organization in which it was a large shareholder. To some it seemed that a chain reaction might now affect the Comité. Sanford had been in contact with the Pincoffs and had warned the King that the Dutch house was attempting to exploit the Comité by forcing the latter to buy it out and thus relieve its precarious financial position.80 After rushing back to Brussels from the United States when he heard of this development, Sanford urged Leopold himself to capitalize on the

79Ibid., I, 31.
80Sanford to Leopold (draft), June 1, 1879, Sanford Papers, Box 29, Folder 12.
situation. He urged the King to buy out the other subscribers and thus prevent his being used by them in any manner. By eliminating these other commercial interests, Sanford advised, Leopold could restore to the enterprise the purely philanthropic character which Sanford and Stanley had favored in the first place. Leopold would then be in a position to create a commercial corporation of his own, on the order of the British East India Company, into which he could invite these subscribers if he felt obligated to them. Sanford was keenly aware of the danger to the King's international image from his association with self-centered business interests, and he wanted him to become a complete master of the situation resulting from Stanley's expedition. Appreciating the political implications of the Comité's projected activity in the Congo, Sanford foresaw that bold steps might eventually be necessary and that they should be unencumbered by commercial and business considerations.

81 Ibid.; Sanford's note, no addressee or date, ibid., Box 29, Folder 4.
82 Ibid. Roeykens contends that the germ of the plan Sanford was pushing on the King at this point was originally planted by Baron Lambermont, Secretary-General of the Belgian Foreign Ministry and another of Leopold's trusted advisors. He believes that Sanford probably was won over to the idea by Lambermont and Greindl. Whatever the origin of the proposal, Sanford
The Comité ceased to exist on November 17, 1879. Acting on the advice of Sanford and other colleagues, Leopold then dissolved the organization so as not to be responsible to anyone and not to be restricted by any contract. But, whereas Sanford had supported this move so that the Congo work could be brought into harmony with the philanthropic emphasis of the International African Association, the King acted in order that he would be free to impose a political orientation upon the Congo project. All of Leopold's African operations now came under his exclusive control. The name "Comité" was retained to screen the actual circumstances and it was officially used along with that of "The International African Association" to give the impression of two separate organizations, neither of which was publicly known to be the King himself. In late 1882 or early 1883, a new title, "The International Association of the Congo," worked hard to see it implemented. See Les Débuts . . ., pp. 312-332.

The shareholders were informed that most of the capital had been expended and that what remained was needed for obligations already contracted. Leopold, through his banker, Lambert, agreed to buy out all subscribers, returning their original investments if they would dissolve the Comité. They also were to be given opportunities to invest in any commercial ventures growing out of the Congo work under the King's direction. Thomson, Fondation de l'État Indépendant du Congo, pp. 73-74.

Ibid., p. 74.
began to replace both of the other two but, until it became widely accepted, it was used along with the others, which only deepened the obscurity. The resulting confusion which was exactly what Leopold desired, was especially marked among Washington officials during the negotiations for United States recognition in 1883-1884.

Leopold, accordingly, had decided to alter the nature of Stanley's mission. In July, Colonel Strauch had carried the King's new scheme to the explorer at Gibraltar. Now Stanley was instructed to undertake the creation of a confederation of free Negro republics, a new state in Africa. Concessions of land for stations should be obtained from tribal chiefs and then efforts were to be made to extend influence over neighboring chiefs. Each station, under European command, was to be the nucleus of a Negro republic. The whole structure would be directed by a president named by Leopold.

Stanley was not enthusiastic about this drastically new approach, arguing for the original philanthropic, scientific and commercial program, but he nonetheless left for the Congo where he began his labors in August. He in fact proceeded to follow a policy much

85 Ibid., pp. 89-90; 161-62.
86 Ibid., pp. 71-72.
like the one agreed upon with the Comité in December, and Leopold was obliged to begin a long and never fully successful effort to bring him around to the new policy. Although he knew of the Dutch company's failure and the Comité's resultant financial troubles, he was not informed of the King's plans to dissolve the Comité and to assume sole authority himself. In the competitive scramble for the Congo which soon developed, his poor understanding of Leopold's real position and his own role in the overall program was a definite disadvantage to the explorer.

Sanford also was a key link between the Belgian Monarch and another very significant figure in the African project, William Mackinnon. Starting out as a clerk with a British firm in India, this shrewd and enterprising Scotsman rose to be a co-founder of a trading concern, Mackinnon and Mackenzie Company. He later founded the British India Steam Navigation Company, which became the largest and most successful in the Indian Ocean trade. In 1882, the line opened service between Zanzibar and Aden and, from that time on, Mackinnon displayed an avid interest in Africa. Besides being one of the wealthiest men in Britain, he was a pious humanitarian and desired to check the slave trade by replacing it

\[87 \text{Ibid.}\]
with legitimate commerce. While obviously aware that such trade would mean profits for shippers and exporters, he also wanted to provide something other than European manufactures for the Africans. He thus founded the Imperial British East Africa Company to exploit the commercial potential of the area and helped establish the East African Scottish Mission to minister to spiritual needs. These motives, common among European imperialists of the late nineteenth century, explain Mackinnon's readiness to enter into the work begun by Leopold II.88

The International African Association expeditions sent out to East Africa in 1879 and 1880 included one venture referred to as the "elephant expedition." It was believed that these docile mammals might prove the answer to the transportation problem in Africa, and a group commanded by F. F. Carter, a Belgian, undertook to determine the matter. Sanford, Mackinnon and Strauch made the preparations. The former obtained all available data, communicating with Stanley and others for advice and suggestions, and helped work out the contract terms for personnel, while Mackinnon used his Indian connec-

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tions to obtain the elephants, promptly providing the animals, Indian mahouts (trainers and drivers) and their transportation to Dar es Salaam.\(^8^9\) Indian elephants, although smaller than the African variety, are much more adaptable as draft animals, even though recent research indicates that, contrary to traditional belief, African elephants can be trained to perform certain tasks.

Although initial reports from Carter were promising,\(^9^0\) eventually all the huge beasts died and the expedition proved a costly experiment.\(^9^1\) Undaunted, Sanford and Mackinnon suggested that donkeys be tried next and both donated some to an East African expedition in 1880.\(^9^2\) All attempts to find substitutes for more expensive human carriers failed, but Leopold's main concern by now was the Congo, where terrain and the tsetse fly precluded such experiments, hence the matter was dropped.

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\(^8^9\)Sanford draft, April 25, 1879, addressee unknown, Sanford Papers, Box 29, Folder 2; Mackinnon to Sanford, April 12, 1879, ibid., Box 127, Folder 2.

\(^9^0\)One of the officers of the expedition wrote to a friend that "... there is not the slightest doubt that elephants are baggage carriers of Africa." Martin to Cadenhead (copy), Aug. 7, 1879, ibid., Box 24, Folder 7.

\(^9^1\)The expedition absorbed 42,000 francs immediately. It included 100 men and carried "elaborate gifts" for the chiefs along the way who would be induced to grant land for establishing "elephant stations." Sanford to Stanley, Aug. 3, 1879, ibid., Box 29, Folder 15.

\(^9^2\)Strauch to Sanford, July 10, 1880, ibid., Box 27, Folder 9.
Sanford continued to act as intermediary between Leopold and Mackinnon. Since the Scotsman spoke no French, Sanford frequently relayed information and requests from the King. Mackinnon also relied upon Sanford, who became his close personal friend, to communicate with the palace in Brussels on personal matters as well as on questions pertaining to mutual interests in Africa. In 1879, Leopold began to consider the employment of Colonel Charles "Chinese" Gordon in his African operations. Mackinnon was the King's chief contact with Gordon in negotiations which dragged on until 1883, while Sanford forwarded Leopold's messages to the influential Scotsman. The King used Sanford whenever he was asking a favor since he felt that Sanford's friendship with Mackinnon and his suave technique would insure the most favorable impression.

93 Mackinnon once asked Sanford to determine if the King would think it proper if he, Mackinnon, gave presents to members of the Royal family upon occasions of birth, marriage, etc. Devaux (one of Leopold's private secretaries) to Mackinnon, April 13, 1882, Mackinnon Papers, Reel 1.

94 Gordon, by 1883, finally convinced that such a position would allow him to strike a blow at the slave trade, agreed to become Stanley's successor on the Congo. However, after pressure from high places in Britain, he obtained a release from Leopold in order that he could direct the fatal Sudan expedition. See Anstey, op. cit., p. 81.

95 Sanford to Leopold (draft), Nov. 12, 1879, Sanford Papers, Box 29, Folder 12.

96 Devaux to Sanford, no date, ibid., Box 25, Folder 19.
Having been highly instrumental in bringing Stanley into Leopold's service, Sanford was frequently consulted on the employment of other personnel and was requested himself to recruit men. For the 1879 expedition, Stanley originally sought fifteen young American Negroes "with good characters" to serve a three-year term on the Congo. 97 Hardly free of the racial prejudice typical of his time, Stanley, nevertheless, could work with men of any race, and the employment of American Negroes as officers under him might have been an interesting development. However, while Sanford endeavored to find the right men, Stanley, under prompting from Leopold, who had little respect for colored men's capabilities, changed his mind. He now asked that Sanford enlist several white Americans and send them to Strauch for orders. 98 Sanford continued to suggest that Americans be used in the African expeditions and for supervising the proposed stations, but he found few qualified individuals interested in the work while those he recommended were not accepted. 99

97Stanley to Sanford, Dec. 20, 1878, ibid., Box 27, Folder 2.

98Stanley to Sanford, 1879 (exact date unknown), telegram; Stanley to Sanford, Feb. 27, 1879, ibid., Box 27, Folder 3.

99Strauch to Sanford, October 30, 1882, Box 27, Folder 11; Sanford to J. C. Bancroft Davis (draft),
While Stanley pushed up the Congo on his first expedition for Leopold, the French were beginning to stir. In the late 1870's Count Savorgan de Brazza, a naturalized French citizen of Italian extraction serving in the French Navy, explored the Ogooué River in the hope of finding a practical route to the interior of the long ignored French Gabon. He reached the Alima River, which flows into the Congo, but sickness forced him to turn back. When he returned to Europe and learned of Stanley's exploits in the Congo basin, he decided to go back and claim the territory for France. In this, he had the support of the French Government, which secretly commissioned him to make territorial claims for it on the Ogooué and Congo, and he was financed partly by the French National Committee of the International African Association.\(^{100}\)

In order to make the project appear as merely another innocuous exploring expedition, De Brazza and French officials managed to have the Paris Geographical Society announce that the mission would explore the region between the Gaboon River and Lake Chad.\(^{101}\)

\(^{100}\)Thomson, *Fondation de l'Etat Indépendant du Congo*, pp. 78-80.

Figure 1. Map of the Lower Congo.
De Brazza left for Africa in December, 1879. By June, 1880, he had erected a station at Franceville on the Ogooué, and then set out for the Congo. He had a relatively small party and his route, though longer, proved less difficult than Stanley's. Ascending the Ogooué to the Lefini, he then followed the latter stream southeastward to the Congo, which he reached in September. The following month found him at his main objective, Stanley Pool, a lake-like expanse on the Congo about 250 miles from the coast. There he negotiated a treaty with a local chief, Makoko, which gave France a stretch of territory on the north or right bank of the Pool and less impressive claims to the left bank.

Leopold had been informed of De Brazza's real aims by Sanford, whose many French contacts proved invaluable throughout the mounting competition with France. Sanford had a mysterious friend who, in some manner, gained access to both De Brazza's letters to his family and to his expedition notes.102 The King, once aware of French intentions, endeavored without success to get Stanley to race ahead and prevent De Brazza's coup.103 In response

102 Sanford to Leopold, n.d. (draft), in Robert Stanley Thomson, "Léopold et Le Congo," Congo, I (Feb., 1931), 188-189; Sanford draft, addressee and date unknown, Sanford Papers, Box 29, Folder 2.

to urgent pleas for speed, Stanley simply reminded Leopold and Strauch that he had already discovered the territory in question over two years before. Besides, he argued, he could not proceed without establishing a route which would provide good communications between the interior bases and the coast.\textsuperscript{104} Stanley's late arrival at the Pool and the French claim meant that Leopold's acquisition of the Congo would prove more difficult than he expected.

By utilizing his special sources of information and interviewing French officials, Sanford was able to predict with some accuracy French plans respecting the Congo. He warned Leopold that De Brazza would probably return to exploit his earlier work, find a better route to the Congo and claim still more territory for France.\textsuperscript{105} When Stanley returned on his second Congo mission for Leopold in late 1882, he appreciated the need for speedier action and the acquisition of territory for political purposes. His officers now secured for Leopold the Niari-Kwilu district north of the Congo, not yet

\textsuperscript{104}Stanley, \textit{The Congo \ldots}, I, 159.

\textsuperscript{105}Not only did he know the contents of De Brazza's letters, Sanford also was in touch with the British Baptist missionaries, Bentley and Crudgington, who had journeyed to the Pool shortly before Stanley. Sanford to Devaux (draft), n.d., in Thomson, "Léopold II et Le Congo \ldots," p. 190.
claimed by France, and considered a very effective route to the upper Congo. Three expeditions successfully established stations and concluded treaties with paramount chiefs ceding sovereign rights to the International Congo Association, as the King's organization was now known. This afforded Leopold a valuable counter to the French success at Stanley Pool which was to prove essential in the bargaining developing at the time of the Berlin Conference. The King would then need every advantage he could muster for, not only was there France to contend with, but Portugal revived an interest in the Congo going back to the late fifteenth century in an attempt to check Leopold's claims and enter some of its own. Sanford, meanwhile, was giving increased attention to the United States and its reaction to these African events. It was in his native land that Sanford accomplished the remarkable feats which enabled Leopold to overcome the growing movement against him.

106 Ibid., Thomson, Fondation de l'Etat Indépendant du Congo, pp. 94-96.
107 Ibid.
Sanford wanted the United States to support the International African Association's work. He not only believed that the organization's humanitarian aims deserved the sympathy and cooperation of all great powers, but he also saw in the Congo great commercial opportunities for Americans which should be encouraged by Washington. Then, too, international complications were developing which required the Association to seek aid and comfort from every quarter. Even before De Brazza's exploits put the French into contention, Portugal was waking from its long slumber on the Congo. The Iberian nation had ancient claims to both banks of the river's mouth by right of prior discovery in the late fifteenth century but had done little to demonstrate that she occupied and controlled the territory. The Portuguese maintained only a few factories near the Congo mouth and on the Angolan coast, but occasionally sending a trading expedition into the interior. To strengthen her claims
now that other Europeans were appearing on the scene, Portugal turned to its old ally, Britain. The British, aroused by French activity, actually prompted Portugal, hoping to use her to block France and to secure commercial privileges for themselves in the process. After long preliminaries, negotiations began in 1882 toward an Anglo-Portuguese treaty which would secure British recognition of Portugal's claims to the Congo.\(^1\) Sanford endeavored to enlist United States influence to offset opposition to Leopold's organization which was developing in Europe.

As early as 1879 Sanford began his campaign to interest the American Government in the Congo. In January of that year, he requested from Secretary of State William M. Evarts a check to see that Portuguese claims did not interfere with American rights. Since the U. S. S. Ticonderoga was then cruising in West African waters, Sanford suggested that its commander be instructed to stop at the mouth of the Congo where, in case of Portuguese assertion of sovereignty over the region, he should express his government's determination to protect all American enterprise, including Stanley's

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\(^1\)See Anstey, op. cit., passim. This treaty, although abortive, was a significant element in the international embroglio which culminated in the Berlin Conference—all of which will be treated here in course.
expeditions. Evidently Sanford's appeals were not ignored, for Portugal was notified of America's interest in the great journalist's work and its opposition to any exclusive claims which would close the territory to free trade. This was at least a beginning, but it could hardly do much to shape larger developments underway. The United States government would have to be brought into the picture in a more meaningful way.

Upon Garfield's election to the Presidency in 1880, James C. Blaine became Secretary of State. Blaine and Sanford got on well together and their association was to be a long one spanning Blaine's two non-consecutive terms as Secretary. Sanford received invitations to Blaine's social functions early in 1881, indicating that he enjoyed relatively easy access to the important Republican leader. In June, Sanford urged him to discourage military occupation of the Congo by European powers and advised, in the interests of United States

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2Sanford to Evarts (draft), Jan. 25, 1879, Sanford Papers, Box 105, Folder 15. Although Stanley never formally became an American citizen, he believed himself to be one on the basis of his army oath during the Civil War, and Sanford continually claimed him as American in attempts to give the United States some involvement in the Congo.


4Blaine to Sanford (telegram), March 11, 1881, Sanford Papers, Box 4, Folder 12.
trade, that he should try to arrive at some understanding with other interested nations to prevent monopolies or exclusive policies from interfering with commerce in the Congo basin. There is no evidence that Blaine was willing to take such moves at that time, but Sanford continued to keep the issue before him so long as the former remained at the State Department.

Garfield's assassination brought Chester A. Arthur into the White House in September, 1881. Those interested in Africa believed that he would be more inclined than his predecessors to appreciate the need for full investigation of the huge continent's commercial possibilities. Sanford's friend, John H. B. Latrobe, pointed out that, as a New Yorker who had been the Customs Collector of that port, Arthur had "more commercial intelligence than Grant, Hayes, or Garfield ever had or could have in their western natures." The new President, furthermore, was one of the Grant "Stalwarts," among whom Sanford had established important


6 Blaine to Sanford, Sept. 3, 1881, Sanford Papers, Box 22, Folder 1.

contacts. Indeed, Sanford counted Arthur and other prominent New York Republicans, such as Roscoe Conkling, as friends. In 1884, President Arthur and several members of his Cabinet spent some days as Sanford's guests in the latter's Florida home.

In 1883, it was decided in Brussels to seek United States recognition of the International African Association's flag. Sanford already had mentioned such action to the President in a letter of 1882 but, by the following year, fears of possible French or Portuguese maneuvers against the Association encouraged Leopold's coterie to stage a well organized campaign aimed at securing official American support with all possible haste. The hope was that United States recognition

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8 Although abroad for long periods of time, Sanford maintained friendships with leading politicians. President and Mrs. Grant visited him at his Florida home in 1880. See Malloy, op. cit., p. 35.

9 Ibid.

10 Thomson (Fondation . . . , p. 147) felt that the plan originated with Colonel Strauch but that the idea might have arisen independently with Sanford. Considering previous efforts to interest his country in the Congo and his excellent political contacts, one is inclined to feel that Sanford might well have given Strauch the idea for the American campaign.

11 Sanford to Arthur, 1882, exact date unknown (draft), Sanford Papers, Box 105, Folder 1.

12 Devaux to Sanford, May 12, 1883, ibid., Box 25, Folder 19.
would set in motion a chain reaction by which other nations would follow suite. But it would be a two-pronged attack in case efforts in Washington were unsuccessful. It was believed that France, too, might be encouraged early to recognize the Association's flag, and negotiations with Paris opened about the same time that the Sanford Mission got under way. Leopold contacted Arthur in a series of letters to set the stage for Sanford's work. The latter assisted the King in drafting and translating the letters and himself forwarded some of them to Arthur. In this correspondence, the President was told of the peaceful and constructive nature of the Association's work and, in the key communication, which

13 Mackinnon to Sanford, Oct. 9, 1883, ibid., Box 127, Folder 5. Sanford later explained that one reason for urgency in this respect was that Stanley and his staff might well be treated as "pirates" if they did not have the backing of a recognized flag. Sanford to Frelinghuysen, Jan. 12, 1885, Diplomatic Despatches, Germany (State Department of Records, Washington, National Archives). The question of recognition also became important in other connections. In the negotiations with Col. Charles Gordon for employment as Stanley's successor in the Congo, Leopold was told that Gordon would not accept the position without a recognized flag which would "justify him in establishing law and order." Mackinnon to Leopold, no date, Mackinnon Papers, Reel IV.

14 Emile Banning, op. cit., p. 7.

15 Leopold to Sanford, Oct. 25, 1883, Sanford Papers, Box 25, Folder 14.

16 Sanford to Arthur, June 13, 1883 (draft), Thomson, "Leopold II et Henry S. Sanford," Congo II (Oct.,
was to be delivered personally by Sanford, he was requested to have the United States recognize the Association's flag as a friendly and neutral one by means of either a declaration or a convention.

In mid-November, 1883, Sanford left Brussels for the United States, equipped with full authority to carry out in the King's name negotiations with American officials. His packet of materials included maps, copies of treaties, commentaries by international lawyers—anything that might prove useful in presenting his case.17

He landed in New York on the 27th and dined with Judge Daly of the American Geographical Society before continuing on to Washington, which he reached the following day.18 In a note to his wife, he outlined his projected course of action, explaining that he would endeavor to bring influence to bear upon President Arthur, the press, the New York Chamber of Commerce and the American Geographical Society.19 Promising reports in code20

17For the complete list, see Appendix I.
18Sanford to Strauch, Nov., 1883 (draft), Sanford Papers, Box 29, Folder 16.
19Sanford to his wife, Nov. 27, 1883, ibid., Box 83, Folder 7.
20Strauch worked out an elaborate code for cable-
were soon received in Brussels. Sanford's earliest success was his work with the Chief Executive. One day after his arrival at the capital, he had presented the King's letter and had conversed with the Chief Executive and Secretary of State. Sanford must have made a favorable impression for, in his annual message to Congress, delivered on December 4, 1883, the President included a paragraph, in typical Sanford phaseology and including his principal emphases, on the advisability of United States support for free trade and neutrality in the Congo.\(^2\) Leopold and Colonel Strauch were ecstatic over this achievement which represented a tremendous boost for their cause.

A central figure in this episode and other events surrounding Sanford's work in Washington was Secretary of State Frederick T. Frelinghuysen. President Arthur relied heavily upon his advice on foreign affairs and deferred to him on problems of international law.\(^2\) Another of the "Stalwart" Republicans, the Secretary was

\(^1\)See Strauch to Sanford, Nov. 16, 1883, ibid., Box 27, Folder 11.


\(^3\)Sanford to Strauch, n.d. (draft), Sanford Papers, Box 29, Folder 16.
not an innovator in policy-making. His generally conservative approach to his office was one of caution, in harmony with State Department traditions. However, he admitted that Africa interested him, and that it engaged much of his attention. John Latrobe, an experienced observer, predicted in 1882 that the new head of the State Department would be more understanding and cooperative on African matters than his predecessors.

Sanford, therefore, did his utmost to enlist the Secretary's support. Frelinghuysen was assured that the Association's work was most proper and philanthropic and that American commerce, and thus American citizens, ultimately would benefit from it. In order to prevent any interference by other Europeans with the liberal, humanitarian government being established by Leopold's officers in the Congo, Sanford urged that the United States should make its position clear in strong support of the Association. Only by such action, he held, could the


24 Frelinghuysen to Coppinger, Dec. 27, 1882, Letters of the American Colonization Society, Letters Received, Vol. 249.

25 Latrobe to Coppinger, Feb. 24, 1882, ibid., Letters Received, Vol. 246.
United States help insure free trade on the great river. On the matter of French claims, Sanford denounced De Brazza's work, and, hypocritically, in view of Stanley's methods, suggested to Frelinghuysen that the United States should refuse to recognize as valid any cession of territory to France by "savages."  

Frelinghuysen wrote confidentially to Sanford that he leaned toward "recognition of the neutrality of the stations along the Congo," and that he would call the matter to Arthur's attention, but that there were certain aspects of the Congo situation which made him withhold full recommendation to the President. He questioned whether the so-called "states" of the Congo, which the Association claimed to be establishing, were

\[\text{26 Sanford to Frelinghuysen, n.d. (draft), Sanford Papers, Box 29, Folder 9. Continuing in this context, Sanford advised: "The assumption of France based on the flimsy and specious pretext of a treaty with an ignorant chief who denies any knowledge of the transaction we could afford to pass over without notice, did they [sic] affect in way the interests of this country and its people." Sanford to Frelinghuysen, Dec. 30, 1882, ibid., Box 29, Folder 9. These remarks of Sanford certainly were ill-advised, considering the great emphasis which the Association was putting upon the right of Congolese chiefs to cede it territory.}\]

\[\text{27 Ibid.}\]

\[\text{28 It was Frelinghuysen who, in response to Sanford's requests, had an American naval vessel visit the mouth of the Congo in 1883. Frelinghuysen to Sanford, Aug. 4, 1883, Sanford Papers, Box 24, Folder 11; Sanford to Strauch, n.d. (draft), ibid., Box 29, Folder 16.}\]
sufficiently self-sustaining to give him justification for recognition of the flag. Sanford was advised by Leopold to counter the Secretary's reservations by explaining that district chiefs had agreed with native kings to form a union under Association auspices, and that the stations and territories thus had a legal government. The Association, he was to be assured, lived only for the states which it was helping to found; it had no commerce of its own and paid no dividends; and would constitute a part of those states' lives only "until she dissolves in them." But, the King added, he was not seeking recognition of the governments of the stations and territories (now more frequently called "states"); only that their flag be recognized as friendly. To assist Sanford in defending the private organization's right to acquire sovereignty in the Congo, the King sent the favorable opinions of two eminent international legal authorities, Sir Travers Twiss of England and the Belgian, Professor M. E. Arntz. These points were sufficiently effective

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29 Sanford to Strauch, n.d. (draft), ibid., Box 29, Folder 16.
30 Devaux to Sanford, Dec. 12, 1883, ibid., Box 25, Folder 19.
31 Strauch to Sanford, Dec. 31, 1883, ibid., Box 27, Folder 11.
with Frelinghuysen to win his full support for recognition and to lead him to use his influence with the Senate.

By January, 1884, the assault on that body was underway. The principal arguments were shrewdly designed to appeal to specific American susceptibilities. Free trade and the Association's intention to respect it were contrasted with the protective French and Portuguese policies in their African colonies. If the Association were evicted from the Congo, the reasoning ran, American traders could expect to see various duties imposed by the countries replacing that organization. The potentially immense Congo market was a major topic of discussion, Sanford readily quoting Stanley's optimistic impressions. Leopold also directed Sanford to emphasize the fact that "mericani" cloth, a cheap American textile widely used in central Africa and shipped by Americans to Zanzibar and the east coast, could be sold more easily and cheaply via the Congo where, in contrast to Zanzibar, there would be no taxes or import duties.

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32 Closely connected with the free trade argument for recognition was the strong resistance of the Association to the projected Anglo-Portuguese Treaty which Sanford was encouraging American statesmen to oppose on the grounds that it would strengthen Portuguese claims and thus perhaps result in Portuguese control with its protective system.

33 Sanford to Latrobe, July 30, 1877 (draft),
Then there was the American work which had resulted in the creation of Liberia. The Congo was compared to that West African republic for American consumption, Leopold once referring to the territory as "the new Liberia." Sanford, it should be noted, sincerely believed that American Negroes, whom he considered "superior to the forest race" in the Congo and physically better able than whites to cope with climatic conditions there, would find humanitarian, evangelical, and business opportunities in Central Africa. He constantly stressed this point during and after the drive for United States recognition. Latrobe, who was cooperating with Sanford in Washington, threw his influence behind the Association because he, too, was convinced that Africa eventually would be civilized by American Negroes. He saw the Congo project as the culmination of his long efforts with Liberia. The anti-slavery aspect of the

ibid., Box 29, Folder 10. Even in 1888, Sanford was able to speak of American Negroes needing only "another Moses to show them the way to the new land of promise, their fatherland." Sanford to the Editor of the New York Herald, June 17, 1888 (draft), ibid., Box 29, Folder 3.

34 Ibid.

35 Latrobe to Sanford, Sept. 22, 1877, ibid., Box 25, Folder 8; Latrobe to Coppinger, Jan. 17, 1861, Letters Received, Vol. 242. Latrobe, however, eventually began to doubt whether America's colored population would find the leadership for the exodus to Africa. He
Association's work was given considerable attention by Sanford for there still existed in the United States a residue of emotion on this issue which he was determined to tap.\textsuperscript{36}

Sanford had a reputation on both sides of the Atlantic as one who gave the finest dinner parties. This "gastronomic diplomacy," as it was called,\textsuperscript{37} upon which Sanford set great store, was put to good use in the campaign to enlist support among influential Congressmen.\textsuperscript{38} Mrs. Sanford joined her husband in Washington early in 1884, adding her charm as hostess during the long party season. Their home, the old Edward

\begin{itemize}
\item realized that Negro leaders desired and expected ultimate social equality in America. These leaders, he felt, saw projects for emigration to Africa as inimical to that end and sure to result in a loss of popularity for those espousing them. Latrobe to Sanford, March 4, 1884, \textit{ibid.}, Box 25, Folder 8.

\item Devaux to Sanford, Jan. 7, 1884, \textit{ibid.}, Box 25, Folder 19.

\item In a hostile article (newspaper unknown), he once was referred to as "Blue Ribbon Sanford" the "gastronomic diplomat." See clipping in \textit{ibid.}, Box 65, Folder 1.

\item During the Civil War, when all American diplomats in Europe strove to win support for the Union cause, Sanford explained to Secretary of State Seward: "This cannot be done simply by subsidizing certain organs of the press; it can be accomplished mainly over a table with good cheer and good liquor upon it and good company around it. I have the greatest faith in this best of weapons." Quoted in Heppner, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 22.
\end{itemize}
Everett mansion on G Street, was the scene of many festive gatherings at which various dignitaries found the conversation turning about the Congo and the question of American recognition. John Latrobe, who later recalled such pleasant evenings, was a frequent guest of the Sanfords, his experience with Liberia being used to impress government figures.39

But not all guests were wined and dined into submission. One strong opponent of the Congo project and American involvement in it was Senator Perry Belmont, a New York Democrat serving on the Foreign Relations Committee. He was given the full treatment at the Sanford home, where he heard his host explain the various advantages certain to accrue to the United States if it would support the Congo cause. Undaunted, Belmont continued to be one of the most vocal critic of the whole affair.40 The Sanford mission, but especially these lavish social affairs, proved expensive. Originally, it had been planned that his visit to Washington, paid for by Leopold, would be brief but, when it appeared that the

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39 Latrobe to Sanford, July 6, 1888, ibid., Box 25, Folder 9; John H. B. Latrobe, Maryland in Liberia (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1885), pp. 90-91.

operation required more time, Sanford decided to remain for the winter. The King agreed to finance the extended stay, but implored his special envoy to recognize the need for economy.41

In lobbying for Leopold in Washington, Sanford was provided with office space by Latrobe and the American Colonization Society. These rooms, located at the corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and Fourth Street, allowed relatively convenient access to the Capitol.42 This organization's officers were most helpful to Sanford throughout his mission, making available to him much data and advice, especially in his efforts to use Liberia as a precedent for United States recognition of the Congo "states" under the head of a private enterprise. Senators doubtful about the legality of dealing with such nebulous entities could be shown letters received by Latrobe's Maryland Colonization Society in 1838 from the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Affairs. In

41 Strauch to Sanford, Jan. 21, 1884, Sanford Papers, Box 27, Folder 12. DeVaux, one of Leopold's secretaries, apparently not sufficiently aware of Sanford's "gala" diplomacy nor of the endless delays characterizing American policy-making, wondered if, by staying on in Washington beyond the period originally agreed upon, Sanford was not taking advantage of the King. DeVaux to Mackinnon, Dec. 14, 1883, Mackinnon Papers, Reel 1.

42 Latrobe to Coppinger, March 5, 1884, Letters of the American Colonization Society, Letters Received, vol. 254.
one of these, the latter body "without any reserve" recognized the agents of the Society at Cape Palmas, Liberia, "as the government of the country ceded to you by the native owners and occupants. . . ."\(^3\) Latrobe further contributed his services by urging the two Senators from his own State of Maryland, Gorman and Green, to support any resolution in behalf of recognition which might come up for a vote in the Senate.\(^4\)

When the Washington mission was planned, Sanford, an old hand at planting newspaper articles, impressed upon King Leopold the advisability of securing press support in the United States. Upon the American's suggestion, the King agreed to let him begin such work in the spring of 1883.\(^5\) Leopold's Association had a valuable friend in James Gordon Bennett of the *New York Herald*. This paper, because of Stanley's connection, probably gave the broadest coverage to African affairs of any journal in the country, and it was clearly sympathetic to the King and the International African Association. Bennett on at least one occasion even requested Sanford

\(^3\)Latrobe to Sanford, March 6, 1884, Sanford Papers, Box 25, Folder 8.

\(^4\)Latrobe to Sanford, March 15, 1884, *ibid.*, Box 25, Folder 8.

\(^5\)Leopold to Sanford, April 29, 1883, *ibid.*, Box 25, Folder 14.
to send in letters and articles. In December, 1883, the Herald in a piece accompanied by a Sanford letter, came out in favor of the United States granting "friendly recognition" to the Association's flag. This article contained all the principal arguments devised in Brussels and explained to the American reader that each of the Association's twenty-two stations was "the center of a little republic," the group of republics forming "a union of states open to the free intercourse of all." And while praising the great philanthropic King of the Belgians and his "selfless" Congo crusade, the paper attacked the greedy British maneuvers believed to be behind the pending Anglo-Portuguese treaty. Sanford was also able to gain some support from the New York Times, which advocated recognition early in 1884 and continued to print pieces favorable to the Association. The newspaper articles influenced by Sanford were appreciated by Leopold, but he was advised to proceed with

46 Bennett to Sanford, Dec. 17, 1883, ibid., Box 22, Folder 2.

47 "America," it held, "ought to be the first to recognize the flag of the Congo States, and the most energetic to take advantage of this new opening for commerce, which happily is to be unvexed by customs house exactions." New York Herald, Dec. 30, 1883, p. 5.

48 Ibid. 49 Ibid.

caution in his remarks bearing upon France and Portugal. It was deemed wise to avoid anything which would seriously offend either country before the Association had acquired more international support.51

Pressure from the American business and commercial world then, as now, was a decisive factor in influencing Congressional opinion. Sanford, accordingly, exploited every possible contact to marshal such support. In the late 1870's, he had initiated inquiries among American business groups respecting their possible financial support of the Association, following advice to concentrate upon the wealthy merchants of New York, Boston and Philadelphia.52 By the summer of 1878, he had decided to focus on New York, but postponed action because of the oppressive financial atmosphere following the Panic of 1877.53 He worked upon the New York Chamber of Commerce the following year. At its meeting on March 6, Sanford emphasized the Congo's commercial potentials and declared that the best way to develop trade with the area was to

51Strauch to Sanford, Jan. 21, 1884, Sanford Papers, Box 27, Folder 12.

52Latrobe to Sanford, Sept. 22, 1877, ibid., Box 25, Folder 8.

53Sanford to Greindl, June 12, 1878 (draft), ibid., Box 29, Folder 3.
support the International Association. These early efforts had not yielded any tangible results but he now undertook to woo the Chamber again. In this new effort his principle colleague was Judge Charles Daly, friendly with many leading New York businessmen and willing to bring his influence to bear on them.

Daly had been active in the Association's behalf in various ways, writing to President Arthur in support of recognition and advising Sanford on certain matters, but his assistance in the case of the New York Chamber was most important. Sanford, who himself still had friends in the influential body, correctly viewed it as the most respected and powerful organization of its kind, and he asked Daly to assist him in enlisting its aid. The Judge in turn prevailed upon Seth Low, whose family's firm long had been engaged in the China trade and who was later to become the Mayor of Brooklyn and President of the Chamber, to propose a resolution based upon Sanford's suggestions. Daly's first draft, made after consultation with Low, was not satisfactory to Sanford who urged a stronger statement. The resolu-

54Draft of Sanford speech, ibid., Box 149, Folder 13; see also the New York Times, March 7, 1879, p. 8.

55Daly to Sanford, Jan. 9, 1884, Sanford Papers, Box 24, Folder 8.
tion, finally submitted to the Chamber and unanimously adopted at a meeting of January 10, 1884, seems to have been acceptable to him. It called on the American Government to insist upon the Congo's neutrality and to oppose all Portuguese pretensions there. The statement, which was sent to the President, also endorsed recognition of the Association's flag.56

The action of this important organization undoubtedly carried weight in Washington, where it was much discussed in the Senate.57 One thousand copies of the resolution were printed at Sanford's expense (Leopold's money) and set out to Congressmen, chambers of commerce throughout the country, and various individuals and business organizations.58 At least one other chamber, that of St. Paul, Minnesota, sent a similar resolution to the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.59 Sanford's New York success, coming hardly more than a month after the Presidential message to Congress, was heartily applauded in the Royal Palace in Brussels.

56 *New York Times*, Jan. 11, 1884, p. 3.

57 Morgan to Sanford, Feb. 1, 1884, Sanford Papers, Box 26, Folder 5.


59 Sanford to Strauch, Feb. 6, 1884 (draft), Sanford Papers, Box 29, Folder 16.
Sanford had to give much attention to the Senate. His major collaborator in this effort was Senator John Tyler Morgan, a Democrat from Alabama, who was Chairman of the important Committee on Foreign Relations. This Southerner worked closely with Sanford and did yeoman service in the fight to win recognition for the Association. He practically put himself at Sanford's disposal, doing his utmost to make his Committee serve his colleague's objectives. One writer has suggested that possible business connections between the two men, conceivably resulting in Morgan becoming deeply obligated to Sanford, might explain the Senator's extremely close cooperation with him.60

One need not go to such lengths in seeking an explanation. Although both men had numerous investments in the Southern states, there is no evidence in the papers surviving either man that they were involved in any common business or investment enterprise or that Sanford did or could have exerted any such pressures on Morgan. The Senator was an expansionist who regularly advocated greater American involvement in world trade

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and who supported various imperialistic proposals. More important, he was convinced that colonization was the answer to the race problem in the United States. At a time when others who had once hoped for such a solution realized that America's Negroes were little interested in emigration, Morgan steadfastly believed in it. Africa, he contended, held the key to a great future for the American Negro.

The Congo venture of Leopold's Association seemed to Morgan the perfect beginning in the opening of the continent. When developed, with the help of the American Negroes, the Congo would provide great business and commercial opportunities to the South's colored population, and the resulting trade would benefit the United States.

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62 As late as 1887, he told an assembly of Southern Negroes: "I am not trying to induce our Negro population to emigrate [sic], though I know that they are now preparing to return to Africa, and will go there sooner than the white people desire [sic]." African Repository, LXIII (Jan. 1887) no. 1, p. 18. When, in 1890, one Negro minister left for the Congo as part of a Southern Presbyterian mission, Morgan wrote to Sanford: "I believe that this is a pioneer movement from the South that will be followed by a rapid development of a great draft of our Negroes to their native land." July 19, 1890, Sanford Papers, Box 26, Folder 5. Morgan's only biographer completely ignores the Senator's work on the Congo matter and his interest in Africa. August Carl Radke, Jr., "John Tyler Morgan, an Expansionist Senator, 1877-1907" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Washington, 1953).
as well as the new Africa. Thus, it appears that the Senator had his own cause which prompted his zealous efforts in Sanford's behalf. There were others who cooperated with Sanford for similar motives. For example, Senator R. L. Gibson of Louisiana also supported recognition in the belief that, if handled correctly, the Negroes would voluntarily return to Africa en masse.

On January 14, 1884, Morgan requested of the Secretary of State information on the Congo for use by his Committee. Frelinghuysen relied on Sanford to assist in its preparation. Furnished with this, the Senator on the 24th introduced a resolution directing the Committee

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63Burnett (op. cit., p. 218) erroneously suggested that Morgan's emigration talk was only a screen "to mask imperialistic goals."

64John Tyler Morgan, "The Future of the American Negro," The North American Review CXXXIX (1884), passim. He actually favored the creation of a company "by Act of Congress," which would provide official support for emigration and the establishment of business and trade in Africa. Morgan to Sanford, July 19, 1890, Sanford Papers, Box 26, Folder 5.

65Gibson felt that Southerners had mistakenly not conferred with Negro leaders on the emigration question. He saw evidence that the blacks "wanted to be by themselves since being around whites reminded them of their former slavery," and eventually, this urge "would focus their attention on Africa, 'their fatherland'." Gibson to Sanford, 1890, ibid., Box 24, Folder 12.

to investigate the matter with the aim of drawing up a proposal for action by the President or Congress. In order to provide an outline or suggestion for the development of a policy statement, Morgan brought a resolution before the Senate on February 25. This denied the right of any European powers to intervene at the mouth of the Congo; it upheld the legality of the Association's occupancy of the Congo territory, commending its aims; and advised the United States to recognize its flag.

Now the Senate referred the proposal to the Committee on Foreign Relations. A second resolution, offered by Morgan on the 26th, called upon the President immediately to take all necessary measures for affording protection for American citizens and their trade in the "Free States of the Congo." It was likewise directed to Morgan's Committee for consideration, but he was unable to muster sufficient support at the time and was forced to shelve the proposals until he could bring more telling arguments to bear upon his colleagues. The Committee, it seems, objected not so much to the general aims of the Morgan resolutions as to their strong tone.

67U. S. Congressional Record, 48th Cong. 1st Sess., 1884, XV, 520.
68Ibid., p. 1339. 69Ibid., p. 1378.
70Ibid., p. 2273.
and wording, especially with reference to foreign powers. It agreed readily enough that preparations should be made for establishing diplomatic relations with the Congo and requested that $50,000 be appropriated for the purpose.71

Sanford, meanwhile, continued to receive flattering appreciation and encouragement from Brussels as well as further maps and other pertinent materials. He was likewise supplied with last minute information concerning the Congo enterprise, providing him with ammunition to convince skeptics that the Association had indeed supervised the creation of a new state whose chiefs had willingly federated, had delegated authority to a head chief and European governors to be named by the Association, and had hoisted a gold star flag as their own.72 Such data, of course, were made available to Morgan for his committee work, and the latter further asked Sanford to prepare some examples from American colonial history of private people negotiating treaties with the Indians. These pre-

71 The Committee proposed an amendment to the pending Consular and Diplomatic Bill before the Senate "to enable the President to open commercial or diplomatic intercourse with the Congo country under the jurisdiction of the International Association in West Africa, $50,000 to be expended according to the discretion of the President." Ibid., p. 4378.

72 Devaux to Sanford, Feb. 25, 1884, Sanford Papers, Box 25, Folder 19.
cedents were to be added to that of Liberia to end the Committee's doubts as to the legality of that aspect of the Association's activities.73

Senator Morgan revised his statement and obtained from Sanford more comprehensive information on the aims and purposes of Leopold's organization, which were still questioned in Committee deliberations.74 When on March 28th, he offered a new resolution in executive session of the Senate, it was found more acceptable, but final approval was delayed. He had to introduce it several times, as various members raised more questions and sought time to consider the matter at leisure.75 One student of the Senate in this period explains that the resolution was presented in executive session in order to save its main principles from the opposition which would most certainly have altered it in open session.76 As it turned out, the resolution was amended in such a way as to modify Morgan's original proposals but without emasculating them.77 The Senate passed it on April 10, thus adding

73Morgan to Sanford, March 5, 1884, ibid., Box 26, Folder 5. As Thomson points out, there appeared to have been no objection to the false analogy between the creation of the American colonies and the Congo situation. Fondation . . . , p. 155.

74Morgan to Sanford, March 22, 1884, Sanford Papers, Box 26, Folder 5; U. S. Congressional Record, 48th Cong. 1st Sess., 1884, XV part III, 2275.

75New York Herald, April 9, 1884, p. 1.

76Burnett, op. cit., p. 227. 77Ibid., p. 227.
its endorsement of United States recognition of the African International Association's flag as that of a friendly government. Public announcement was not made until the 23rd, but Sanford immediately wired the good news to Brussels where he was acclaimed the hero of the hour by King Leopold and his associates, who realized that their American friend had accomplished no mean feat.

The Senate's action was enough for Secretary Frelinghuysen who by this time was ready to extend recognition if accorded this type of Congressional recommendation. All that remained was for the formal agreement to be signed. Sanford, acting for the International Association of the Congo, as the King's organization was now known, and Frelinghuysen exchanged declarations on April 22, 1884. There was little comment on the event in American papers and important criticism did not develop until later when the importance of the act came to be fully realized. The action was hailed in Belgium, but

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79 Devaux to Sanford, April 12, 1884; April 23, 1884, Sanford Papers, Box 25, Folder 19.

not all other European powers accepted it gracefully. British circles were especially critical. A correspondent of the London Times termed it "a piece of very sharp practice—an act of immorality, in fact—novel in international relations, and hardly contemplated by international law."\(^8\) He pointed out what other European critics also delighted in emphasizing: that, ironically, the main American argument against Portugal's claims was the latter's protective duties which were only a fraction of those imposed on imports into the United States.\(^2\)

But recognition was now an accomplished fact.

Leopold thus obtained government status for his Congo operations. As Stanley so typically put it, this was "the birth unto new life of the Association."\(^3\) A private organization challenged and threatened on several sides, it had only been able to await a coup de grâce as the European powers maneuvered for position and determined how to oust it to their best advantage. Now, recognized as a friendly government by the United States, the Association could reasonably hope for similar treatment from other nations. This did, indeed, follow. That other factors were at work affecting various national decisions to recognize Leopold's organization cannot be

\(^{8}\) May 5, 1884, p. 5. \(^{82}\) Ibid.

\(^{83}\) The Congo ..., II, 383.
denied. Yet, Sanford's accomplishment in the United States, along with the French treaty represented the foremost reasons for the Association's new, stronger international position and was a major influence on the policy reorientations in European capitals which promptly followed.

Although his chief objective had been attained, Sanford's work in the United States was not yet concluded. Among the matters still concerning him was the Anglo-Portuguese Treaty. Negotiations on this had begun in late 1882 and it was not signed until February 26, 1884. British Parliamentary ratification was deliberated until summer. This treaty granted England's recognition of Portuguese claims to both banks of the lower Congo in return for the right of free trade. Intense opposition to this arrangement developed in Britain. Mackinnon and his colleagues, interested in helping Leopold's organization and fearing Portuguese tariff policies, enlisted traders, Chambers of Commerce and missionaries to exert pressure on Parliament against the treaty. It was also desirable to have the United States make clear its opposition so as to add yet another factor for Parliament's consideration. Morgan was urged to

84 Anstey, op. cit., pp. 115, 150, 162.
85 Ibid., chaps. 6 and 7.
keep the issue alive in the Upper Chamber.\textsuperscript{86} The cooperative Senator was willing to submit his speeches to Sanford for criticism before he presented them from the floor.\textsuperscript{87} It appears, too, that Sanford was working closely with Mackinnon, seeking to coordinate the Washington efforts with that of British forces, timing their efforts in order to strike at the most opportune moment.\textsuperscript{88} The treaty was finally dropped in June, 1884, not because of the excellent lobbying carried on by Leopold's friends, but due to categorical opposition of Bismark who saw possible discrimination against German subjects resulting from it.\textsuperscript{89}

Another question receiving Sanford's attention at this time was a United States consular appointment to the Congo. This was a logical sequel to recognition and Sanford was particularly interested because he strongly desired and expected to see American commerce extended

\textsuperscript{86}Sanford to Morgan, June 14, 1884 (draft), Sanford Papers, Box 29, Folder 3.

\textsuperscript{87}Morgan to Sanford, July 24, 1884, Sanford Papers, Box 26, Folder 5.

\textsuperscript{88}Sanford to Nachtigal, May 13, 1884 (draft), Sanford Papers, Box 28, Folder 14; Anstey, \textit{loc. cit.}

\textsuperscript{89}Anstey, \textit{op. cit.,} p. 162. Sanford later expressed his belief that England would have ratified the treaty had not the United States extended recognition to the Association's flag. Sanford to Lambermont, June 2, 1890, Diplomatic Despatches, Belgium.
to the Congo area. Although a loyal friend of Leopold and a dedicated Association officer there can be no doubt that Sanford's Washington campaign was also inspired by his great interest in providing incentives and markets for the expansion of American trade. It would seem that his concern here stemmed from the observations made and impressions gained during his Latin American experiences of the late 1850's. The declaration signed by Sanford in the exchange with Frelinghuysen contained this paragraph:

That they [states of the Congo] guarantee to foreigners settling in their territories the right to purchase, sell or lease, lands and buildings situated therein, to establish commercial houses and to there carry on trade upon the sole condition that they shall obey the laws. They pledge themselves, moreover, never to grant to the citizens of one nation any advantages without immediately extending the same to the citizens of other nations, and to do all in their power to prevent the slave trade.90

Sanford, who no doubt composed most, if not all, of the statement, took its contents seriously. It was his sincere desire to see American merchants take advantage of the rights and privileges thus afforded them. One can assume with confidence that he himself had ambi-

tions to participate in these widened commercial opportu-
nities in some fashion once things got underway.

Sanford and Morgan, harboring hopes that they could further influence American policy, discussed the best means by which the United States could capitalize on its entente with the Association. They wanted a consul appointed to the Congo but, beyond that, they desired that an official survey of its commercial potential be made. Morgan suggested that a commission, possibly composed of naval officers, be sent up the river in a light draft steamer as far as practical, the party then proceeding in launches to investigate its upper reaches. He believed that this body should facilitate the opening of commercial relations and immigration and that it should likewise look into a reported slave trade. Sanford favored an investigatory commission and proposed dispatching a party commanded by a military officer and including a geologist, a mineralologist, and a naturalist, who would report on the commercial potentiality and natural resources of the upper Congo basin. Their joint efforts to secure appointment of a

91 Morgan, always occupied with emigration, stated that "I would like to have a sensible Negro in the commis-
mission." Morgan to Sanford, July 4, 1884, Sanford Papers, Box 25, Folder 5.

92 Sanford draft, n.d., ibid., Box 29, Folder 2.
consul for the area were not immediately successful, but the State Department was induced to appoint an agent to make a careful study of the whole matter.

The Consular and Diplomatic Bill, passed by Congress in July, ultimately appropriated funds for such a position. Named to the post in August was Willard P. Tisdel, an Ohioan who had served as agent of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company in Mexico and South America, who spoke Portuguese and who had traveled in Africa. Morgan was responsible for Tisdel's selection, the appointee being a family friend. Tisdel seemed an admirable choice to everyone who met him. Leaving for Europe en route to Africa some weeks later, he carried

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93This pressure for a consul on the Congo continued until 1888 when the appointment was finally made. Until that time, the closest American consular office was the one in Gabon, which had been in operation since 1856.


96Sanford wrote: "I have seen Tisdel and am much pleased with him. . . . The King said . . . that the selection was a most satisfactory one." Sanford to Frelinghuysen, Oct. 17, 1884 (draft), Sanford Papers, Box 29, Folder 9. Kasson commented: "Tisdel . . . is an excellent man for his place." Kasson to Sanford, Oct. 30, 1884, Ibid., Box 25, Folder 4.
the hopes of Sanford and Morgan who believed that his eventual report would furnish tremendous impetus to American merchants.

Sanford himself returned to Europe in September and was shortly involved in the Berlin Conference. His occupation with furthering American-Congolese commerce never abated and he determined to see this realized. While there was considerable support in the United States for the opening of Africa to "civilizing" influences, and many Americans could appreciate and support the stated humanitarian aims of the Association, it was a different matter to interest them in trading there.97 Endeavoring to overcome misconceptions and general reluctance, Sanford used newspaper articles and letters to the editors to sell businessmen the idea that they should follow the lead of British and other European traders who were aggressively competing for markets in outlying areas like Africa. He tried to counter any statement discouraging commercial interests in Central Africa and was constantly contacting friends and business associates, seeking their support or trying to bring them into the trade.

97 See New York Times, editorials of March 19 (p. 4) and April 12, (p. 4) 1879, for an expression of these views.
There were of course, certain aspects of the protective American system which interfered with foreign trade, and Sanford desired to see a new official commercial policy implemented, but he and others saw the major problem as one of attitude. Once the facts were explained, he felt, American businessmen would find the means to compete with European interests in getting his message across. The New York Herald was of great help. Many of its articles gave optimistic appraisals of the Congo's commercial potential and, by its own admission the paper introduced the topic as early as 1872. Amos Lawrence, an old friend of Sanford and sales agent for New England's largest textile mills, was persuaded to look into the Congo market. He planned on sending samples of his goods to Africa with Tisdel but, missing the special agent, he sent out some parcels of cotton and woolen goods to await his arrival. This seems to

98 Not only were duties comparatively high, but the merchant marine was hampered by numerous discouraging regulations. For a critical analysis of these conditions, see New York Herald, Jan. 3, 1884, p. 6.

99 Ibid., Dec. 30, 1883, p. 5. This article, quite possibly suggested by Sanford, explained that: "There seems to be no better opening in the world for American enterprise. . . ." where 50 million people were "thirsting for trade, . . . especially in our cotton goods."

100 Lawrence to Sanford, Nov. 18, 1884, Sanford Papers, Box 25, Folder 11.
be the only positive response Sanford received from New England industrialists and merchants he contacted, but he continued to prod them into action.

It was reported that, in the Congo, other nationals were profitably trading such items as cotton goods, tobacco, rum, gin, guns, hatchets, beads, copper wire and the like—all of which could be supplied from American sources. Rubber from the Congo, furthermore, was being purchased by New York and Boston concerns, but from Dutch suppliers via Rotterdam rather than directly.101 At the same time, Stanley, speaking of the Congo trade before British manufacturing and commercial groups, was said to be having a great impact.102 Such information convinced Sanford that it would not be long before Americans would awaken to west central African potential and share in its development.

Tisdel's report proved a great disappointment to Sanford. The special agent prepared for his Congo mission by visiting the Dutch African Trading Company in Rotterdam and then meeting Sanford and Leopold in Brussels and Stanley in London. He also briefly attended the Berlin Conference before proceeding to the tropics.103 The early Tisdel communications to the Secretary

101 Tisdel to Frelinghuysen, Nov. 23, 1884 (copy), Morgan Papers, Vol. 1.
102 Ibid. 103 Ibid.
of State were promising. His early impressions of the
Association and its officials were not unfavorable, but
he reserved final evaluation until he could make personal
observations on the scene.104 With respect to the Asso­
ciation, one senses in his early reports a note of under­
lying skepticism which may have arisen from extravagant
remarks by officials in Brussels or Tisdel's reading of
the organization's optimistic statements during his
survey of its records.105 He rendered his final report
in a series of letters to the Secretary of State in the
Spring of 1885. It was thoroughly pessimistic, with
frank appraisal of the country, the relatively little
that had been accomplished by the Association, and pros­
pects for American trade. He saw the Congo country as
barbarous, undeveloped, extremely unhealthy, and offer­
ing commercial opportunities only to those with immense
capital for use in overcoming the many problems facing
them.106

While it was based upon his honest opinion of the
country he saw, he spent only six weeks there and had
been ill all but three days.107 The trip's brevity, he

104Ibid. 105Ibid.
106U. S., Dept. of State, File on Special Agents,
Willard P. Tisdel, XXXIII.
107Sanford to Morgan, April 14, 1885, Morgan
Papers, Vol. II; Tisdel to Sanford, April 29, 1885,
Sanford Papers, Box 28, Folder 9.
said, was due to inadequate transportation provided by the Association. The same reason was offered to explain his failure to investigate the river further up than Stanley Pool. It is clear that Tisdel was quite upset and disillusioned by his trip and that he was extremely anxious to leave the area because of his health. His letters gave much emphasis to the high mortality rate among Europeans serving there. One also gains the impression that relations with Association employees during his short stay were far from ideal.

Returning via Europe on his way back to the United States, Tisdel expressed a desire to see Sanford before submitting his findings. It appears that the latter was unable to alter the character of the report, its author afterward claiming that he had been strongly urged to make extensive changes favorable to the Association's image and to the general picture of the Congo. Tisdel's views also made him persona non grata with Leopold and his associates. He defended his position to Sanford after the report had been submitted, declar-

108 Tisdel to Sanford, April 26, 1885, Sanford Papers, Box 28, Folder 9.
109 Ibid.
110 Stanley to Sanford, May 17, 1886, Sanford Papers, Box 27, Folder 13.
111 Tisdel to Sanford, Nov. 17, 1885, ibid., Box 28, Folder 9.
ing that practically every white man on the Congo had written him in support of his stand.\textsuperscript{112} But the two men could not be expected to understand each other at this point. Sanford was deeply enmeshed in Association activities and thinking of future prospects, whereas Tisdel, probably feeling himself fortunate to have survived the mission, lacked the inclination or imagination to envision later possibilities.

Sanford was naturally disturbed about the reaction to the report in American business circles. Senator Morgan wrote Thomas F. Bayard, new Secretary of State in the Cleveland Administration, pointing out that travelers' impressions varied widely and that Tisdel's opinion need not be the only one considered.\textsuperscript{113} Actually, little was said about the report in the American press, for the simple reason that few had any interest in the matter. The \textit{New York Times}, touching upon the subject, seemed reluctant to emphasize its discouraging aspects and actually turned one editorial on it into an attack on United States trade policy, holding protective tariffs to be the main block to the expansion of American commerce.\textsuperscript{114}

\textsuperscript{112}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{113}Bayard to Morgan, Morgan Papers, Vol. II.
\textsuperscript{114}June 29 (p. 2) and July 5 (p. 6), 1885.
Adding to Sanford's problems were other adverse reports coming in from the Congo. The Navy Department directed its own survey of the region shortly after Tisdel had beaten a hasty retreat and sailed for Europe. Admiral Earl English, Commander of the South Atlantic Squadron, sent Commander J. Bridgman and a party of naval officers up the river, and their findings, included in the so-called "English Report," were made public by July, 1885. Again it was a tale of woe, describing the Congo as the last place that any practical American businessmen should consider for any purpose. The group advised against establishing a coaling station in the vicinity (possibly suggested to the Secretary of the Navy by Sanford and Morgan) and deemed it unwise for the Government in any way to encourage Americans venturing into the area. In short, the investigating officers unanimously concluded that there could be no bright future for the Congo, as predicted for it by other parties.115 This must have been a blow to Sanford's ambitions for American enterprise. But all was not over. Another Congo finding was to follow, this one more to Sanford's liking.

In November, 1885, Lieutenant Emory H. Taunt, U.S.N., on orders from Admiral English, undertook a six-

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month trip into the interior. His comprehensive account to the Secretary of the Navy was, in many ways, a counter to Tisdel's and Bridgman's findings.\textsuperscript{116} The question arises: why this further survey? It is highly likely that Senator Morgan, still working closely with Sanford, was responsible for Taunt's mission, which would normally have been an unjustified, repetitious assignment.\textsuperscript{117} Sanford probably had the Senator use his influence to have someone in authority investigate the region above Stanley Pool, the region informed persons believed to be the key to future trade and development. In fact, the young naval officer did penetrate to the upper river, thus becoming the first representative of any government other than the Association (by that time the Congo Free State) to reach Stanley Falls.

Taunt's relations with Leopold's officers encountered along the river were cordial, in contrast to Tisdel's.\textsuperscript{118} Deep in the interior, he found "immense

\textsuperscript{116}U. S. Congress, Senate, Executive Document No. \textsuperscript{77}, 49th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1886-87, I.

\textsuperscript{117}This must remain an undocumented hypothesis, but it fits in with the two men's previous techniques and policies and no other explanation seems possible.

\textsuperscript{118}He was, in fact, given an impressive reception with all the trimmings, by Congo officials who, undoubtedly, had been forewarned after the Tisdel affair. \textit{Ibid.}, p. 2.
plantations of manioc, sugar cane, yams, bananas, and plaintains," much of the land being "rich and fertile."\(^{119}\) There were also dense forests of rubber, gum copal, palm and other valuable trees. Taunt considered the country drained by the mighty stream's affluents "even richer than that in the immediate vicinity of the Congo." And certainly not of least importance, this officer was convinced of the region's great mineral wealth. The extensive trade he witnessed also led him to foresee promising markets for American producers and merchants, but on the condition that a railroad be built to connect the lower and upper river.\(^{120}\)

Now here was a man Sanford could appreciate and work with! Taunt met him in Brussels upon returning from Africa in April, 1886. The two found that they were in close agreement on the Congo's potential and, especially, its eventual openings for American commerce.\(^ {121}\) Taunt, while still in Brussels and encouraged by Sanford, wrote to Senator Edmunds of the Foreign Relations Committee, requesting that his report be called to the Senate's attention.\(^ {122}\) Edmunds, another expansionist who

\(^{119}\)Ibid. \(^{120}\)Ibid., p. 35.
\(^{121}\)Sanford to Morgan, April 14, 1886, Morgan Papers, Vol. II.
\(^{122}\)Ibid.
sided with Morgan on many such issues, agreed that Taunt's findings should be made public.\footnote{Edmunds to Sanford, April 27, 1886, Sanford Papers, Box 120, Folder 1.} The Upper House was sent the materials on February 5, 1887, at which time Morgan asked that five hundred copies be printed for the Upper Chamber. Congress ultimately authorized printing fifteen hundred.\footnote{U. S. Congressional Record, 49th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1886-87, XVIII, part 2, 1391.} So Sanford finally had an answer to Tisdel's gloomy remarks. By the time Taunt's report was made public, Sanford had become involved in a personal business venture in the Congo,\footnote{Accompanying his forty-two page report, Taunt had sent his log book, maps, various statistics, and samples of trade goods common on the upper Congo. Senate, Executive Document No. 77.} which made him even more concerned with American interests there. These new opinions, published by Congress (and thereby enjoying its endorsement), and sent out by Morgan and his friends, provided Sanford with further hopes that he might soon find some of his countrymen working alongside his own employees in Central Africa. Developments such as the Taunt report, of course, were not unbene\footnote{See infra, Chap. 5.}ficial to Leopold's organization, but Sanford's activities in behalf

\textsuperscript{123}Edmunds to Sanford, April 27, 1886, Sanford Papers, Box 120, Folder 1.

\textsuperscript{124}Accompanying his forty-two page report, Taunt had sent his log book, maps, various statistics, and samples of trade goods common on the upper Congo. Senate, Executive Document No. 77.

\textsuperscript{125}U. S. Congressional Record, 49th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1886-87, XVIII, part 2, 1391.

\textsuperscript{126}See infra, Chap. 5.
of the King after he secured United States recognition is best represented by his work at the Berlin Conference. It was here that he further demonstrated his importance to the Belgian Monarch as well as his general diplomatic abilities.
CHAPTER IV

THE BERLIN WEST AFRICAN CONFERENCE

Leopold proved himself a master strategist in the international confusion centering about the Congo in the mid 1880's. On the day following Sanford's exchange of declarations with Frelinghuysen, France signed a treaty with the Association by which it indirectly extended recognition to the blue and gold flag.¹ It might appear at first glance that the French had exacted a dear price for their support. It was stipulated that, should the Association ever find itself forced to sell its Congo possessions, France would enjoy the first option on them. The Association's position did not seem financially or diplomatically secure at the time,² and it was commonly assumed that Leopold's precarious position in the mounting scramble among the European powers in West Africa would force him to liquidate his holdings. French officials saw many advantages in the treaty, not the least

¹The French treaty specified that France would respect the Association's stations and lands. For Leopold's purposes, this was tantamount to recognition. See treaty in E. Hertslet, Map of Africa by Treaty (3 vols., London: H. M. Stationery Office, 1894) I, 244-46.

²The French were not aware of Sanford's exploit, negotiations having been kept secret.
of which was an opportunity to counter the British, whose agreement with Portugal had not yet been discarded. 3

But what appeared a shrewd move by the French was, in reality, a further example of Leopold's keen, perceptive instincts at play. He had given nothing for French recognition save promises dependent upon contingencies which he was determined to prevent. Moreover, as Leopold had anticipated, the other powers now became fearful that France would replace the Association and thus establish hegemony on the Congo. Strongly desiring to avoid this, they now determined to rescue the Association and thereby prevent France from capitalizing on its treaty. Fears of French control of the river were even stronger than those of British domination, though the Anglo-Portuguese Treaty was still being debated. 4

Bismarck was at the heart of these developments. The German Chancellor, prodded by merchant groups and growing colonial interests and activated by his own realization that African issues could be used in European diplomacy, had begun to involve his nation in the imperi-


alistic activity in West Africa. This new official German interest in Africa surprised and disturbed Great Britain. There was confusion among London officials over how best to handle this latest participant in the field.\(^5\) Certainly, Germany could neither be ignored nor bluffed. Under Bismark's deft hand, the Empire's international position had become impressively strong. In Europe, the three Emperors' League and the Triple Alliance in turn provided security when it was decided that overseas activities might well fit into Germany's national interests. France was kept diplomatically isolated and Britain, enmeshed in the Egyptian imbroglio, badly needed Bismark's support there. Yet, in the Spring of 1884, when the Chancellor sought British accommodation over German moves in Angra Pequena in southwest Africa the British Foreign Office was inexcusably slow and evasive with its replies.\(^7\) It was then that the formidable

\(^5\)German merchants and traders, of course, had been active along the west coast for years, with some fifteen concerns operating there in 1884. See Mary E. Townshend, The Rise and Fall of Germany's Colonial Empire (New York: Macmillan Co., 1930), chap. 2.


German statesman turned his influence against the British position in Africa. His decisive opposition to the Anglo-Portuguese Treaty was perhaps the first indication of developing Anglo-German estrangement. At the same time, Bismark was reaching an accord with France certain to provide concerted diplomatic action against the British. The French, now keenly regretful over having failed to join Britain in her intervention in Egypt, were delighted to obtain Bismark's support in opposing British occupation there. Not only were the two powers siding against Her Majesty's Government over Egypt, they were plotting to undermine its position on the Niger where British traders and consuls had been carving out a sphere of interest and toward where French and now German imperialists were increasingly turning.

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8 A. J. P. Taylor (Germany's First Bid for Colonies, 1884-1885 [London: Macmillan Co., 1933], pp. 33-40) contends that Bismark intentionally devised the split with Britain to bring about the Franco-German entente.

9 It is interesting to note that Sanford gave his attention to Germany in the campaign against the Anglo-Portuguese Treaty. In May, he wrote to Gustave Nachtigal, the famous German explorer, and implicitly encouraged him to do what he could to see that Germany opposed the treaty. Sanford to Nachtigal, May 13, 1884 (draft), Sanford Papers, Box 29, Folder 14. He also conceived the idea of using letters to German newspapers to acquaint the public with the Association's viewpoint on the Congo controversy. Borchgrave to Sanford, Aug. 29, 1884, Sanford Papers, Box 25, Folder 16.

London that the growing questions of Africa might be settled at a conference.

True to form, the cautious Bismark took steps to prevent France from enjoying its pre-emption rights on the Congo. This was done by according the Association German recognition which, Bismark announced in June, 1884, would follow shortly. In negotiation with Leopold, Bismark recognized Association claims to the left bank of Stanley Pool, then being claimed by both Stanley and De Brazza for their respective employers, in return for a guarantee of free trade on the Congo. The Association was to insure that freedom of commerce would be maintained no matter what country might replace it on the river. When the treaty was signed in November, Bismark was certain that he had neutralized the French whereas, in reality, he had contributed materially to bolstering the Association. Even the foremost statesman of the age could be successfully manipulated by the astute Belgian monarch!

While the other nations were being led into policies favoring the Association, Great Britain continued suspicious of Leopold. She had questioned his venture

11Crow, op. cit., p. 87.
from the outset, but distrust had mounted in consequence of strong domestic pressure brought against the Anglo-Portuguese Treaty and because further intelligence indicated that the Association hypocritically was aiming at monopoly for itself through treaties with Congo chieftains. Although apparently aware of Leopold's stratagems, British officials were unable to block them. The Foreign Office could not decide whether Bismark had been duped or merely poorly advised; in fact, it had almost decided to contact the Chancellor and explain the snares of Leopold's diplomacy. But Bismark's reiteration of support for the Association and Foreign Office realization that Britain might well need German cooperation on the Niger question at the proposed conference discouraged such a move. Rather than risk isolation over a relatively minor area, the British had adopted a more friendly policy toward the Association by November, 1884, when the Berlin West African Conference got under way.

The idea of an international conference for a general settlement of African affairs including the Congo

13See supra, p. 83.
14Crow, op. cit., p. 86.
15Ibid., p. 88.
16Ibid., pp. 90-91; Anstey, op. cit., p. 183.
17Crow, loc. cit.
problem was discussed in various circles before Portugal first made an official proposal to the powers on May 13, 1884. It must have seemed to many an obvious answer for what had become a bothersome international tangle. Certainly Leopold and his associates saw in such a meeting an opportunity to plead their case and to win further support. In the spring of 1885, Mackinnon had mentioned British commercial interests urging an "international convention for the neutralization of the river." The following May, Sanford expressed hopes for concerted action toward a settlement on the Congo by the commercial powers interested in Africa. It was probably true, as Bismark declared, that United States recognition of Leopold's organization compelled an international gathering. If the King had not been successful in Washington and Paris, the nations interested in the Congo perhaps could have worked out bilateral arrangements for their various interests in the Congo, and the Association

18 Mackinnon to Sanford, May 12, 1883, Sanford Papers, Box 127, Folder 5.

19 Sanford to Nachtigal, May 13, 1884 (draft), ibid., Box 29, Folder 14.

20 One scholar had suggested (unconvincingly, in my opinion) that, notwithstanding the recognition of the Association by the United States and France, the Conference might not have been necessary if British officials had clearly understood Bismark's real attitude toward the Anglo-Portuguese Treaty. London came to believe that he
stood to lose in that case. Now, at a conference of the powers, much could be achieved.

Although Portugal took the initiative in suggesting a conference, Bismark eased that minor power aside and seized upon the idea himself, fearing that a Portuguese conference would be dominated by the British.\(^21\) In August, German and French leaders arrived at a preliminary understanding on a general program of cooperation respecting African problems on a whole and special questions to be treated at the upcoming gathering.\(^22\) Planning and arranging the conference was solely a Franco-German project. Bismark accepted the French proposals for the conference agenda. It was also the French who suggested Berlin as the conference site.\(^23\) Formal invitations, it was agreed, would be issued by the Emperor and sent out through the German embassies, while French representatives would then follow with confirming invitations. Eventually, opposed the idea of any treaty between the two powers, when actually he only desired a new one embracing difference in provisions. See Crow, op. cit., pp. 28-29.

\(^{21}\)Ibid., p. 63.

\(^{22}\)Langer, op. cit., p. 301; Final agreement on the African questions for the conference was reached only in September, Crow, op. cit., p. 20.

\(^{23}\)Crow, op. cit., p. 66.
thirteen other nations were invited to participate.\textsuperscript{24} This procedure was followed in Washington by the German Minister, von Alvensleben, and his French counterpart, Sala, who contacted the Secretary of State on October 10, 1884.\textsuperscript{25}

As one of the nations with a long interest in Africa, represented by its relationship with Liberia and extensive trade with Zanzibar, the United States would in any event, have been invited to participate in the Berlin Conference.\textsuperscript{26} American action in granting recognition to Leopold's Association afforded clear evidence that the United States was concerned over the Congo question; this guaranteed its inclusion. It was apparently France which emphasized the importance of inviting the United States and that it be included in the first series of invitations,\textsuperscript{27} although Bismark had mentioned a conference to the United States as early as May.

American newspaper assertions that the Washington invi-

\textsuperscript{24}Howard E. Yarnall, The Great Powers and the Congo Conference in the Years 1884-1885 (Gottingen: n.p., 1934), pp. 56-58.

\textsuperscript{25}Kasson to Frelinghuysen, Oct. 13, 1884, No. 42, Diplomatic Despatches, Germany.

\textsuperscript{26}A German governmental publication reported that America was invited because Liberia was considered an American protectorate. Kasson to Frelinghuysen, No. 34, October 13, 1884, \textit{ibid}.

\textsuperscript{27}Yarnall, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 61.
was part of a sinister German plot were later countered by Sanford who sought to assure the Secretary of State that it was "but a natural and friendly act on the part of the European powers that we should be asked to concert with them in measures for assuring the benefits we had taken the first steps to secure." 28

Frelinghuysen agreed to American participation with the understanding that the proposed meeting would constitute a "conference" and not a "congress," the distinction, important in American eyes, being that the former's results would not be binding upon participant states. Decisions of a conference, he held, would have only the force of recommendations until such time as they were finally accepted by several governments involved, whereas a congress could create effective obligations. Only in this way did the Secretary feel that the United States could be "free from exposure to European complications." 29

America's participation was justified on the grounds that it would contribute toward understandings which would prevent conflict among the powers involved in Africa, and that it could help prevent the emergence of trade

28 Sanford to Frelinghuysen, Jan. 14, 1885, Diplomatic Despatches, Germany.

29 Kasson to Frelinghuysen, No. 42, Oct. 18, 1884, Diplomatic Despatches, Germany.
monopolies detrimental to American enterprise. Delegates were to be sent to Berlin upon condition that the Conference confine itself to the three points mentioned in the official invitations, which were: Freedom of commerce on the Congo and throughout the Congo region; freedom of navigation on the Congo and Niger; the definition of formalities to be followed to insure effective occupation of the African coasts. It also was to be understood that the United States would not be obligated to sign any resultant protocol or general act.

The general procedure was that each nation was to be represented by its minister or ambassador to Germany, in association with any advisors or assistants considered necessary. The American Minister then serving in Berlin was John A. Kasson. A Vermonter by birth, he had settled in Iowa where he had practiced law and had become a leading figure in the state's Republican ranks. He had won a seat in the House of Representatives and had been appointed United States Minister to Austria-Hungary in 1871. Returning home in 1877, he had won re-election to Congress and then had been chosen for the Berlin post in

30 Ibid.
32 Ibid.
Kasson was an expansionist who, according to his biographer "caught the African fever" while in Austria-Hungary and desired to see his government follow the lead of some of its imaginative citizens in the Dark Continent (Sanford and Stanley?). After inquiries respecting the proposed conference, he assured the Secretary of State that, in attending, the United States would logically follow its policy expressed in the recognition treaty with the Association, and that it would be in line with the Government's desire to encourage commerce and industry. Furthermore, he saw precedents for American participation at Berlin in the Scheldt Dues Convention of 1862 (negotiated by Sanford) and in others dealing with postal affairs (negotiated by Kasson) and a common meridian. 

Later, Kasson suggested that Frelinghuysen send an American warship to the Congo's mouth just before the conference opened in order that the United States would enjoy greater respect and influence during the deliberations.


tions. In fact, he was in favor of acquiring an American station on the Congo coast to provide "exclusive use of a limited district for a depot and factorial establishment for the use and benefit of American citizens and of our government." One is not surprised to find that Frelinghuysen was scarcely prepared to commit his country to such a clearly imperialistic policy. Yet, it is interesting to note that, in his instructions to Kasson for the conference, Frelinghuysen gave him more latitude than his early statements might have suggested. Kasson was to use his own discretion as to the extent of his participation and, although he should be mindful of the traditional American policy of non-intervention in other countries' territorial disputes, it was the Secretary's desire to see something on the order of a "free state" created in the Congo to insure neutral control of the river valley.

Kasson might well have wondered if he possessed the finesse to help establish such a sovereign domain.

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35 Kasson to Frelinghuysen, Oct. 15, 1884, No. 40, Diplomatic Despatches, Germany.

36 Kasson to Frelinghuysen, Nov. 3, 1884, No. 60, ibid.

37 Ibid.

38 Frelinghuysen to Kasson, Nov. 8, 1884, No. 37 Diplomatic Instructions, Germany, U. S. Dept. of State, National Archives, Washington.
without becoming involved in the rivalries of the actively interested countries. The American Minister did not receive his instructions until November 8th and was the last representative to do so; this necessitated a delay in the conference opening, which Bismark had planned for mid-October. Accordingly, the first session did not begin until November 15th.

In crossing Belgium on his way to his Berlin post in the summer of 1884, Kasson met King Leopold and then passed an evening at the estate of his good friend, Henry S. Sanford. He was favorably impressed with the Belgian monarch in spite of the fact the latter requested him to influence the American Government on the Congo question. Kasson naturally sympathized with the Association's announced aims and previously had been asked to aid the cause. Only two days after he had received his Belgian appointment, Kasson was congratulated by Sanford who urged him to oppose Portugal's claims and to assist the Association in extending its control to the mouth of the Congo.

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39 Yarnall, op. cit., p. 64.
40 Younger, op. cit., p. 323.
41 Kasson to Frelinghuysen, Oct. 10, 1884, No. 33, Diplomatic Despatches, Germany; Kasson to Sanford, n.d., Sanford Papers, Box 25, Folder 4.
On October 21, Kasson took steps which would indeed help the Association and allow Sanford a more direct influence on events. He cabled the latter, who was in London preparing to leave for the United States, and asked him to join the American delegation in Berlin. It was Kasson's belief that he should have the assistance of someone thoroughly familiar with the history and policies of the Association and aware of current conditions in the Congo. The State Department was requested to authorize Sanford to serve as his associate, Kasson explaining that he would be especially helpful in "those outside preliminary conversations which often shape the actions of the conference in advance." To expedite departmental action, the Minister took the liberty of telling Frelinghuysen that Sanford would probably serve

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42 Halligan, op. cit., p. 78. Sanford himself had sought the Berlin appointment. His wife (undoubtedly without his knowledge) had written to President Arthur in his behalf, pointing out her own as well as her husband's contacts at the German court and his knowledge of the language and country. She added: "... again you wish to perfect your policy on the lower Congo by arrangement with the European powers. Who would be so well fitted for it [than Sanford] and how readily it could be accomplished en route to Berlin or Saint Petersburg." He was evidently being considered for the German or the Russian post. Gertrude Sanford to Chester A. Arthur, March 2 [1884?], Chester A. Arthur Papers, Series 1, Washington: Library of Congress.

43 Kasson to Sanford, Oct. 21, 1884, Sanford Papers, Box 25, Folder 4.

44 Ibid.

45 Kasson to Frelinghuysen, Oct. 23, 1884 (telegram), no. 47, Diplomatic Despatches, Germany.
without salary.\textsuperscript{46} The Department was apparently satisfied that his contributions might prove useful and, on October 24th, gave Kasson official permission to invite him to Berlin.

Sanford had been traveling in England and Scotland, visiting among others, William Mackinnon. American presidential elections were approaching and Sanford had planned to return home to help the Republican cause. He had continued to work for Leopold and the Association and, even when in Europe, had followed up his Washington campaign by encouraging the State Department to oppose Portuguese pretensions as being prejudicial to rights won by the American treaty with the Association, and to support extending sovereignty over the Congo's mouth to the Association. He pressed the need for instructing the American delegate to the upcoming conference along these lines.\textsuperscript{47}

The invitation from Kasson apparently came as a surprise to Sanford and, although he did not immediately reply, he must have seen the advantages of the position. Kasson and Leopold did their best to encourage a favorable response, the latter making it clear that Sanford's

\textsuperscript{46}Kasson to Sanford, Oct. 25, 1884, Sanford Papers, Box 25, Folder 14.

\textsuperscript{47}Sanford to Frelinghuysen, Oct. 19, 1884 (draft), \textit{ibid.}, Box 28, Folder 9.
presence in Berlin would be most desirable. Kasson even enlisted Stanley to convince his friend to accept. He soon did so and his credentials were sent on October 30th. Not only was Kasson aware of his new associate's opportunity to aid the Association, but took steps to see that, in the course of serving two masters, Sanford did not overlook the main purpose of his presence. There was to be no question of the latter dominating the American delegation. Kasson explained to Frelinghuysen that Sanford must follow a line of action consistent with his own and, to insure that end, urged the Secretary to inform Sanford that his instructions would come through the Minister. Accordingly, Sanford was accredited as an associate delegate, but was given no definite powers and was to be governed by orders transmitted by the head of the delegation.

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48 Count de Borchgrave (secretary of Leopold) to Sanford, Oct. 24, and 25 (telegrams), 1884, ibid., Box 25, Folder 16.

49 Stanley to Kasson, n.d. (telegram), ibid., Box 27, Folder 4.

50 Kasson to Frelinghuysen, Oct. 24, 1884, no. 47, Diplomatic Despatches, Germany. Kasson was able to maintain his position as head of his delegation, but Tisdel, who observed the Berlin proceedings, remarked that Sanford "... was master of the situation--of course always yielding the first place to Mr. Kasson. ..." Tisdel to Morgan, Nov. 25, 1884 (personal), Morgan Papers, I.

To obtain further advice and guidance on the Congo, Kasson sought to have Stanley join him at the Conference. Such experts were not only accepted by the powers, but were actually recommended, and Washington agreed so long as he, like Sanford, would serve without pay. Assuming that the explorer would choose to attend, Kasson reminded him that it would be in harmony with the interests of the Association which "would desire his presence there."\(^{52}\) The American Minister obviously knew that Sanford and Stanley could serve Leopold's organization in Berlin, but he also believed that they would help him better to represent American interests in conference deliberations.

There was some difficulty with Stanley, however. Kasson had not anticipated an unfavorable reaction to his invitation. Leopold had become somewhat disillusioned with his explorer who had found it impossible to resign himself to Britain's disinclination to take a direct hand in the Congo. It will be recalled that before accepting service under Leopold, Stanley tried to stir up support in England for establishing a protectorate over the territory explored in 1878. He still nourished hope that time would lead to a positive response.

\(^{52}\)Kasson to Stanley, Oct. 20, 1884 (copy), no. 46. Diplomatic Despatches, Germany.
In 1883, when the Association's position was precarious, he again privately expressed his desire for British action, and Leopold conceivably could have realized this. Weak, in need of a rest, Stanley had, in May, 1884, been replaced as commander in the Congo by the Englishman, Sir Francis de Winton and, by that summer, his activities in Britain had begun to embarrass his employer. He publicly lectured on the desirability of a British protectorate, emphasizing its advantages to Protestant groups with missionaries in Africa.

Stanley's actions were undoubtedly based upon his belief that Leopold's Association could not survive the international competition and he therefore did not interpret such efforts as being disloyal. He was still interested in the Association and was going to render it further services.

The King, nevertheless, requested Sanford, his favorite intermediary with Stanley, to direct the latter to be more prudent in his remarks and not to speak of wanting a British protectorate while on his lecture cir-


54Borchgrave to Sanford, Aug. 31, 1884, Sanford Papers, Box 25, Folder 16.
Therefore, when he invited Stanley to Berlin, Leopold let it be known that he did not favor this. The King's Berlin agents were instructed to make the appropriate contacts to see that Stanley not be permitted to attend the Conference despite Kasson's intention to bring him. The King's actions were not spitefully motivated but were, rather, based upon his belief that Stanley would perhaps serve the interests of Britain before those of the Association. Without Leopold's endorsement the explorer, whose African labors had done so much to cause this meeting of the powers, felt that he could not attend. He stayed at Sanford's Chateau Gingelom while the latter sought to mediate.

It was finally agreed that the explorer would be given Association authorization to attend provided that Bismark offered no objection. This concession stipulated that Stanley must promise to be guided entirely by

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55 Ibid.
56 Stanley to Kasson, n.d. (telegram copy), Sanford Papers, Box 27, Folder 4.
57 Borchgrave to Sanford, n.d., ibid., Box 25, Folder 16.
58 Kasson to Frelinghuysen, Nov. 9, 1884, no. 64, Diplomatic Despatches, Germany.
59 Borchgrave to Sanford, Nov. 9, 1884 (telegram), Sanford Papers, Box 25, Folder 16.
Sanford's orders at the conference. Complying with Leopold's request, Sanford suggested to Kasson that the latter personally determine Bismark's disposition toward Stanley. This was too much for the American Minister. He was not, he stated, willing to have the matter of Stanley's participation dependent upon the German Chancellor's fancy and, rather than ask Bismark, he would withdraw Stanley's invitation. Kasson was quite upset by Leopold's opposition and made it clear that he had invited Stanley as an "American discoverer, traveler, and expert," and not as an Association representative. Since De Brazza was reported on his way to advise the French delegation, he believed Stanley's presence would be especially appropriate. As it turned out, Bismark had no objection--indeed, he must have been puzzled by the whole affair. Stanley agreed to go, although he received no accreditation other than Kasson's introduction.

Sanford and Stanley arrived in the German capital on November 13th. They were not, of course, the sole

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60 Ibid.
61 Ibid; Kasson to Sanford, Nov. 6 and 9, 1884, ibid., Box 25, Folder 4.
62 Kasson argued that, if anyone should ask the great Prussian his views on Stanley, it should be the Belgian Minister, not he. Ibid.
representatives of Association interests there. Although not officially invited, the organization had two of its officials present. Colonel Strauch, President of the Association, and Captain van der Velde, a leader in the controversial Niari-Kwilu country's conquest, were there along with two of Leopold's most trusted associates, Baron Auguste Lambermont, Secretary of the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and an expert on commercial and navigational treaties, and Emile Banning, a journalist who had been for years intimately concerned with the King's colonial schemes. Both of the latter were assigned as associate delegates under the Belgian Ambassador in Berlin, Count van der Straten-Ponthoz, nearing the close of his diplomatic career and prepared to represent Belgium's interests but not the Association's. Leopold thus felt assured that his African plans would not be ruined at the conference unless several able and dedicated men failed him.

The first problem with which the conference dealt was that of establishing free trade in the Congo basin and at the river's mouth. In these deliberations, Britain and Germany sought to extend free trade as far as possible, while France and Portugal worked to limit its area. The

Figure 2. The Conventional Basin of the Congo As Defined by the Berlin Conference.
Association, working behind the scenes, endeavored to make negotiations serve its purposes, foremost of which was to obtain the most extensive recognition possible of its territorial claims. The Conference soon named a commission to define and delimit the Congo's geographical basin. This body ruled that the northern boundary was to follow the watersheds of the Niari, Ogooué, Shari and Nile systems; the eastern one the Lake Tanganyika watershed; and the southern one the Zambezi and Loge watersheds. But then came the question of extending the free trade area beyond the actual geographical basin. Some delegates desired to see it embrace a much larger territory commercially connected with the river. This led to a southward extension on the west to the Loge River in Angola. After considerable French haggling the northern boundary of the western zone was extended to the line of 2030' reaching into French territory where British and German traders were operating.

Kasson proposed that the eastern boundaries of this "commercial basin" be extended to include all lands eastward to the Indian Ocean, bounded on the south by the Zambezi and by the fifth degree of latitude in the

64 Crow, op. cit., p. 108.
65 Ibid., pp. 108-112.
This suggestion was presented with the help of Stanley who addressed the commission and utilized maps to explain what would have to be included. Sanford and Stanley both shaped this proposal, seeking to extend the free trade zone as far as possible with the aim of ultimately assisting the Association's territorial claims. The "American proposition" as it was called, was accepted by the Conference at its third meeting on November 27th.

Sanford introduced his railway proposal plan on that same day. Where the Congo was not navigable for a distance above Vivi because of a series of cataracts, Stanley had earlier suggested that a railway be constructed to link the two long passable sections—indeed, he held that without such a line the Congo country could never fulfill its potential. Convinced of this, Leopold was determined to see that France or Portugal did not build such a rail connection. However, at the

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66 Kasson to Frelinghuysen, Nov. 24, 1884, no. 79, Diplomatic Despatches, Germany.
67 Ibid.
69 Greindl to Sanford, June 11, 1878, Sanford Papers, Box 24, Folder 16.
first session of the Conference a German proposal had included a prohibition of monopolies or special privileges in the area which should eventually be delimited for free trade. Leopold undertook to effect a revision of this clause when it came up for committee discussion. It was Emile Banning who devised an amendment which was to be offered by the Belgian delegation. But the Belgian Government would not cooperate to that extent and the Cabinet advised its delegates that it would be inappropriate for them to take the initiative in such a matter and thus give the impression that they were completely at the King's disposal. It was therefore decided that Sanford should present the desired revision. What became known as the "Sanford Railway Proposal" provided that whichever power held the most territory between Vivi and Stanley Pool when the Conference concluded its work should be given a preferential right to construct and operate, directly or through a concessionary, a line around the cataracts. The proposal


73Protocol III, Senate Executive Document No. 196.
was printed and distributed but action was postponed until the question of free navigation of the Congo should come up at a later time. As was already clearly evident, considerable opposition to the project was certain then to arise.

It had become an important issue by the next session, on December 1st. Letters from Brussels encouraged Sanford to repeat his Washington performance of diplomatic finesse. All in Leopold's circle were counting on his "skill and devotion to their cause" to secure passage of his proposal in one form or another. They emphasized that since most of the exploration and pioneering efforts had been carried on by the Association, the grant of railroad rights to any other power would amount to "expropriation without indemnity." In England, Mackinnon was doing his best to influence the Foreign office to support the Association in Berlin, and he advised Sanford to work closely with Sir Edward Malet, head of the British delegation, whom Mackinnon believed to be in a position to assist the organization. The British, seeking to mend the rupture with Bismarck, who was cooperating closely with Leopold's agents, began to

74 Borchgrave to Sanford, Dec. 6, 1884, Sanford Papers, Box 25, Folder 16.

75 Mackinnon to Sanford, Nov. 29, 1884 (telegram), ibid., Box 127, Folder 5.
warm up to the Association during the Conference. Bismark urged London to recognize the organization as Germany had, making it clear that such action definitely would improve Anglo-German relations. On December 2, 1884, Malet was authorized to begin negotiations on a treaty with the Association's officers, and Great Britain recognized its flag on December 16th. This would suggest that the British delegation was able to work more closely with Sanford, Banning and Lambermont toward the close of 1884, although Sanford was to mention on the 24th that Malet's attitude on some questions affecting the Association was still "less than lukewarm."

The German Chancellor made it known that he particularly favored Sanford's proposal. At the second session, it was Bismark, as President of the Conference, who brought up Sanford's railway amendment in the committee on free trade and asked him to support it. The latter, who saw the Chancellor frequently, undoubtedly exploited Bismark's calculated sponsorship of the Association and

76 Crow, op. cit., pp. 144-146.
77 Ibid., pp. 147-148.
78 Sanford to Mackinnon, Dec. 24, 1884 (draft), Sanford Papers, Box 127, Folder 10.
later sent him a gift of his prized Florida oranges in recognition of their friendship. But the French and Portuguese threw their weight against Sanford's project, neither wanting the Association to gain railroad rights. The French were well aware of Bismark's interest in the Association's railway plans as a means of opening trade in which Germans could participate. Courcel, France's Ambassador in Berlin, was cautioned to oppose the subject carefully, so as not to push the Chancellor too far.

In the second discussion of his proposal, Sanford explained that three routes had been suggested for the railroad, all traversing territory claimed by more than one power and, since capital could never be attracted to a project involving two or three different nationalities it was essential that one state have sole authority over the whole operation. Since the Association had more territory suited to rail development than any other contender he held that it should receive exclusive construction rights. The precedent cited was the action of the Congress of Berlin which in 1878 had entrusted Austria with the task of facilitating navigation on the

80 Bismark to Sanford, March 20, 1885, in unsigned, Some Account of Belair . . . , p. 43.

81 Jules Ferry to Courcel, Dec. 9, 1884 (telegram), Documents diplomatique français, V, 483.
But, due to continued French resistance, the resolution was again shelved for later consideration. Sanford had found that France was willing to arrive at an understanding with Leopold on the disputed Congo areas and that only then would it allow the railroad proposal to pass. The French, indeed, were ready to renounce certain claims in return for concession from the Association which Leopold did not find agreeable at that time.

When asked if he would continue to push his support of the Association, Bismark indicated that he would not force French hands and thereby risk a public split in the Franco-German entente on African questions and probable collapse of the Conference. German authorities were bluntly informed that France keenly resented Leopold's dependence upon German support against her and that the issue was upsetting French public opinion. The Gallic press demanded that the government not yield ground without adequate compensation, and the influential imperialist writer, Paul Leroy-Beaulieu, was attacking

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83 Sanford to Leopold, Dec. 10, 1884 (draft), Sanford Papers, Box 29, Folder 12.

84 Courcel to Ferry, Dec. 14, 1884, Documents diplomatiques française, V, No. 486.
the cabinet for lack of firmness in its African policy. Too much had been done, too much money had been spent, and the foremost of French imperialists, Premier Jules Ferry, was determined to maintain a firm stand. French officials believed that, although Bismarck would defer to France on this point, he would exact compensation for the concession in some way favorable to his protegé, the Association.

His proposal was referred back to the main body by the free trade committee and Sanford explained to the assembly that he was willing to consider amendments which would secure his motion's essential objective, namely that commercial contacts between the upper and lower Congo would be assured by a railway around the rapids. But the French once more proved stubborn and, although Sanford planned on introducing the railroad proposal later, it never again became a topic for formal discussion. The Association's main concern now became its territorial dispute with France. Quay d'Orsay officials, well aware that Bismarck would not stand by Leopold if they were steadfast, were ready to drive a hard bargain with the Belgian monarch.

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85Courcel to Hatzfeldt, Dec. 5, 1884, ibid., No. 477.
86Ibid.
In championing the railway project, Sanford was acting officially as the United States delegate, but Kasson pointed out to the assembly that his country was not interested in particulars of the plan and merely presented it to emphasize the need for improving communications on the river. Back in America, Frelinghuysen declared in a report to Congress that the Sanford motion was definitely not to be considered as an "American proposition," but, while he believed it to have been introduced in Association interests, it was actually essential for the commercial development of the area. The United States, he said, naturally had no direct interest in the matter and had no intention of forcing the other nations to consider such a plan. Sanford's step was apparently taken without previous consultation with and approval from the Department of State and was destined to provide a target for critics of American participation in the Conference. He personally did not then believe that by aiding the Association in this way, he was proceeding in any way detrimental to national interests. It was some time before he and others realized


that Leopold's objectives were not necessarily consistent with the publicized aims and policies of the original International African Association.

Early in December, the French suggested to Sanford that the Association should seek a private accord with them and that Paris might be a more appropriate site for discussions. Bismark had encouraged France, Portugal and the Association to come to terms on their conflicting territorial claims before the conference ended, but the initial December negotiations in Berlin had broken down. The principal issue was the Niari-Kwilu region north of the Congo which Stanley's officers had successfully claimed for the Association in 1883 before De Brazza could raise the tricolor there. The Niari River extended from a point northwest of Stanley Pool westward to the Kwilu which emptied into the Atlantic at Rudolfstadt. With three hundred miles of coastline and a tributary system stretching back to the Congo, the Niari-Kwilu area was obviously extremely valuable, and France was anxious to incorporate it into its territory of Gabon. In order to

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90 Sanford to Leopold, Dec. 10, 1884 (draft), Sanford Papers, Box 29, Folder 12.


92 Courcel to Hatzfeldt, Dec. 5, 1884, Documents diplomatique français, V, no. 477.
weaken Leopold's claims there, the French, who already had recognized title to the north bank of the Pool, asserted that Stanley's claim to the south side was not valid since De Brazza's earlier treaty with the chief, Makoko had actually ceded both sections to France. However, being reasonable bargainers, they were willing to renounce any pretensions to the south bank if Leopold yielded Niari-Kwilu.

The wily Belgian monarch well knew that he would, in all likelihood, be obliged to part with the latter region but was determined to receive as large an indemnity for it as possible. He therefore set the figure at 5,000,000 francs, payable in deliveries of coal, timber and marine stores, which he deemed only fair compensation for the vast sums the Association had laid out in exploring and developing the territory.93 More attuned to the realities of the diplomatic maneuvering at Berlin, Sanford held that Leopold's determination to exact such an indemnity might jeopardize the Conference and all that the Association had gained.94

Mackinnon, Hutton and Stanley believed that Bismark would back the King in the controversy and there-

93Stanley to Sanford, Dec. 24, 1884, Sanford Papers, Box 27, Folder 4.

94Sanford to Mackinnon, Dec. 24, 1884 (draft), ibid., Box 127, Folder 10.
fore favored Leopold's policy and did their best to gain support in London. The British Foreign Office was willing to back the case for financial compensation only if Bismark did so first. Sanford was thus in the position of advising the King to be prudent and consider a simple territorial exchange in view of Bismark's determination not completely to alienate France, while others were encouraging the Monarch to maintain his stand.

Negotiations on the dispute opened in Paris during the Conference's Christmas break. It was clear that Ferry was the man who had to be moved if any settlement were to be achieved. The preliminaries were handled by Baron Lambermont who went to the French capital on December 28th. Since he was a Belgian associate delegate to the Berlin Conference it was deemed inadvisable to accord him any official authority to conduct Association business in Paris but, rather, he was to work with Baron Eugene Beyens, Belgium's Ambassador to France and former secretary of the King, in creating the proper climate for talks.

95 Mackinnon to Sanford, Dec. 15, and Dec. 20, 1884, ibid., Box 127, Folder 5.
96 Sanford to Mackinnon, Dec. 24, 1884 (draft), ibid., Box 127, Folder 10.
97 Crow (op. cit., p. 164) believes that the conference broke up for the Christmas season expressly for the purpose of facilitating territorial negotiations in Paris.
98 Banning, op. cit., p. 38.
The official opening formal discussions for the Association in the King's name was Eudore Pirmez, a member of the Belgian Parliament and formerly Minister of the Interior, whom Leopold considered very capable. He was given the technical assistance of the versatile Emile Banning. The two arrived in Paris on the 30th and had their first meeting with Ferry the following day. The King likewise sent Colonel Strauch, Secretary General of the Association and, because he was not completely confident of success with these representatives, he requested Sanford to confer with the French Premier. The French Ambassador in Brussels advised his government that Sanford's visit was extremely important since he came as Leopold's personal envoy with full authority and was in close touch with all aspects of the controversy. Stanley, meanwhile, had gone to London where he campaigned at the Foreign Office. He could report on the eve of Sanford's Paris mission that Foreign Secretary Granville had instructed Lord Lyons, the British Ambassador in Paris, to assist Leopold's American associate in the


100 Banning, *loc. cit*.

101 This was the stated opinion of the French Ambassador to Brussels, and it seems the only explanation why Sanford would be sent to Paris after all the others. De Montebello to Billot, Dec. 26, 1884, *Documents diplomatique français*, V, No. 497.

102 Ibid.
negotiations. The British had been informed by Leopold's friends that he was ready to leave the Congo if the French did not meet his terms. This blackmail policy was Leopold's trump card which he expected would force Britain and Germany to support his demands.

The first meetings with French officials were inconclusive, both sides restating their claims to Stanley Pool and Ferry refusing to consider the suggested 5,000,000 francs compensation for Niari-Kwilu. On January 2, a lottery was proposed, and this eventually won favor with both Leopold and Ferry as a practical means of meeting the former's demands since the Premier felt that he could never obtain the necessary grant from the Chamber of Deputies. It was ultimately agreed that the money would be raised in France by this means. Other boundary differences remained to be settled. Lambermont and Banning returned to Berlin, while Pirmez and Strauch remained in Paris to iron out difficulties with Ferry. Sanford had made only a brief appearance during the early

103 Stanley to Mackinnon, Dec. 30, 1884, Mackinnon Papers, Reel 3. The German Ambassador to France was also assisting in the conversations.

104 Stanley to Sanford, Dec. 24, 1884, Sanford Papers, Box 27, Folder 4.

105 Banning, op. cit., pp. 41-42.
talks, meeting privately with Ferry and then returning to the German capital.

As the dispute dragged on, there was renewed apprehension that the conference might still founder because of vexing territorial questions which were outside its official responsibility. Especially concerned were Leopold and his colleagues.\(^\text{106}\) The French had privately agreed to assist him in obtaining Portugal's recognition of Association claims but, at the same time, they gave the Portuguese similar assurances, which naturally confused and exasperated both parties.\(^\text{107}\) Sanford was active in Berlin, endeavoring to enlist German influence upon France. Leopold's objective was to gain French acceptance of his territorial claims since this would bring the Portuguese into line.\(^\text{108}\) But Bismark was reluctant to interfere\(^\text{109}\) and, without certain concessions to Portugal, it would have been much more difficult for Leopold to gain French acquiescence.

\(^{106}\)Ibid., pp. 53-54.

\(^{107}\)Borchgrave to Sanford, Jan. 15, 1885, Sanford Papers, Box 25, Folder 17; Crow, op. cit., pp. 167-170.

\(^{108}\)Devaux to Mackinnon, Jan. 2, 1885, Mackinnon Papers, Reel 11.

\(^{109}\)Ferry to Courcel, Jan. 28, 1885, Documents diplomatique français, V, No. 574.
As one of the advocates of territorial sacrifices by the Association in order to secure greater political gains, Sanford undoubtedly was most influential in developing the King's more conciliatory policy. He had supported the Association's claims to both banks of the Congo in December but, with the continued delay in Leopold's reaching agreements with France and Portugal, he was among the first to urge some workable compromise with Portugal on the southern shore. Leopold saw the French Foreign Office as the villain of the piece seeking to drive him from the stage so it could capitalize on its right of preemption. He now became convinced that, contrary to his firm belief up to this point, that concessions from him would not necessarily prompt further demands from France or Portugal. By withdrawing its claim to the whole lower bank of the Congo and conceding to Portugal the estuary from the sea to Noki, the Association at length won over Ferry.

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110 See Sanford draft, addressee unknown, n.d., Sanford Papers, Box 29, Folder 2.

111 Sanford to Mackinnon, Dec. 24, 1884 (draft), ibid., Box 127, Folder 10.

112 Borchgrave to Sanford, Jan. 13, 1885, ibid., Box 25, Folder 17.

113 Ferry to Courcel, Jan. 28, 1885, Documents diplomatique français, V, No. 545.
the Association thereupon signed a treaty to that end on February 5th and Portugal, thus deprived of French support, came to terms with Leopold. The later enabled Lisbon to save face by allowing Portugal the Cabinda enclave north of the Congo mouth.\footnote{Ferry to Courcel, Feb. 6, 1885, \textit{ibid.}, no. 565; Thomson, \textit{Fondation . . .}, p. 279.} Meanwhile, pressure from France, Britain and Germany compelled the Portuguese to content themselves with less than their original demands which had included the whole lower bank of the river.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 278-279; Crow, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 173.} As it became clear during January that Britain and Germany would not permit Portugal to control the Congo's mouth, Sanford's railway proposal gradually lost its importance. It finally became unnecessary when Portugal, in a separate arrangement, of February 16th, agreed that the Association be given the right to construct a line around the cataracts.\footnote{Borchgrave to Sanford, Jan. 16, 1885, Sanford Papers, Box 25, Folder 17; Thomson, \textit{Fondation . . .}, p. 279.}

But this had not been Sanford's only concern in the Conference sessions where he had not restricted his participation to discussions directly affecting the Association. The slave trade particularly interested him. During the December 1st session, he brought up the
point that, in issuing a declaration against this traffic, the Conference should broaden the definition to include trade on land as well as on the sea. Not only was Sanford making a point with which he knew most Americans to be in sympathy, he was sincerely concerned with the whole problem of commerce in human beings and bondage in Africa. Later, at a conference held in Brussels in 1889-1890, his position on these matters was to place him in opposition to Leopold and others who showed themselves lacking any genuine interest in conditions affecting African life. At Berlin, Sanford also participated in discussions respecting a postal convention for the Congo and the controversial liquor trade. Both he and Kasson endeavored to have the assembled nations take a strong stand on the problem but, it never became a topic for formal deliberation because too many merchants of several nationalities were enjoying large profits from such questionable enterprise.

Obviously Sanford's principal function in Berlin and Paris was in securing advantages for the Association. Because of the success he enjoyed with Leopold's other

117 His suggestion eventually was included in the article drawn up by Sir Edward Malet and inserted in the General Act of the Conference. Unsigned, Some Account of Belair . . ., p. 69.

118 Banning, op. cit., p. 23.
collaborators, the Association not only came through the precarious jungle of power diplomacy relatively unscathed, intact and secure in the Congo. Not only that—by the end of February, it had won recognition treaties from all nations participating in the Conference.\(^{119}\) Thus, what soon came to be known as the Congo Free State was brought into being. Again Sanford had performed a major service for Leopold. Their mutual friend, Mackinnon, spoke for the King in congratulating him upon "the great part" he took "in all negotiations which have led up to what I am happy to learn the King considers a satisfactory settlement."\(^{120}\) The special agent, Willard Tisdel, having been ordered to stop in Berlin before proceeding on his mission to the Congo, reported, as the Conference was getting under way that, although first place on the American delegation was held by Kasson, Sanford was acknowledged to be a very important person at the gathering because of his special knowledge of the Congo and the excellent contact he enjoyed.\(^{121}\) Sanford explained his role to Frelinghuysen as one

\(^{119}\)Crow, op. cit., pp. 149-150.

\(^{120}\)Mackinnon to Sanford, March 3, 1885, Sanford Papers, Box 127, Folder 6.

\(^{121}\)Tisdel to Morgan, Nov. 25, 1884 (personal), Morgan Papers, vol. I.
involving considerable work behind the scenes in promoting settlement of differences and conflicting claims without which the Conference would have been unable to proceed.\textsuperscript{122} It is entirely reasonable to suggest that, without Sanford's work in this respect, the Conference might well have been disrupted and, at best, much delayed, and that the Congo Free State might have been stillborn.

Sanford unquestionably believed that he was serving America's best interest while engaging in his various endeavors in Berlin and Paris. Like others, he was convinced that everything which worked to the advantage of the Association was beneficial to all trading nations that might be interested in the Congo, and he had no doubts that the United States merchants would one day participate fully in the Congo trade. Sanford and Kasson both considered it a principal objective of the American delegation to secure the Association recognition from the European powers so as to reinforce the American act of April, 1884, and thus silence critics in the United States.\textsuperscript{123} There was certainly no problem of a conflict

\textsuperscript{122}Sanford to Frelinghuysen, Jan. 14, 1885, Diplomatic Despatches, Germany. See complete letter in Appendix II.

\textsuperscript{123}Kasson, in fact, had been instructed through Tisdel to "demand recognition of the 'Free States'" by the powers. Tisdel to Morgan, Nov. 25, 1884, Morgan Papers, Vol. I.
of interests so far as Sanford was concerned. American participation in the Berlin Conference and his personal activities there were, in his eyes, perfectly consistent with his country's needs and were logical outgrowths of the Garfield and Arthur Administrations' more aggressive outward looking policies. Not only was he proud of his work at the Conference and always ready to defend it, but he felt that it merited him more recognition and some compensation. He had agreed to serve without pay but later declared that the State Department's utilization of his knowledge and services at Berlin without any consideration of payment ill-befitted the government.

There had actually been considerable domestic opposition to American participation in the Berlin gathering, and Sanford's inclusion in the United States delegation was a major target. The New York Times not

124 He was disappointed that, in an article on the Conference, Kasson made no mention of him. Senator George Edmunds to Sanford, June 28, 1886, Sanford Papers, Box 120, Folder 1.

125 Sanford to Senator Perry Belmont, March 22, 1886 (draft), ibid., Box 29, Folder 3.

126 Some American groups supported American work at the Conference. The National Temperance Society praised the stand on liquor control; The American Peace Society lauded attempts to neutralize the Congo; and the American Baptist Missionary Union supported measures against slave trade and restrictions on liquor. See
only carried hostile articles reprinted from the London Times, but contributed its own attack on the American delegation and the Administration for sending it. Even the New York Herald, usually in full support of more American involvement overseas, was unable to allow the United States role at Berlin to go completely unquestioned. A leading periodical, the Nation, was critical of Sanford's appointment, and charged that the whole policy of participation in the Conference indicated that the country "was more willing to become a part of the European system." In Congress, New York Democrat Perry Belmont led an inquiry into the Conference in the Lower House. Belmont had harbored suspicions of Sanford's activities since the latter's Washington campaign in 1884 and now vociferously denounced the Arthur Administration's whole Congo policy. This naturally reflected on the head of the Berlin mission and Kasson enclosures in Kasson to Frelinghuysen, Feb. 9, 1885, No. 159, Diplomatic Despatches, Germany.

128 Jan. 11, 1885, p. 11.
129 XL (Jan.-June, 1885), 27.
sought desperately to defend the work with which he was so closely identified. He was, at one point, advised by Hamilton Fish, an experienced observer of such matters, that Sanford's presence was the chief cause of apprehension that something was amiss and that the United States was being used by Leopold and the European states. Although Sanford had his enemies in Congress, Kasson knew that the issue had gone beyond personal animosity and had entered the arena of party politics.

When Grover Cleveland fulfilled long cherished Democratic ambitions and gained the Presidency, he wasted little time in repudiating the foreign policies of the preceding Republican Administration. The Congo question was singled out for attack in his first annual message to Congress. The President apparently depended upon Belmont's data for his briefing on the matter. This


132 Younger, op. cit., p. 343.

133 Richardson, op. cit., VIII, 330.

situation prompted Sanford to enlighten the new Secretary of State, Thomas F. Bayard, on the Berlin Conference, in the hope that the new administration would see the advantages of ratifying the General Act. But the influence of leading Democrats on Bayard was too strong. Cleveland continued to oppose the results of the Berlin Conference and the Act never won Senate approval. It was Sanford's later belief that ratification could have been accomplished if Frelinghuysen had taken the initiative and had pushed for acceptance in the Senate before the change in administration. The United States was the only participating power failing to ratify the Conference's General Act, which greatly embarrassed its delegates. Sanford, however, could console himself with the satisfaction of knowing that he had accomplished the major objective of his service in Berlin, and that Leopold was indebted to him for this. As the Congo Free State emerged amidst the scramble for African lands, attention turned to the development and exploitation of this vast territory. Sanford was certainly not lacking

135 Sanford to Bayard, March 25, 1885, Thomas F. Bayard Papers, LXIX, Washington, Library of Congress.


in ambition to participate in this great field for business and commercial enterprise. One writer had suggested that his work in Berlin was motivated by a desire to gain the railway concession involved in his proposal. Although he may have entertained such hopes, Sanford's connection with the proposal was not part of Leopold's original plan and was not the principal reason for his presence at the conference. The railroad concession, while it need not necessarily have excluded Sanford, was destined to have a long and tortuous development, involving other and much wealthier friends of the King. Yet Sanford was destined to share in the early commercial ventures in the new Congo Free State in modest fashion. This was an understandable result of his participation in African affairs and it was to mark a turning point in his relations with Leopold.

138 Ibid., pp. 98-99.
139 See Anstey, op. cit., chap. IX.
CHAPTER V

THE SANFORD EXPLORING EXPEDITION

Stanley's book, The Congo and the Founding of Its Free State, was published in the summer of 1885. It won a wide audience and did much to arouse interest in Central Africa through the literate world. One reviewer was carried away by Stanley's account of past achievements and future prospects and wrote that "Greeley's remark 'Go West young man' should be revised to 'Go to the Congo' as the best advice to those with capital . . . , strength, health, energy . . . , and patience . . . ."¹ While all of the latter attributes were indeed necessary for one interested in the Congo, the comparison with the American West or other bonanza areas halted abruptly there. Money, indeed fortunes, would be made in the Congo, but the very nature of the area and the peculiar conditions surrounding its history determined a type of development far different from that suggested in Stanley's pages of melodramatic prose.

The Free State² which emerged from the negoti-

¹New York Times, July 5, 1885, p. 4.
²The actual name eventually adopted was "Etat Indépendant du Congo," and, correctly translated, would
ations and treaty-making attending the Berlin Conference was a vast field for enterprise. Already in direct control of this new political unit through his complicated, obscure and devious maneuvers with the International African Association and the Comité d'Etudes de Haut Congo, Leopold requested and secured from the Belgian parliament the right to rule the Congo territory as its sovereign. There was thus created a personal union between the tiny European state and the huge African one. The King, having already poured a large part of his private fortune into acquisition of the new domain, was anxious to launch its development and exploitation so as to tap its obviously promising resources. But many considerations were necessary. In seeking capital, Leopold avoided concessions which would undermine his dominance or lead to the intrusion of excessive foreign influence there. At the same time, however, he could not ignore the fact that certain persons had rendered valuable aid in his drive for the Congo and that they might well consider themselves rightfully entitled to some compensation from their successful royal associate. Certainly there was no shortage of developmental proposals, since the

be rendered "Congo Independent State," but the English-speaking world long has accepted the name "Congo Free State" and it will be used in this study.
region's potential riches were widely appreciated by 1885.

The British were not going to hesitate in this situation. Among those to whom the King of the Belgians was indebted were his friends across the Channel, Mackinnon and Hutton. They had been closely associated with him since the beginning of his African activities, had invested in the Comité and, along with innumerable other services, had put forward considerable effort to defeat the Anglo-Portuguese treaty. Being shrewd businessmen, they naturally sought to gain economic advantage now that their colleague had acquired an immense block of virgin territory in what Stanley deemed the richest part of the continent.

There was the railroad which definitely must be built around the rapids. Leopold opened his search for financial backing for this project at the same time that Hutton initiated conversations with Free State authorities respecting a commercial company. Eventually, in July, 1885, plans were worked out by Mackinnon, Hutton and Stanley for a corporation to combine both the railway project and trade. This represented the first major effort at development and an attempt to realize the Free

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3This section on the Congo railway concession is based largely upon the excellent account in Anstey, op. cit., chap. IX.
State's investment potential. The Congo Railway Syndicate was organized to negotiate for concessions from Leopold. The latter had encouraged the three Britons and had actually committed himself to grant them extensive rights and privileges. Their establishment, the Royal Congo State Railway Company, was about to be launched with a royal charter and broad concessions when, in September, 1886, Leopold abruptly terminated negotiations. The group had sought such wide reaching powers that the King's sovereign rights would have been seriously jeopardized had they been accorded, and significant opposition developed in Belgium over granting key concessions to foreigners. A Belgian syndicate had been formed by Captain Albert Thys, one of Leopold's military staff, and this concern had offered to build the railway on terms much more attractive to the Monarch. Thys' company eventually constructed the line to Stanley Pool and the concession was thus retained in Belgian hands.

Sanford, too, had been giving some thought to the Congo's future. Early in 1885, he had proposed a radical overhaul in the whole machinery of the King's Congo operation based upon the belief that Leopold's political ambitions at the Berlin Conference would be crowned with

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4 Hutton to Mackinnon, Sept. 16, 1886, Mackinnon Papers, Reel 1.
success and that the resulting situation would demand new approaches. He suggested an International Congo Company, patterned after the British East India Company, to replace the fledgling and, in his view, over-expensive and inefficient administrative system of Leopold's organization. Such a company, Sanford believed, could take over the new State's stations and found new ones. It could perform the task of development more economically while, at the same time, carrying out the "dominating idea of this great work--introducing civilizing influences in the Congo Basin." The company's agents, under this system, would operate simultaneously as state political officials subject to its control but not paid by it. Sanford probably saw investment opportunities for himself in such a company and could have expected special consideration from the King had his proposal been accepted. But a giant concern similar to the British East India Company monopoly would have been

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5Sanford to Mackinnon (draft), Sanford Papers, Box 29, Folder 4. This note is undated, but the scheme outlined in it was communicated to Mackinnon in February, 1885; see Anstey, op. cit., p. 189, n. 1. With respect to the administrative system of the International Association of the Congo, which in turn became that of the Free State, Sanford, in late 1884, referred to it as wasteful and extravagant. He favored a thorough and vigorous reorganization which would introduce rigid economies and discipline. Sanford to Mackinnon, Dec. 24 (draft), Sanford Papers, Box 127, Folder 10.

6Ibid.
unattractive to Leopold for the same reasons that he ultimately spurned the British railway syndicate. Small concession easily controlled were one thing, but a huge all-embracing operation with quaisi-governmental status probably would have involved a great degree of foreign capital and would have interfered with his designs for a personal, and ultimately Belgian, empire.

Sanford's close collaboration with the King inspired various rumors as to how he would be rewarded. This, indeed, led to some speculation that the American would assume direction of the Free State's affairs. These rumors must have stemmed from Sanford's advocacy of administrative changes and his frequent visits to the royal palace, but few could have taken them seriously. Leopold could hire foreigners such as Stanley and De Winton as supervisors in the field, but the director-general of operations could only be a Belgian. Sanford, furthermore, lacked any reputation for administrative or business genius and he had too diverse interests to give the single-minded direction such a position demanded.

7 Nicholas Fish to Kasson, April 18, 1885, quoted in Halligan, op. cit., p. 151.

8 All the administrative officers of the Free State were Belgian and, in early 1886, De Winton was replaced as Governor General in the Congo by a Belgian, Camille Janssen. Arthur Berriedale Keith, The Belgian Congo and the Berlin Act (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1919), p. 70.
Denied the opportunity to participate in a large undertaking under royal direction, Sanford was obliged to find something on a smaller scale if he were to reap tangible benefits from his many services. Trade prospects in the Congo were encouraging to a man such as he since, in his many business plunges, he had never been intimidated by risks. In 1876, thirty-three European trading posts operated on the lower Congo; double that number were in service a decade later, with many more facilities functioning along the coast and in the interior.  

The Dutch African Trading Company (Afrikaansche Handelsvereeniging), the largest in the Congo area, was founded in 1869 and operated eighty stations on the river at its mouth and on the adjoining coast. Its central base at Boma alone employed more than fifty Europeans in 1878.  

Most important among several British firms was that of Hatton and Cookson, which had set up its first "factory" on the Congo in the mid-1850's. It managed twelve facilities in 1886.  

The French were represented by the house of Daumas, Beraud and Company, founded in  

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1855, with fifteen posts. The Portuguese firm of Valle-Azevedo with headquarters at Ambriz in Angola operated some of its twenty-five stations on the lower Congo. In 1885, the Belgians entered the trade with the Antwerp firm of Devoubaix setting up a base on the river. Reports from the American Tisdel indicated that the commerce enjoyed by these firms was very profitable. The Dutch African Trading Company he found, had exported 20,500 tons of rubber from the Congo in 1883, some of that amount being sold, via Rotterdam, to manufacturers in Boston and New York. Sanford closely followed the progress of some of the trading companies. He must have been impressed to find that a small British operation, the Congo and Central African Company, working on and near the Congo, had shown a ten percent return each year for 1883 and 1884, and had expanded into the more successful British Congo Company the following year. Information such as this gave Sanford the inspiration to think in terms of his own establishment but, probably more than


13Tisdel to Frelinghuysen, Nov. 23, 1884 (draft), Morgan Papers, I, 25.

14Prospectus and brochures in Sanford Papers, Box 31, Folder 4.
anything else, the Taunt Report actively encouraged him to begin commercial operations in the area.

The comprehensive study of Congo conditions by Lieutenant Taunt gave much attention to trading possibilities on the upper river. Containing data on navigation and boat design, regional labor availability, foods obtainable, precautions against sicknesses and their treatment, it was actually a guide for anyone interested in setting up commercial operations. Taunt was quite optimistic about the region above the Pool where he found less disease and lower mortality rates, as well as greater market potential and more natural wealth, than farther down stream. Taunt felt that the greatest problem throughout the Congo, was not the country itself, but the men who were employed there. Sanford, who had been urging the State Department to appoint a Consul to the Congo, recommended Taunt as a "capital man" for the position on the basis of his excellent report. The two had been in frequent contact since early January, 1886, when Taunt, upon the completion of his Congo trip,

16Ibid., pp. 13-15.
17Sanford to Morgan, April 14, 1886, Morgan Papers, Vol. II.
responded to Leopold's request and visited Brussels. Taunt's advice must have been crucial in Sanford's decision to launch his own company.

The first mention of Sanford's plans for a definite undertaking came in June, 1886. In a letter to Amos Lawrence, head of the Pacific Mills, one of the largest textile concerns in the United States, and whom Sanford hoped to attract, he told of a syndicate he was forming and which already included Jules Malou, Belgian Senator and former Prime Minister; Mr. J. Montefiore-Levi, a wealthy Belgian Jew; Jules Levita, a Parisian lawyer and old friend; and, possibly, Levita's brother, head of a London commercial house. Several other Belgians were reported as ready to commit themselves and Sanford, who obviously had previous authorization, took out some shares in Lawrence's name. He shortly after described his promotion as an "exploring expedition," which he hoped would benefit American commerce and industry while paving the way for further American enterprise in the Free State. He obviously believed that his countrymen must

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18 Taunt to Sanford, Jan. 2, 1886, Sanford Papers, Box 28, Folder 1; New York Times, Jan. 2, 1886, p. 2.

19 Sanford to Lawrence, June 7, 1886 (draft), Sanford Papers, Box 29, Folder 11.

20 Sanford to Bayard, June 15, 1886 (draft), ibid., Box 29, Folder 3.
be shown, and stated his intention to "demonstrate the value of the Upper Congo for our trade."21

The company that finally emerged had twelve subscribers, of whom only Sanford and Jules Levita were non-Belgians. As it became increasingly difficult to interest investors, Sanford was forced to deviate from his original plan of making the concern a joint Anglo-Saxon and Belgian enterprise.22 Lawrence, upon whose participation Sanford depended for prestige and as an example to other American businessmen, finally decided not to invest because he was not satisfied with the articles of association which made it possible for a majority of stockholders to involve the company in debts and liabilities, for which individual subscribers were liable. He did, however, advance Sanford $10,000 at five percent to help him launch the company, and Sanford put some shares in his name.23 When Lawrence died late in 1886, his son had Sanford remove the Lawrence name from the company's books and the shares were transferred to Sanford. Stanley, too, had apparently been approached.

21 Sanford to Lawrence, June 7, 1886 (draft), ibid., Box 29, Folder 11.

22 George Grenfell to Sanford, Nov. 23, 1889, ibid., Box 24, Folder 19.

23 Lawrence to Sanford, June 25, 1886, ibid., Box 25, Folder 11.
but declined to risk his money because he did not consider Congo conditions favorable and distrusted the State.24

A limited, joint-stock company was set up in June, 1886, which in January, 1888, became a full-fledged corporation ("Société Anonyme"). The charter provided that half the stock would go to the "capital directors" and promoters, one third to the managing directors in the Congo, five percent to employees in the field at the discretion of their superiors and twelve percent to the management in Europe.25

With key officials working in expectation of profits, expenses could be kept down. Only £8,000 was initially subscribed, with provisions for an increase of £4,000 by debentures or other special means should the need arise. This was considered adequate to cover the purchase of a twenty-five ton river steamer, necessary trade goods, and the establishment of base camps on the lower Congo and at Stanley Pool. Other expenses, it was believed, would be light because of Free State willingness to make its facilities available to Sanford's group. Leopold had offered Sanford a completely outfitted steamer but later withdrew the offer on the grounds that terri-

24 Stanley to Mackinnon, Sept. 28, 1886, Mackinnon Papers, Reel 3.

25 Sanford to Malou, 1886 (draft), Sanford Papers, Box 29, Folder 13.
torial disputes with France had come to preclude it. It was expected, nevertheless, that Free State transportation facilities of some kind could be obtained if needed.

The venture's objective was to purchase and ship out ivory while investigating the opportunities for more extensive trade along both the Congo and its affluents. The company's work was to be completed by January 1, 1888, at which time accounts would be settled and the organization would, hopefully, give way to a more ambitious one. Allowing for procurement of boats and supplies and time for transport, it was expected that the actual trading would be underway for six to nine months. Sanford estimated that the profits by July, 1887, when the first cargo of ivory was expected in Europe, would be £40,000 gross.

The name of the enterprise was originally to be the Congo Commercial Exploring Expedition, Sanford having ruled out, for obvious reasons, another title, the American Commercial Exploring Expedition, given early consideration. It was then decided, however, to name the company after its founder and thus the Sanford Exploring Expedition was born. It had been Sanford's intention at the

26 Ibid.  27 Ibid.  28 Ibid.
outset to operate the concern himself, but he soon found that he was unequal to the task, admitting to Amos Lawrence: "I found the responsibilities and cares of the commercial part of it . . . beyond me." The business end, therefore, was turned over to Weber and Company, an Antwerp firm which had become a shareholder. Emile Levita, a respected and well-established London businessman, was Sanford's first choice for business director, but he was unwilling to match the Webers' capital contributions. The founder, owning two-fifths of the stock, nevertheless, remained in control of the management of operations in Africa and of relations with company agents.

The key post of supervisor in the Congo was given to Taunt. The young naval officer came highly recommended beyond his work on the Congo in 1885. When he first met Sanford, he bore a letter of introduction from B. F. Stevens, a United States Despatch Agent in London and an old acquaintance of Sanford. Taunt's Navy superiors

29 Sanford to Lawrence, June 18, 1886 (draft), Sanford Papers, Box 29, Folder 11.

30 Jules Levita to Sanford, May 21, 28, and June 10, 1886, ibid., Box 125, Folder 6.

31 Sanford to Lawrence, June 18, 1886, ibid., Box 29, Folder 11.

32 Stevens to Sanford, Dec. 28, 1885, ibid., Box 27, Folder 7.
also testified to his abilities. Admiral Schley praised his service during the Greeley Relief Expedition in Arctic waters in 1883, and lamented that he would be wasted in the Congo. Entirely satisfied with his choice, Sanford was instrumental in aiding Taunt to obtain leave of absence from the Navy Department and did his best to have him named American Consul in the Congo, requesting the Secretary of State at least to consider him for a temporary appointment until a resident representative might be sent out. This effort was unsuccessful but, ironically, Taunt did become United States Commercial Agent in the Congo in 1889, following loss of his position with the new organization.

Sanford directed Taunt to reach the upper river and there to establish contact with the African ivory supplies. Trade was to be one objective, but the expedition also was to secure valuable sites, material, and personnel for the larger operations that were to follow when a more extensive enterprise should replace the

33 Schley to Taunt, June 14, 1886 (copy), ibid., Box 28, Folder 1.

34 Sanford to Bayard, June 15, 1886 (draft), ibid., Box 29, Folder 3.

35 Packhurst to Bayard, Jan. 18, 1889, No. 18, Diplomatic Despatches, Belgium.
pioneering body. It would seem that Sanford was unwilling to admit the commercial character of the operation, for he wanted it known that it was a "scientific" undertaking. This would account for the title "expedition" rather than "company" in the organization's name. Taunt was advised to avoid "all causes of collision with natives" and to be "especially careful . . . to use arms only in case of legitimate defense," for "we wish to be at peace and on good terms with all." In view of what eventually transpired, these orders are significant.

Arriving at Boma on the lower Congo in July, 1886, Taunt and his men found that the Free State had barely enough accommodations for its own staff and that outsiders had no alternative but to stay at a hotel run by the Dutch Trading Company. Taunt and Antone Swinburne, his second in command, were forced to pay exhorbitant rates there and incur heavy expenses before they were able to proceed up-river. There was considerable delay in the arrival of essential supplies and Taunt regretted having left Europe without them. Nor could they depend on the State for such materials, for it

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36Taunt to Sanford, Sept. 24, 1886, Sanford Papers, Box 28, Folder 2.

37Sanford to Taunt, n.d. (draft), ibid., Box 29, Folder 18.

38Taunt to Sanford, Aug. 22, 1886.
apparently had difficulty maintaining its own stores and could spare none to private concerns. In August the party obtained the small steamer *Florida* which had been built in England to Taunt's specifications. This was supposed to be an essential element in the whole operation, but it came in two large containers rather than in a number of smaller ones as Taunt had instructed the manufacturer. The crates weighed as much as 1,500 pounds each and proved extremely difficult to transport.

Delays arising from this situation caused Sanford to suggest that, perhaps, another steamer should be sent out. As he was continually to do, Taunt advised patience and discouraged the move, emphasizing that he would have his hands full just putting the *Florida* into operation.

The State's transportation facilities were quite limited and were used by various commercial houses, explorers, missionaries, and government administrators. In service when Taunt arrived were the two steamboats, *Stanley* and *en Avant*; a steam launch, the *Henry Reed*;

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39 The boat was shipped in parts. Transporting a ready-made vessel around the rapids would have required a huge labor force and a great loss of time.

40 Taunt to Sanford, Sept. 19, 1886, Sanford Papers, Box 28, Folder 2.

41 Taunt to Sanford, Sept., 1886, ibid.
which the State leased from the British Baptist mission; and some lighters. Sanford was aware of the boat shortage—this was the reason he wanted his own vessel in operation—but he had certainly expected the State to assist his company in emergencies. Leopold's forces, he believed, were committed to proving the commercial advantages of the Congo, especially in the interests of the future railroad, and he was therefore confident that officials would render all possible assistance to any private enterprise willing to pioneer on the upper river. Sanford still remained convinced in October that the State, "which is doing all it can to promote my enterprise," was following this policy. But his men soon found that conditions in the Congo were determined more by personnel on the spot than by vague promises made in Brussels. The Congo transport head, Lieutenant Valcke charged the company £1 per load for shipping supplies to Stanley Pool or for bringing out ivory from the interior. Enjoying a haulage monopoly, he was hardly anxious to see the Sanford people put their boat

42 Taunt to Sanford, Aug. 22, 1886, ibid.
43 Sanford to Mackinnon, Oct. 24, 1886, Sanford Papers, Box 127, Folder 2.
44 A "load" was the amount of goods possible for one African to carry—sixty-five pounds on the average.
in operation. There were three thousand loads waiting to be moved to Stanley Pool in September and Valcke relished the thought of carrying this profitable cargo at his convenience. One of Sanford's employees accused the State official of intentionally delaying the Florida's launching. And, according to Taunt, Valcke was favoring a French trading company, at whose establishment he lived, in making State facilities available. Thus it was alleged, he granted the French rights which were denied Sanford's firm.

The African carrier problem was acute. Such individuals were needed in large numbers to move material around the cataracts and also in the hinterland. Unable to depend upon the State's steamers on the upper Congo, Taunt endeavored to enlist porters to carry ivory down to Stanley Pool. He and Parminter had reached the upper river in late July and only two loads had arrived at the Pool two months later. Zanzibaris, employed with considerable success by Stanley and others, and the capable

^5Parminter to Sanford, Sept. 14, 1886, Sanford Papers, Box 26, Folder 7.

^6Swinburne to Sanford, Nov. 14, 1886, ibid., Box 27, Folder 14.

^7Taunt to Sanford, Aug. 22, 1886, ibid., Box 28, Folder 1; Sept. 17, 1886, Box 28, Folder 2.

^8Parminter to Sanford, Sept. 14, 1886, ibid., Box 26, Folder 7.
Hausas from the western Sudan, who had proven themselves in many capacities on the west coast, were considered the best carriers and general auxiliaries, while Bangala tribesmen from the upper bend of the Congo had shown themselves to be good caravan leaders. But all were in great demand and therefore expensive. It was the lower river Africans upon whom the Europeans had to depend most. Not only did State authorities fail to honor their original agreement to help find four hundred carriers per month—Africans hired directly by Sanford's company were frequently taken over by State agents.

As if to prove that he was out to ruin Sanford's organization, Valcke imposed severe restrictions upon the labor force it eventually managed to assemble. He demanded that all the company's stations and men should be under his orders and that they be paid at the State rate, whereas all other commercial or missionary enterprises were free to engage labor on their own terms. When Taunt and Parminter sought to enlist Zanzibaris whose contracts with the Free State had expired, they found various obstacles put in their way. This also was contrary to the original understanding by which the government had agreed to send such men to the company.\footnote{Parminter to Sanford, \textit{ibid}.}
\footnote{Swinburne to Sanford, Nov. 14, 1886, \textit{ibid.}, Box 27, Folder 14.}
There continued to be a labor problem affecting both transport and the manning of stations for the duration of the Sanford operation. Eventually, one of the company agents resorted to purchasing and freeing slaves who were then required to serve the company. Such practices naturally lent themselves to all manner of exploitation and Sanford never encouraged them. 51 It was even suggested to Sanford that he try donkeys for transport. Since the African porters frequently stole, and punishing them made it practically impossible to hire replacements in the district, donkeys were thought to offer several advantages if they were properly treated. 52 The company, however, continued to depend upon human carriers when it could procure them.

Before sending his agents into the field, Sanford had obtained the State's permission to erect stations and storage facilities at certain points along the Congo. The specific number and exact location of such posts was a major factor in the company's planning, affecting decisions bearing upon numerous other requirements. When therefore, the State failed to stand by its commitments,

51 Chatrobe Bateman to Sanford, n.d., ibid., Box 24, Folder 2.

52 De Winton to Sanford, Sept. 27, 1887, ibid., Box 24, Folder 10.
there was cause for grave concern. Upon his arrival at Banana, Taunt was informed that the company could not have the Kinshasa site, immediately up-river from Leopoldville on Stanley Pool, for a station.53 There were instances later in which the State, apparently exercising preemption rights, simply took possession of stations after Sanford's men had arranged to set up installations.54 The State would not settle on fixed rents for its concessions and eventually claimed the right at any time to retrieve stations and grounds it had ceded to the company without consideration for the investments made.55 Sanford must have been shocked to learn that such a policy did not apply to other commercial interests on the Congo and that these rented land at set figures or could purchase it outright.56 These discriminatory practices could only hamper company operations and delay the anticipated extension of its activities.

53Swinburne to Sanford, Nov. 14, 1886, ibid., Box 26, Folder 14.
54Stanley to Sanford, Aug. 17, 1886, ibid., Box 27, Folder 6.
55Parminter to Sanford, Sept. 14, 1886, ibid., Box 26, Folder 7.
56Ibid.
Sanford was urged to insure that agreements effected in the Congo were ratified and made binding in Brussels. This was good advice, for he evidently felt that Leopold and his administrators were as good as their word and that his company would receive proper consideration. Parminter repeatedly warned his employer that the undependable Congo King was "slippery." 57 Stanley, another party in a position to offer sound advice, cautioned Sanford to beware. In May, 1886, the State decided to evacuate its stations on the upper Congo, and Leopold agreed that the Sanford concern could take over facilities there. Sanford was, of course, delighted with this development, though Stanley viewed it as ominous and warned Sanford to think well before he committed himself. The experienced Congo-hand felt that the State might well merely be using Sanford's group to occupy the posts, enabling itself to reduce expenditures. He further felt that such a virtual abandonment of the upper Congo would, by ending official governmental occupation and administration, induce the French to take it. 58 When Stanley learned of later actions by the State, especially the refusal to allow the company to erect a

57 Parminter to Sanford, Dec. 2, 1886, ibid., Box 26, Folder 7.

58 Stanley to Sanford, May 17, 1886, ibid., Box 27, Folder 6.
station at Kinshasa, he deemed Sanford a fool to continue putting such unbounded faith in Leopold. But, as yet, Sanford refused to think of his company's setbacks due to anything more than minor errors and personal antagonisms in the Congo.

Taunt and his lieutenants found ivory plentiful on the upper river and its affluents. They were somewhat discouraged, however, to find State officials engaged in the trade, knowing that, with its better transport facilities, the State would enjoy considerable advantage over private traders. According to the company's original understanding with the Congo administration, the latter was not to engage in ivory commerce, but Leopold's financial troubles evidently forced him to reconsider, and Taunt found State agents Van Gele, Coquilhaut and others competing directly with his men. But for the time being, at least, there was much ivory to be collected. Indeed it was estimated that there was enough of it at Stanley Pool to last two years at ten tusks per day but, even though the company did some business there, Taunt considered operational costs too high. In order to

59Stanley to Mackinnon, Sept. 28, 1886, Mackinnon Papers, Reel 3.
60Taunt to Sanford, July 11, 1886, Sanford Papers, Box 28, Folder 1.
61Ibid.
avoid competition and to obtain ivory at lower prices, he now penetrated further up-country than any other white agents or "legitimate" traders had ever gone. At Boloba, well above Stanley Pool, he found ivory available at ten or fifteen mitakas (copper rings) per pound, far less than the cost at the Pool.

Africans exchanged ivory for various goods. Cheap cotton cloth with check and stripe patterns was in constant demand. To consummate a transaction, the trader was frequently obliged to offer guns and powder, mirrors, cups and spoons, and the like—anything which caught African fancy. In some areas, copper was the essential trade item. It was in great demand at Oubango, and, at other points, no ivory could be obtained without it. The Bakuba and Bakete people on the Kasai River, where company agents were active in 1887, desired beads, copper, cloth and especially cowries in barter for their ivory.

62"Legitimate" was commonly used to distinguish regular commercial activities from the slave trade. Arab slavers were not unusual in the western reaches of the Congo.

63Taunt to Sanford, 1886, Sanford Papers, Box 28, Folder 2.

64Swinburne to Sanford, March 30, 1888, ibid., Box 27, Folder 14.

65Parminter to Sanford, June 2, 1887, ibid., Box 26, Folder 7.

66Swinburne to Sanford, loc. cit.
These tribes actually preferred slaves for their tusks, and it was by supplying them that other African traders had obtained ivory in the region and in turn sold it to Europeans.67 As the latter started trading directly with these tribes' tribesmen, slaves were gradually replaced by the other exchange goods. At first it appeared that, on the Lulua river, a southern extension of the Kasai, ivory was available only to slave traders, but Parminter found that European merchandise, once introduced, set off a gradual demand which made steady inroads on the predominance of "black ivory."68 At the Equator station, company agent, E. J. Glave, accumulated a large number of tusks, some over one hundred pounds each, at relatively little cost. His stock made a strong impression upon members of the Emin Pasha Relief Expedition who passed through the post in May, 1887, on their way toward the southern Sudan.69

There seems to be no question that Sanford's forces were able to buy ivory, and cheaply, too. Getting it out of the interior was another matter. And there was the related problem of barter goods. Ivory had to be

67Ibid.  68Ibid.  
acquired continually, as opportunity afforded, which meant that trade items be constantly on hand. Here again it was a question of transport. When supplies could not be brought to company stations regularly and in quantity, tusk collection was held up. The State officers knew this and appeared deliberately to have held up the flow of goods to company outposts.70

By 1887 more competition appeared. The Dutch had begun to operate in the ivory markets as far as Stanley Pool and for a distance beyond. This inspired fear that rivalry between European buyers would drive up the price of the ivory and thus reduce profits for all.71 Also engaged in the trade were the Portuguese, occasionally seen near Stanley Pool.72 They were apparently not well organized for, at one point, Taunt was negotiating to purchase a quantity of tusks from two Portuguese who had managed to get up to untapped areas but had then run out of supplies and were practically destitute.73 Then, of course, Arab traders from the east coast were active

70Swinburne to Sanford, Nov. 14, 1886, Sanford Papers, Box 27, Folder 14.
71De Winton to Sanford, Sept. 27, 1887, ibid., Box 24, Folder 10.
72Taunt to Sanford, Jan. 10, 1887, ibid., Box 28, Folder 3.
73Ibid.
around Stanley Falls. Due in part to the State's inability to erect an effective barrier against them beyond Bangala, Arab ivory hunters sent expeditions well down-river during the period when Sanford's concern was in operation. They came in large numbers and employed both force and violence to obtain ivory and slaves. Their depredations would leave an area stripped, not only of tusks, but sometimes of most humans.

Sanford's agent, Swinburne, met Tippo Tib, the most powerful and well-known of all Arab slave traders in tropical Africa, and endeavored to work out some arrangement whereby he could count on Arab good will and assistance. In May, 1887, he reported that he had accomplished this, and was confident that Tippo Tib would honor his promise of cooperation. Indeed, Parminter believed that the Arab would trade the company much ivory himself. But most of the Sanford business was

74Most of these "Arabs" were actually mixed bloods, usually with more Negro than Arab physical characteristics, who originated on the East coast and its islands. Many of the Arab forces were in fact full-blooded Negroes but, when wearing Arab dress and armed with guns, seemed little unlike Arabs to the Africans who saw them.


76Swinburne advised the company to send the Arab leader a "milk sop" such as some good guns to demonstrate friendship. Swinburne to Weber and Co., May 30, 1887 (copy), Sanford Papers, Box 27, Folder 14.

77Parminter to Sanford, July 29, 1887, ibid., Box 26, Folder 7.
done farther down the river and, in any case, Tippo Tib agreed in February, 1887, to become governor of the Stanley Falls region for the Free State, and ivory expeditions below the Falls became less of a menace.\(^7^8\) In the Company papers in the Sanford collection, there is no indication that competition, with the exception of that from the State, proved more than a nuisance for a considerable period.

Some efforts were made to exploit another Central African Savannah product. Rubber appeared as a possible substitute for ivory as a trade commodity in some areas. At the company's Luebo station, on the Lulua River in the south, it was reported that the high price of ivory made rubber a better trade item there. The Africans obtained milk by bleeding vines rather than trees. They rubbed this on their bodies and, when dry, peeled it off and formed the thin film into balls. Forty of these balls were exchanged for one bead.\(^7^9\)

Taunt organized the gathering of rubber at Luebo, with the intention of shipping it to Europe in sixty-five pound units.\(^8^0\) It was also available in Baluba country,

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\(^7^8\)Slade, op. cit., pp. 94-97.

\(^7^9\)Letter of Account, n.d., Sanford Papers, Box 21, Folder 6.

\(^8^0\)Taunt to Sanford, Nov. 26, 1885, ibid., Box 28, Folder 2. Sixty-five pounds was the usual capacity of an African carrier.
from which quantities had been carried overland to Angola. Parminter wished to tap this trade, believing that river transport would enable the company to exploit the situation and outbid those who depended on the longer, more expensive overland route to the coast. Sanford was quite interested in rubber trade prospects, hoping that it would prove attractive to American concerns who had long imported it from European middlemen. He collected literature on the growing number of uses for rubber and kept his eye on the prices it demanded in the world market. It is not clear whether the company ever brought out much rubber, but he eventually contacted concerns such as the Converse Rubber Company and the Boston Rubber Shoe Company, urging them to invest in this new enterprise. At one point he considered setting up his own rubber manufacturing plant. Although unable to arouse American rubber interests at the time, his expedition advertised the rubber potential luring later exploiters in the 1890's.

Company employees in the Congo were probably no worse than most white men of the period serving in the

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81 Parminter to Sanford, June 2, 1887, ibid., Box 26, Folder 7.
82 Sanford drafts, April 14, 1888, ibid., Box 22, Folder 4.
83 Ibid.
tropics. Personnel available for such work were, as a rule, adventurers, failures, or misfits unprepared for and commonly unable to cope with the rigors of life in a place like the Congo. Others, who seemed to possess the necessary qualifications for pioneering in central-Africa, frequently disappointed their supporters. Heavy drinking was a major problem among Europeans in the Congo. This in turn led to arguments and tension among persons dependent upon one another. Constant bickering and accusations were the norm.

Faced with a harsh existence in a climate often leading to physical deterioration, men found themselves ignoring long cherished moral principles and social taboos, which only increased bitterness and despondency. The Sanford correspondence is rife with all manner of charges and countercharges, denunciations and spiteful evaluations, levelled by one agent against another. As usual in such cases, Sanford, the party far removed from the scene of action, found it difficult to establish the true circumstances. Some of his men seem to have carried out their assignments adequately and provoked little criticism or animosity from their superiors. With others, there was trouble.

Roger Casement, who later gained world attention by exposing the horrors of Leopold’s labor regime and for
his leadership in the Irish Easter Rebellion of 1916, was employed by the company at Matadi. He was considered utterly incompetent by Swinburne, who accused him of upsetting trade. Taunt was also very critical of him, reporting that his station was in complete confusion while he was in constant conflict with State officials. Chatrobe Bateman, who was hired from the State at a higher salary, appears to have run his station at Equator efficiently but had to resign in 1887 for health reasons. Another man enticed away from the State by the same means, Herbert Ward, was soon partially incapacitated by a poisoned arm and suffered from constant bouts with fever and dysentary. Taunt claimed that even without these afflictions Ward was unstable and "needed watching at all times." In characteristic fashion, Ward, who was entrusted with transporting the company's two steamers

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84 Swinburne to Weber and Co., July 16, 1887 (copy), ibid., Box 27, Folder 14.

85 Taunt to Sanford, Feb. 15, 1887, ibid., Box 28, Folder 3. One of Casement's biographers notes that his subject had a romantic passion for African exploration which made him seek a post on Sanford's expedition, "organized by a wealthy American who was able to join the current fashion without having to concern himself with sponsors or tiresome budget considerations" [sic]. Rene MacCall, Roger Casement: A New Judgement (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1957), p. 15.

86 Taunt to Sanford, Aug. 22, 1886, ibid., Box 28, Folder 2.
upstream, abandoned his work for Sanford and left to join Stanley's expedition in 1887.

But the real blow to the company came when Taunt, in whom Sanford had placed such confidence, resigned his position. Beset by lack of cooperation from the State and by interminable delays, the expedition's commander became an alcoholic. Here was a young naval officer with a good record who had seen in the Congo an opportunity to invest several years of his life in return for large profits. After going into the interior, he had requested Sanford to send him some scientific instruments, which prompted the latter to inquire whether, perchance, Taunt had not taken the scientific facade of the expedition too seriously. The agent's reply left no room for doubt as to why he had gone into the Congo:

 Give yourself no uneasiness about the scientific part of the expedition—of course I came out here solely and entirely to make money. . . . The instruments are for use as a secondary [sic] and only to give coloring to the exploring part of the expedition. You can rest assured that all the science in Africa would not have tempted me back to the hardships of this life away from my profession and from my family, if I had not thought there was plenty of money in it.87

When it finally became clear that the tight company timetable could not be met, and Taunt, who worked for

87Taunt to Sanford, Sept. 24, 1886, ibid., Box 28, Folder 2.
company shares, realized that no great wealth would arise out of the venture, he became despondent. Along with increased alcohol consumption, Taunt appears to have kept an African woman, a common practice among Europeans in the Congo and referred to as a "necessary African adjunct," but he took great pains to conceal the fact.  

Late in 1887, he simply left the Congo without notice and returned to Europe. He borrowed money from friends and others there, sank into drunkenness and barely managed for a time to keep a step ahead of his creditors. Sanford was dumbfounded and wrote to those who had recommended Taunt to him seeking an explanation. He must have realized that Taunt's desertion in a sense represented the decline in company hopes. Parminter guided affairs in the Congo thereafter but, although he had his supporters, some stockholders, informed that he left his post for months and intrigued against the company, desired a replacement.

The original schedule called for the company's small steamboat, the Florida, to make its initial trip

88Swinburne to Sanford, Sept. 29, 1887, ibid., Box 27, Folder 14.
89See letters from B. F. Stevens to Sanford, 1887, ibid., Box 27, Folder 7.
90Jules Levita to Sanford, n.d., ibid., Box 125, Folder 10.
in 1887. It was eventually brought up to Stanley Pool in sections and was there assembled by Davy, an able mechanic, who was, however, obliged to wait for parts to reach him. Engine shafts and other heavy equipment were hard to move and had to be slung on long poles carried on the porters' shoulders, for which duty it was exceedingly difficult to hire carriers. 91 When Herbert Ward, who had been in charge of transporting the steamer and its parts up-river, abruptly quit the company and enlisted in Stanley's expedition, the equipment for which he had responsibility was abandoned. Since he had made no provision for protecting the parts from the elements, they rusted and deteriorated before they could be retrieved and brought up to the Pool. 92 This meant even more delay before the vessel could be put into service. It was indeed discouraging to the concern to compare this poor showing with that made by the Baptist missionary, George Grenfell, who had managed with meager assistance to transport, assemble, and launch a steamer on the Pool in four months. 93


92 Parminter to Sanford, April ?, 1887, ibid.

While the company was anxiously awaiting new parts for the Florida, Stanley appeared at the Pool. The explorer was back in Africa for the last time to "rescue" Emin Pasha. A German scientist, whose Christian name was Edouard Schnitzer, Emin had become a Moslem and had been made governor of the Egyptian Equatorial Province in the southern Sudan. The Mahdist revolt cut him off from Cairo and, after Gordon's defeat at Khartoum in 1885, he and his garrison continued to hold out, an island of hated aliens in the Mahdi's Sudan. After he had let it be known in 1886 that he was finding it increasingly difficult to maintain his precarious position, efforts were made to come to his aid. Mackinnon and Hutton organized the Emin Pasha Relief Committee and engaged Stanley to lead a rescue force. Hoping to capitalize on the situation, Leopold convinced the Committee to take the Congo route to the upper Nile rather than by way of the east coast. Emin was to be offered a governorship in the Congo Free State provided he would help bring the Equatorial Province with him.94

Stanley moved up the Congo and, late in April, 1887, he was at Swinburne's post on the Pool. Since speed was considered essential for his expedition, Stanley

94Mackinnon to Sanford, May 3, 1887, Sanford Papers, Box 127, Folder 7.
tried to procure all useful transport facilities then available on the river. By threats and intimidation, he had managed to get possession of the missionary steamers, Peace and Henry Reed. Swinburne then relinquished the Florida to him, but claimed later that Stanley would have taken it in any case. The slim vessel was not yet fitted with essential parts and was consequently little more than a hull to be towed. Stanley claimed that Swinburne willingly agreed to let him borrow the vessel in return for helping him launch it, since it would be of no use to anyone until the necessary machinery arrived in July. To speed acquisitions, the explorer guaranteed the company that it would be compensated in cash for use of the Florida.

95 Stanley excused his confiscation of these steamers, recalling that he had rendered assistance to missionaries on his previous expeditions and further explained that his large entourage of over six hundred men could not stay long at Stanley Pool with its inadequate food supplies and that the steamers were therefore a necessity if his party was to be moved quickly enough. That this had entailed a struggle, he admitted. The Baptists tried to prevent him from taking the Peace by hiding essential parts, until they were ordered by State officials to halt such interference. Stanley to Mackinnon, April, 1887, Mackinnon Papers, Reel 3.

96 Sanford to De Winton, n.d. (draft), Sanford Papers, Box 29, Folder 8.


98 Ibid., pp. 462-463.
Stanley's action hit Sanford and the stockholders hard. They had expected the Florida to be operative much earlier and believed that the required parts would soon be on hand for installation. The loss of the hull after so many months of delays, just when it was about to be outfitted and the ship put into service, was a serious blow to the company's fortunes. Knowing Stanley's methods, Sanford had rather anticipated that he might seize the other boats but, had expected that his own company would be exempt from such strong-armed measures. Sanford first claimed that two-and-a-half to three months were lost due to Stanley's move, representing a severe loss to his business at a peak season. He went on to point out to De Winton, Secretary of the Emin Pasha Relief Committee, that the company's men were, in reality, in worse straits than Emin Pasha and could ill-afford to be deprived of the long-awaited steamer. As the wronged party, he pressed the Relief Committee for damages and ultimately claimed a six months loss of business.

99 Sanford to Taunt, April 4, 1887 (draft), Sanford Papers, Box 29, Folder 18.

100 Sanford to De Winton, n.d. (draft), ibid., Box 29, Folder 8.

101 Sanford to Mackinnon, Jan. 18, 1888 (draft), ibid., Box 127, Folder 10.
To Mackinnon, whom he saw as the key man in the dispute, Sanford explained that the loss of the Florida had prevented the revictualing of the Luebo station in time of drought and that while the boat was absent the French and Dutch traders had been able to press steamers into service in areas where the company had expected to do considerable business and where, consequently, the price of ivory was bid up considerably higher. He also contended that, because of the Florida episode and attendant developments, his company would not be in a good position to form the contemplated larger enterprise favorable to the original investors.

The amount Sanford's company asked for the loss of the Florida was £5,000. Stanley dismissed the claim in no uncertain terms and influenced Mackinnon to believe that Sanford's whole case was grossly exaggerated. No one wanted to accept responsibility for the claim and the issue dragged on for years. Sanford's demands irritated and finally alienated Mackinnon who had turned the

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102 Taunt also reported that Stanley's move toward the Nile involved food raids on African settlements, which forced up prices and led to company agents feeding both their white and black employees and friends on European products. Taunt to Sanford, May 11, 1887, ibid., Box 28, Folder 3.

103 Ibid. 104 Ibid.

105 Mackinnon to Sanford, March 14, 1889, ibid., Box 127, Folder 9.
whole matter over to the Emin Pasha Relief Committee. The Scotsman advised Sanford to take the case to court if he must but, whatever the means, to get it over with as quickly as possible. At length, in February, 1890, Stanley authorized the Committee to pay £100 and remarked, "I wish he [Sanford] went to law about it [so] that I could give him a piece of my mind." In March of the same year, the Sanford Company's liquidation committee offered to have the claim arbitrated, but the proposal was rejected by the representatives of the Emin Pasha Relief Committee. The British ultimately agreed to pay £200 but Jules Levita, the then defunct Sanford Company's agent, held out for arbitration. There, it seems, the matter rested when Sanford died in 1891. His widow, finding herself in financial difficulties, laid the matter before Stanley in 1895, evidently hoping to obtain some settlement. He emphasized Sanford's exaggeration of company inconvenience and losses and declared that the outrageous claims had blocked any settlement.

106Ibid.

107Stanley to Mackinnon, Feb. 25, 1890, Mackinnon Papers, Reel 3.

108J. Levita to Sanford, April 22, 1890, Sanford Papers, Box 125, Folder 11.

109Stanley to Gertrude Sanford, Oct. 31, 1895, Ibid., Box 27, Folder 6.
Sanford obviously saw in the Florida incident an opportunity to recoup some of the expedition's losses. His associates and he believed that the wealthy backers of the Emin Pasha Relief Committee would be willing to cover any claims against Stanley arising out of this noble cause. While Sanford may have over-estimated his losses, there is no doubt that the affair did damage the company's position and that some indemnification was due. The incident was but one more in a series of unfortunate developments which had dogged the enterprise from the outset.

During the spring and summer of 1888, Sanford strove to attract American capital for the proposed successor to the Exploring Expedition. The always cooperative New York Herald published an interview in which he appealed to humanitarian, religious, patriotic, and especially economic impulses and sought to reach the business community with a stirring exposition of the Congo's trade and investment possibilities.110 Never hesitant to think big, he contacted John D. Rockefeller and a number of other leading New York and Boston businessmen.111 Those who demonstrated any interest in his pro-

110June 16, 1888.

111H. M. Flagler to Sanford, May 7, 1888, and H. S. Hewitt (for the Mayor of New York) to Sanford, June 4, 1888, Sanford Papers, Box 22, Folder 4.
posals wished to send an agent to the Congo to report on the regions mentioned by Sanford and to investigate the Company's books in Brussels and Antwerp, but Sanford would not permit this.\textsuperscript{112} When such individuals refused to invest, partly on this account, he accused them of bad faith.\textsuperscript{113}

Although hoping to make the new venture an all-American one, he was obliged to turn to British contacts when no ready response appeared west of the Atlantic. Mackinnon, who declined to take on any new obligations himself, suggested he contact Hutton who was more interested in West African commerce.\textsuperscript{114} But Hutton and other British businessmen held that essential information was lacking and, furthermore, they were discouraged by the small profits of the Exploring Expedition venture.\textsuperscript{115}

\textsuperscript{112}E. S. Converse to Sanford, June 22, 1888, George A. Alden to Sanford, June 25, 1888, \textit{ibid.}, Box 22, Folder 4.

\textsuperscript{113}Mackinnon had money in Sanford's Florida Land and Colonization Co., one of the latter's several American promotions at the time, and avoided his further schemes. Sanford continued to hope, however, and suggested that his projected larger operation might perhaps fit in with Mackinnon's recently launched Imperial British East Africa Company. The Scotsman assured him that this was not possible. Mackinnon to Sanford, Oct. 26, 1888, \textit{ibid.}, Box 127, Folder 8.

\textsuperscript{114}Mackinnon to Sanford, July 24, 1888, \textit{ibid.}, Box 127, Folder 8.

\textsuperscript{115}John Holt to J. F. Hutton, Oct. 3, 1888, \textit{ibid.}, Box 22, Folder 5.
The poor showing made by Sanford's first African venture must have been especially embarrassing. It was reported in October, 1888, that 14,000 pounds of ivory valued in London at £7,000 had been collected at a cost of £710 and it was expected that a further 4,000 pounds might be gathered before operations ceased. The ivory, it turned out, was not actually sold until 1889, which may explain the fact that Sanford was reluctant to have the company's accounts examined earlier. When dealing with prospective investors, he was forced to indulge in future hopes and expected returns which failed to be convincing. Reluctantly, he was obliged to abandon the idea of a new concern based upon American or Anglo-Saxon capital. Instead, he found no alternative but Belgian sources.

The Sanford Exploring Expedition's investors met in late September, 1888, to discuss liquidation procedures. Weber and Company sought to take advantage of certain investors' absence to push its views on how the old concern should be involved in the new enterprise, about to be formed. Sanford and Levita, undertook to block Weber's move to dominate the proceedings by demanding details of what they charged was Weber's poor manage-

116 Mackinnon to Sanford, Oct. 18, 1888, ibid., Box 127, Folder 8.
ment and bad judgement. The relationship between Sanford and the Weber firm had been strained for some time. Back in early 1887, Sanford, with Levita's assistance, had successfully blocked Weber's proposal to have more shares in the company issued. This was the beginning of a power struggle that could only damage the interests of all. Weber eventually stopped communicating with Sanford and Levita and ordered the Congo agents serving under Parminter to cease correspondence with them. A major point of contention between the two sides was Sanford's insistence upon more Anglo-Saxon participation in the new operation, which Weber opposed. It was on this question that Levita at length deserted his American friend, for he was in favor of turning the organization into a Belgian company which, he believed, would give it more influence with Free State officials and agents in the Congo. He suggested that Sanford content himself with using his authority as a board member.

117 Levita to Sanford, Oct. 17, 1888, ibid., Box 125, Folder 9.

118 Levita to Sanford, Feb. 18, 1887, ibid., Box 125, Folder 7.

119 Levita to Sanford, April 28, 1888, ibid., Box 125, Folder 9.
of the new company to enlist Englishmen or Americans, if interested, as administrators and agents.\textsuperscript{120}

The actual liquidation meeting took place on November 2, 1888. Certain affairs of the Exploring Expedition could not be completely closed out until the next October but formation of the new company proceeded. Thus there came into being the Société Anonyme Belge pour le Commerce de Haut Congo, a corporation which was to engage in trade, to obtain concessions and to exploit available natural resources.\textsuperscript{121} It was constituted by legal act on December 10, 1888, with a capital of 1,200,000 francs, soon increased to 3,000,000. Privileged shares valued at 500 francs each with fixed dividends, numbered 2,400, while there were also issued 4,800 ordinary shares, with fluctuating dividends, half of which went to the founders.\textsuperscript{122} Sanford obtained 100 privileged shares. In order to cover all concluding affairs of the Exploring Expedition, 1900 ordinary shares were set aside for three years. Of these, Sanford was allowed 420 in proportion to his interest in the earlier

\textsuperscript{120}Levita to Sanford, Nov. 13, 1888, \textit{ibid.}, Box 125, Folder 9.

\textsuperscript{121}Organizational papers of Société Anonyme Belge, \textit{ibid.}, Box 30, Folder 15.

\textsuperscript{122}Accounts of Société Anonyme Belge, \textit{ibid.}, Box 21, Folder 3.
company. The Société's board of directors included Sanford, Baron Weber, E. Cambier, Albert Thys, and G. Brugmann, who became president and dominant force in the concern. Sanford was unable to secure the necessary financial backing to give him the controlling interest, so he could only watch Brugmann take over. The managing directorship went to C. Balser. Although Sanford had considered fighting for this post, the opposition proved too strong. Even his seat on the board was challenged by some because of his announced intention of transferring his shares in a way unacceptable to other board members.

The Exploring Expedition was a bitter experience for Sanford in several ways. His lack of success in attracting Americans to the Congo field after risking his own money and giving so much of his time and effort to the cause was a keen disappointment. This had been one of his major goals for years, and he had been consistently rebuffed. At one point, he envisioned an American company with $5,000,000 picking up where the Exploring Expe-

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123 Mackinnon to Sanford, Dec. 17, 1888, ibid., Box 127, Folder 8.

124 This probably had something to do with his desperate financial position which impelled him to borrow on his shares. Levita to Sanford, Nov. 23, 1888, ibid., Box 125, Folder 9.
dition left off and ultimately winning commercial control of the Congo. All that was now out of the question. The Taunt episode, beside contributing to the company's poor showing, was a personal blow to Sanford who had enlisted and supported Taunt so strongly. The company's failure to realize anticipated profits on schedule seriously compromised his financial position. He had counted on Congo returns to cover other outstanding obligations; in fact, he admitted that he had expected company earnings to help him meet current expenses in his Florida operations. Disaster attended the latter—he had suffered citrus freezes, fire damages, and fever among his workers in 1886 and 1887. Attempts to build a large market for his oranges in Northern cities failed, partly because of transportation problems, so that expected gains did not materialize. Then the Congo had not proved profitable. In order to regain some degree of equilibrium, Sanford had to negotiate a large loan on his Société shares. The French circles in which he first applied exhibited an almost general distrust

125 Sanford to A. H. Rice, n.d. (draft), ibid., Box 29, Folder 4.

126 Sanford to Mackinnon, July 3, 1888 (draft), ibid., Box 127, Folder 10.

127 Sanford to Mackinnon, Jan. 18, 1888 (draft), ibid., Box 127, Folder 10.
about Congo affairs due to increasing conflicts between the State and the Congo Arabs.\textsuperscript{128} Money finally was obtained in Belgium but not on the most attractive terms.

Perhaps the greatest blow to Sanford, other than the monetary one, was his final realization that, despite years of faithful service and extremely significant contributions to Leopold's undertakings, he was not to receive any special favors. Continued reports from the Congo proved that State officials were not being directed to assist and support Sanford's company. It was almost as if, once done with him, the King had completely forgotten Sanford after 1886. This was one of the most bitter lessons of his Congo venture. He might well have wondered if he had gone too far in his cooperation with Leopold. Such bitterness and doubts were to influence him at the Brussels Anti-Slavery Conference in 1889.

\textsuperscript{128}Levita to Sanford, Jan. 28, 1889, \textit{ibid.}, Box 125, Folder 10.
CHAPTER VI

THE BRUSSELS ANTI-SLAVERY CONFERENCE

Leopold's African empire proved a heavy drain on his financial resources. Over 900,000 squares miles of territory, much of it yet unseen by Europeans, had to be explored and brought under administration. The Berlin Conference provided that, in order for African territorial claims to be accepted, effective occupation had to be demonstrated. This requirement explicitly applied to the West coast, but the principle could well be used elsewhere. Such extension had been evident in Britain's attitude toward certain Portuguese claims.\(^1\) Realizing that his political success in 1885 was largely due to the sufferance of the powers which might not prove permanent, the King was forced to be mindful of the need to prove more than nominal occupation in case of contingency. He also had the understandable desire to pry open his vast holding in order to tap its wealth in known and potential materials. In pursuit of this objective he had been forced to use his private fortune. It was estimated by one knowledgeable writer that the Congo depleted the royal purse by 10,000,000 to 12,500,000

\(^1\)Keith, op. cit., p. 69.
francs, then a substantial sum, in the period 1879-1900.  

Captain Thy's Compagnie de Chemin de fer du Congo, resting upon both private and public funds, would provide railway communication between the lower and upper sections of the river, facilitating the monarch's developmental plans, but construction did not begin until 1890. Private companies such as this one could not provide quick means of obtaining monies to meet mounting costs. Premier Jules Ferry had given Leopold permission to run a lottery in France as part of the 1885 accords settling the Niari-Kwilou territorial dispute, but successive French governments blocked it. Finally, in 1887, the Belgian Parliament which the monarch wanted to cultivate, especially on financial matters, consented to a lottery loan for 150,000,000 francs and the French, after a new frontier definition with the Free State, agreed to let Leopold float 80,000,000 francs of the loan on the Paris Bourse. When the issues appeared on the market early in 1888, the King had considerable difficulty

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2 Johnson, op. cit., I, 451, no. 2.
3 The Belgian Government put up 10,000,000 francs to back the company. Keith, op. cit., p. 71.
4 Masoin, op. cit., I, 348-350.
in maintaining the price and was forced personally to purchase many to avert sharp market fluctuations. In the end, only 30,000,000 francs were realized from the loan. The Belgian Government was willing to extend him a sizeable loan in August, 1889, but to no avail—funds were perpetually short. These hard-fought credit struggles were trying and instructive experiences for the King and decisive for the Congo. Leopold decided that other avenues of income must be opened and settled upon import duties. According to the Berlin Act, which had no mention of export duties, the Congo State might tax outgoing trade, but imports enjoyed free entry for twenty years. Since exports as yet were few, no financial relief was in sight from that source. The problem, then, was one of revising the free trade provisions agreed upon at Berlin.

Leopold was able at this point to capitalize on an anti-slave trade movement organized by Cardinal Lavigerie. This French prelate, in 1868, had founded a special missionary order, the Society of Our Lady of


\[6\] Keith, *op. cit.*, p. 77. He was to receive 5,000,000 francs at once and ten annual installments of 2,000,000 each.
Africa, better known as the White Fathers, who devoted themselves exclusively to the African field. Lavigerie's priests labored to extend Christianity, European civilization and, if possible, French influence, first in Algeria and eventually in parts of West Africa, the Great Lakes region, and as far south as Northern Rhodesia. Another of his primary goals was the elimination of the slave trade, of which he and his colleagues had seen much during their years in East and Central Africa. The Cardinal opened a campaign against this barbarous traffic in 1888, utilizing a vast array of data collected by his missionary agents as well as reports by various travelers and explorers such as Livingstone and Stanley. Well known and influential, referred to by one writer as "the most famous Catholic missionary since Francis Xavier," he visited the important capitals, broadcasting his emotional appeal and endeavoring to unite Europe in a crusade against the Arab slavers. Popular sentiment was definitely aroused. Anti-slavery societies sprang up

in several countries and the somewhat quiescent British organization developed new enthusiasm.\textsuperscript{10}

It was Salisbury, the British Prime Minister, who suggested to Leopold that he convene a conference in Brussels to study the whole question.\textsuperscript{11} This inspired the King, who had found such international gatherings quite useful in the past, with the idea that he might lead a slave trade elimination campaign in return for approval of import duties in the Congo.\textsuperscript{12} The French and others, however, were quick to see tariffs as Leopold's real motive for calling the conference.\textsuperscript{13}

Invitations were sent out in September, and the Brussels Anti-Slavery Conference opened in November, 1889. Attending were representatives of the powers which

\textsuperscript{10}Keith, op. cit., p. 77; Slade, op. cit., pp. 103-104.

\textsuperscript{11}Salisbury was not only responding to British revulsion against the slave trade—he was becoming increasingly concerned with the importance of the upper Nile region to Egypt and felt that growing Arab resistance to European advances in East Africa and the upper Congo possibly represented an extension of Mahdist influence. Consequently any effort that would check the Arabs south of the Sudan could only weaken the Mahdists and thus facilitate eventual reconquest of the Sudan. Roland Oliver, Sir Harry Johnston and the Scramble for Africa (London: Chatto and Windus, 1959), p. 139.

\textsuperscript{12}Keith, loc. cit.; Slade, loc. cit.

\textsuperscript{13}Jusserand to Spuller, Sept. 10, 1889; France, Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Documents diplomatique français, 1re série, VII, 494, n. 458.
had participated in the Berlin gathering of 1884-1885 plus the Congo Free State. Baron Lambermont, one of Leopold's most trusted henchmen, served as President. Among the major topics to be considered, was that of ending slavery in Africa itself, the exportation of slaves from there, and slavery within the countries to which Africans were forcibly transplanted. A committee composed of representatives from nations with territorial interests in Africa was formed to investigate these questions and to report on them to the conference for its action. As at Berlin in the mid 80's, the assembly was not to occupy itself with territorial matters. When Portuguese delegates repeatedly sought to lay before the Conference their country's territorial differences with Cecil Rhodes South Africa Company, they were rebuffed. Since the slave traffic had been eliminated in many areas, it was determined at the outset that major efforts at eradication of the seaborne trade should be made in the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf and

14 Terrell to Blaine, Nov. 20, 1889, No. 40, Diplomatic Despatches, Belgium.

15 The Congo Free State, England, France, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Spain and Belgium, demonstrating its gradually increasing interest in colonial questions, were the countries inclined to participate in these committee deliberations.

16 Terrell to Blaine, Nov. 24, 1889, No. 43, Diplomatic Despatches, Belgium.
in East African waters as far south as Madagascar. It was clear to most representatives that they must also devise means of restricting commerce in liquor and guns, so closely linked to the whole slavery problem. This was to prove one of the more delicate tasks of the Conference.

The United States was represented at the Conference by its Minister to Belgium, Edwin H. Terrell, and Sanford. The former was instructed to serve as a delegate "ad referendum" rather than as a plenipotentiary, since the State Department, again under James G. Blaine's direction was being extremely cautious so as to avoid the controversy surrounding American participation at the Berlin gathering. One foreign observer remarked that, from the beginning, it was obvious that American policy was based upon an intense desire to avoid serving the colonial interests of European powers which it assumed to be the true driving-force behind the assembly. Terrell attempted to set Blaine at ease as

17 Terrell to Blaine, Nov. 20, 1889, No. 40, ibid.
18 Terrell to Blaine, Nov. 22, 1889, No. 41, ibid.
19 Terrell to Blaine, Nov. 20, 1889, No. 40, ibid. The United States had refused to ratify the Berlin General Act.
20 Banning, op. cit., p. 75.
the Conference opened, indicating that there was no reason to believe that Brussels' results would be merely an extension of the Berlin ones as many predicted. He assured his superior that matters before the second conference had so many aspects separate and distinct from questions pertaining to the Congo that it had to be considered an "independent affair."\(^{21}\)

Since Sanford's presence at the Berlin Conference had been regarded as one of the principal blocks to ratification of the General Act,\(^ {22}\) it is surprising that he was selected to serve in Brussels. One might well have expected the Harrison Administration to shun anyone so closely identified with Arthur and Frelinghuysen's repudiated Congo policy. Of course, Sanford still had his supporters, among them John H. B. Latrobe who recommended him to Blaine as the ideal person to represent America at the Conference. He must have had considerable backing from friends close to the President, for there is reason to believe that Blaine personally opposed the appointment.\(^ {23}\) In terms of diplomatic

\(^{21}\)Ibid.

\(^{22}\)Younger, op. cit., p. 343.

\(^{23}\)Emile Banning claimed to have been informed through the Belgian Minister in Washington of Blaine's opposition to Sanford. Banning, op. cit., pp. 281-282.
experience combined with knowledge of the subject to be discussed, Sanford actually had few peers, and this may have been the major consideration, although such pragmatism has not always governed similar appointments in the past.

Although Terrell was first classified as a delegate "ad referendum," he was entitled to participate in the Conference by virtue of his ministerial post. Sanford and other foreign delegates without plenipotentiary status and not holding diplomatic posts in Belgium were admitted only to committee meetings and not to the conference sessions. In seeking to have his official status changed so as to become eligible for participation in the important full assembly discussions, Sanford found himself involved in a tiresome and embarrassing correspondence with the State Department. The main difficulty arose over Washington's insistence upon the use of the term "delegate" for its representatives. In European diplomatic parlance, the French "délégué" is used to identify "experts," which is not the meaning of the English language term but which was, nevertheless, interpreted in the French fashion. Terrell was directed to make it clear that Sanford was to have the same rank as

24 Terrell to Blaine, Dec. 21, 1889, No. 58, Diplomatic Despatches, Belgium.
his own, and this gained the latter admission to the conference, where he began signing protocols beginning with the one produced by the session of December 7, 1889.

But this solution was not completely adequate. "Quiet objection" was raised to Sanford's presence at conference sessions by a prominent member. It was argued privately to the President of the assembly that the American "delegate" was neither a plenipotentiary to the Conference nor an accredited minister to Belgium and thus had no right to attend or to sign protocols. It is not known who employed this technicality in an attempt to prevent Sanford from participating in the Conference, but it is not difficult to suspect Free State officials who now saw Sanford as a possible threat to Leopold's position on import duties.

Although Lambermont agreed to recognize Sanford's status as equal to the plenipotentiary's, the embarrassed American was determined to force the State Department to abandon what he believed to be a ridiculous position. He reminded Blaine that he had been given plenipotentiary status several times in the past for pur-

25Ibid.

26Lambermont to Sanford, Feb. 4, 1890, Sanford Papers, Box 25, Folder 7.

27Ibid.
poses of signing conventions and treaties and advised dropping the title of delegate to eliminate such confusion in the future.\textsuperscript{28} Blaine continued to advise the President that, as "ad referendum" representatives, Sanford and Terrell would not become too involved and that the United States would thus be better able to maintain freedom of action.\textsuperscript{29} Despite the Secretary's stand, Sanford ultimately obtained formal appointment as "special plenipotentiary" to the conference in May, 1890, almost seven months after the Brussels meetings began.\textsuperscript{30}

Sanford was dissatisfied with his position in other respects as well. It contrast to his unremunerated services at the Berlin Conference, he received some compensation in Brussels. But he considered it insufficient. His French friend, Jules Levita, recalling Sanford's experience in Berlin, advised him not to take the position in 1889 unless it offered hopes of definite material rewards.\textsuperscript{31} While he was able to obtain expense money, it was not without effort. In requesting his pay-

\textsuperscript{28}Sanford to Blaine, April 1, 1890, Diplomatic Despatches, Belgium.

\textsuperscript{29}Blaine to Sanford, April 25, 1890, Sanford Papers, Box 24, Folder 4.

\textsuperscript{30}Terrell to Blaine, May 5, 1890, No. 81, Diplomatic Despatches, Belgium.

\textsuperscript{31}Levita to Sanford, Nov. 27, 1889, Sanford Papers, Box 125, Folder 10.
ment from Blaine, Sanford excused himself by informing the Secretary that he had never been offered anything for his work in Berlin and that he did not wish to appear indifferent to the subject. 32 Blaine authorized him to draw $1,000 for overhead, which Sanford replied had already been exceeded. 33 Thus, he again had concrete evidence that his services were unappreciated in Washington.

Adding to his problems was the fact that he and Terrell did not work well together. Much of the difficulty undoubtedly arose because of Sanford's long experience and his familiarity with the individuals and issues at the Conference which tended to make him impatient with Terrell. His knowledge of international law and his broad understanding of rivalries on African questions and the intrigues of European diplomacy are clearly illustrated in his letters to the State Department. Terrell, whose own position was made more difficult by his poor knowledge of French, had to defer to him on many points. Sanford became indignant when Terrell failed to confer with him before making decisions. He complained to Blaine that he was exposed to errors made by Terrell because the

32 Sanford to Blaine, Dec. 24, 1889, Diplomatic Despatches, Belgium.

33 Sanford to Blaine, June 19, 1890, ibid.
latter acted without his full knowledge, and he contended that, had he been informed by Terrell of certain departmental decisions in time, he could have seen to their implementation more effectively than his younger associate.\textsuperscript{34} Terrell admitted that the two differed widely and that their relations became so strained that it was difficult to unite on despatches. He further explained that, since Sanford lived in the country and was frequently absent from Brussels, he had decided to formulate despatches himself in order to save time.\textsuperscript{35}

As for the slave trade, Sanford appreciated its evil effects as much as anyone and strongly desired to see its extinction. Yet he was no rabid Arab-hater, as were many of the crusaders. He was on record before the Conference as opposing dependence upon suppression as advocated by over-zealous Christian philanthropists, and championed a gradual replacement of the slave trade by legitimate commerce.\textsuperscript{36} While recognizing the Arabs' involvement in the infamous traffic, he was at all times ready to admit their contribution toward the betterment of Africa. At a time when few voices of moderation were heard, Sanford had emphasized the commercial role which

\textsuperscript{34}Ibid. \textsuperscript{35}Ibid. \textsuperscript{36}Interview in the \textit{New York Herald}, Feb. 14, 1889, p. 7.
the Arabs could play in Africa once they gave up traffic in human beings. He pointed out that, in East Africa and the upper Congo, they had introduced the cultivation of rice and a taste for American cotton goods. Allowing for the obvious horrors of slave raiding, he felt that the Congo Africans had made net gains from their contact with the Arabs. At the Conference, he favored a firm policy in dealing with slave traders who he declared, could "only be deterred by the fear of certain and prompt extinction." He urged Blaine that the United States should make clear to the world its stand that slavers should be dealt with as pirates—outlawed and shot down when met. He asked for and received authorization to make a statement to this effect in the main assembly since the United States was not participating in the special slave trade committee meetings formulating assembly provisions of the General Act. Sanford's policy, then, called for efforts to interest the slavers in legitimate commerce and extermination of those who saw fit to continue in their old nefarious habits.

The General Act of the Conference specified strict control in those regions where the trade originated,

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37 Sanford to Blaine, Dec. 12, 1889, Diplomatic Despatches, Belgium.

38 Ibid.
including fortified stations to guard against raiding and to protect regular traders and European missionaries. Slaving caravans were to be intercepted and their victims released by special expeditions which also would secure communications between the stations. The sea-borne trade was to be eliminated and the work would be coordinated by an International Maritime Office to be established at Zanzibar. Finally, those powers still permitting domestic slavery were to prohibit the further importation of human chattels.39

The evils of the liquor trade also occasioned considerable discussion respecting its restriction. Sanford was particularly interested in the topic as he had been at the Berlin Conference where his efforts, as well as those of the British representatives, to check the importation of spirits were unfruitful. It was, after all, a subject which brought out the vested interests in force. Dutch and German representatives led the opposition to any attempts to limit the free flow of alcohol. It was Sanford's estimate that two-thirds of German exports to Africa were in the form of spirits while gin was Holland's most important trading item.40

39Keith, op. cit., p. 78; Slade, op. cit., p. 105.
40Sanford to Blaine, April 3, 1890, Diplomatic Despatches, Belgium.
delegate to the conference, appropriately enough, was the consul at Banana as well as the managing director or the Dutch trading firm there, one of the largest on the West coast. A British proposal for a duty of fifty francs per twenty-four gallons was termed ruinous by the Dutch, who claimed that such a tax would halt the liquor trade and would be harmful to other forms of commerce and manufacturing as well as to capital investment in Africa. The Netherlanders ultimately agreed to consider a duty of six-and-a-half francs.

After conferring with agents of various Congo trading houses, Sanford reported their agreement that a tax amounting to twice what the Dutch had conceded would not seriously upset the liquor traffic and they would be satisfied to pay it. He was working closely with the British delegation on the liquor question and wanted totally to prohibit the sale of spirits in those African regions where it had not yet taken hold, and to impose a substantial duty where a market had already developed. This would, of course, disturb the free trade arrangement resting upon the 1884 treaty between the United States and the International Association of the Congo. This, in view of its failure to ratify the Berlin Act, was the principal document up for consideration in

\(^{41}\text{Ibid.}\) \(^{42}\text{Ibid.}\)
Brussels so far as Washington was concerned. The United States was willing to yield its right to free trade on that specific point. Blaine fully endorsed Sanford's vigorous efforts for restrictions upon the liquor trade or what he termed "those deleterous and poisonous compounds imposed on the Africans as spirits."43

Finally, in early May, 1890, the special study committee decided to create a liquor zone stretching from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean and from 20° North to 22° South latitude. In those areas of the zone where European distilled liquors had not yet penetrated their importation or distillation was to be forbidden. Elsewhere in the zone, a compromise duty of fifteen francs a hectolitre was to be levied upon liquor and distilled spirits, with provision for an increase to twenty-five francs in three years and further revision in six years.44

When the plan came up for final consideration on the 24th, Sanford was willing to incur the conference's displeasure by offering an amendment. He was concerned about the cheap, often toxic mixtures being passed off as liquor in Africa. He now made a proposal, a revised form of one he had offered in committee earlier and which

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43 Blaine to Sanford, April 25, 1890, Sanford Papers, Box 24, Folder 4.

44 Terrell to Blaine, May 2, 1890, No. 80, Diplomatic Despatches, Belgium.
had been shunted aside for further discussion, \textsuperscript{45} demanding that each case of liquor entering the zone should be accompanied by a certificate from an expert chemist specifically stating its degree of purity, and the confiscation of all adulterated spirits.\textsuperscript{46} Many delegates insisted that it was too late to consider such a matter and that it actually represented an entirely new proposition for which they had no instructions. There were protests that the committee had completed its work and that the amendment should have been presented earlier.\textsuperscript{47} It was argued that there was no time to deal with it, and it, too, was shelved "for later consideration."

Lambermont was willing to enter Sanford's proposal in the protocol, but admitted to him that such a serious matter deserved more than casual treatment.\textsuperscript{48} Not to be denied, Sanford again brought up the amendment in revised form on the 27th. It now included a provision

\textsuperscript{45}Terrell to Blaine, May 24, 1890, No. 94. \textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{46}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{47}Sanford had been forced to return to the United States on business while the committee worked on the liquor question and was unable to push his earlier version of the amendment. Terrell was evidently unable or unwilling to pursue the issue.

\textsuperscript{48}Terrell to Blaine, May 24, 1890, No. 94, Diplomatic Despatches, Belgium.
for the confiscation and destruction of liquors not bearing a certificate of purity, plus a fine of double the product's supposed value.\(^9\) He was encouraged by Mackinnon to believe that the plan was not impractical, the latter assuring him that chemical analysis could be handled without difficulty in East Africa where his Imperial British East Africa Company intended to restrict all importation to the part of Mombasa.\(^{50}\) There was, however, too much opposition to the basic idea. Even the British, who had worked hard to achieve liquor import restriction, opposed the Sanford amendment, holding that it would arouse such hostility that the whole liquor duty might be jeopardized.\(^{51}\) The outcome of Sanford's efforts to put teeth into liquor reform was the insertion into the June 6th session protocol of a recommendation that the signatory powers should take all necessary measures and, if deemed essential, to provide for penal legislation to prevent the exportation of adulterated spirits from their respective countries to Africa.\(^{52}\)

\(^{49}\) Sanford to Blaine, May 27, 1890, ibid.

\(^{50}\) Mackinnon to Sanford, May 27, 1890, Sanford Papers, Box 127, Folder 9.

\(^{51}\) Terrell to Blaine, June 3, 1890, No. 100, Diplomatic Despatches, Belgium.

\(^{52}\) Terrell to Blaine, June 6, 1890, No. 102, ibid.
The liquor question by that time had become a popular issue in many quarters. The American delegation frequently received letters lauding its efforts. Obviously disappointed with his lack of success, Sanford had little patience with these. To Blaine, he complained that expressions of sympathy by British philanthropists and prohibitionists were a poor substitute for the sheafs of petitions which could have been presented to the Conference. In response to a letter of praise from an English clergyman, a nettled Sanford wrote:

Your efforts in this important course would be well employed nearer home; an earnest and sincere effort in its support were better than faint praise and something practical and effective could accomplish more than kindly expressions.53

Blaine, too, was piqued at the failure of Sanford's proposition and instructed Terrell to reopen the question. The latter convinced him that there was unanimous opposition to further deliberation on the topic and it was finally dropped.54

Sanford also served on the committee dealing with firearms. During its sessions, he was authorized to declare that the United States was willing to renounce

53Sanford to Rev. J. Grant Miller, June 7, 1890 (draft), Sanford Papers, Box 29, Folder 3.

54Terrell to Blaine, May 24, 1890, No. 94, Diplomatic Despatches, Belgium.
its right of free entry into the Congo Basin in the case of firearms, as it had been with liquor. Stanley, who had been asked to address the Conference, had earlier in no uncertain terms linked European arms with the slave trade and had advised as a remedy for that problem the absolute prohibition of firearms and ammunition in the affected regions. The United States accepted this and, with Sanford's urging, encouraged abolition of the arms traffic. Although still devoted to the goal of stimulating American trade in the Congo, Sanford realized that, on the arms issue, commerce must not be the primary consideration. American arms manufacturers were perhaps enjoying a greater market in Africa than those of any other nation. The favorite guns of the Arab slave traders at the time, it was reported, were mostly Remingtons. These weapons were also widely used in Ethiopia and the Sudan. There was a Remington cartridge case factory in Ethiopia and, at Tabora, on the caravan route from the east coast to the

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55 Terrell to Blaine, May 2, 1890, No. 80, ibid.

56 He also remarked that several important Arab chiefs active in slaving should be caught and hanged and that Tippo Tib's head was worth 50,000 sterling to modern civilization in its fight to end the slave trade. Ibid.

57 Sanford to Blaine, April 3, 1890, ibid.
Great Lakes, there was a depot for charging the cartridges. Winchester rifles were evidently another type commonly used among the East African Arabs. Sanford expressed his country's desire to limit the sale of such arms in any way which would best protect Africans from the slave traders and their allies.

The Conference decided to prohibit the importation of firearms and ammunition into the zone defined for liquor regulations. In other areas, all arms were to be carefully stored and guarded. Flintlocks, unrifled weapons and their powder might be sold outside the slave trade districts at the discretion of the governments involved. All precision pieces such as rifles and breech-loaders were to be allowed only to the armed forces of the European states or those licensed by such states to carry them for self-defense. These provisions were to stand for twelve years, subject to renewal for two year periods thereafter.

The topic which caused the Conference the most difficulty was that of import duties. On May 10th, after


59 Ibid.

the Conference had been dealing at length with the many problems of Central Africa, Baron Lambermont read a carefully prepared statement which Leopold had been holding in readiness for the right moment. The King's associate outlined in glowing terms the great achievements of the Congo State and then declared that the free trade provisions of the Berlin Act were designed merely for the provisional and formative period of the State's existence and that modification—indeed a new economic policy now was in order, since the country had been opened up. He went on to explain that the State's financial position was precarious owing to great expenses incurred from early International African Association days and the new burdens attending the anti-slave trade campaign. It was held essential that the Free State, as well as the other states in the Conventional Basin of the Congo, be given the right to levy a ten percent ad valorem import duty upon all merchandise.\textsuperscript{61}

Preliminary soundings had already indicated to Leopold that most of the powers were sympathetic with his position and would accept the proposal. And Terrell was reminded by prominent members of the Conference that royal bankruptcy which was deemed imminent, and the Free

\textsuperscript{61}Terrell to Blaine, May 10, 1890, No. 88, Diplomatic Despatches, Belgium.
State's demise would find France taking over the entire Congo basin. Thus, the 1884 preemption treaty providing France with first claims to Leopold's Congo if the State should fail was again being employed to force the powers into supporting Leopold's demands. The English, especially, considered the Free State government as being more amenable than the French one would be if Leopold were forced out of Central Africa.

Sanford had been aware of a possible move for import duties by Leopold and made his opinion on the matter clear to the State Department. Blaine was warned to resist any attempt by the Congo to alter the conditions agreed upon in the April, 1884, exchange of declarations when Sanford had represented Leopold's Association. One of his principal arguments, maintained throughout the dispute, was the firm conviction that American commerce would eventually be extensive in the Congo if no artificial barriers were imposed. He wrote to the State Department: "We are destined to be large traders there, and to be one of, if not the greatest source of supply of manufactured goods in that region if we have the access," and later predicted to Blaine that

62 Ibid.  63 Ibid.
64 Sanford to Blaine, Jan. 3, 1890, Ibid.
65 Sanford to Halford, Jan. 3, 1890 (draft), Sanford Papers, Box 29, Folder 3.
Central Africa would be, "the greatest market for our domestic cotton goods outside our own domains." Terrell received instructions to state his government's objection to any action by the Conference, in particular any proposed move on import duties, which would be an expansion of the Berlin Act. Whenever the American representatives had occasion to mention the Berlin Act they, of course, found to their chagrin some voice ready to remind them that their government had never seen fit to accept it. This provoked Sanford's further pleas for ratification, but without result. He was concerned that the Administration and the Senate should grasp that, while the United States might hold the Congo State to the free entry provision of the bilateral "Declaration of Washington," this provision applied only to the actual territory of the Free State itself. The Berlin Act, on the other hand, prohibited import duties in a vast free trade zone throughout Central Africa extending from sea to sea. If, there-

66 Sanford to Blaine, May 27, 1890, Diplomatic Despatches, Belgium.
67 Terrell to Blaine, May 14, 1890, No. 89, ibid.
68 As Sanford often referred to the recognition treaty he signed for the Association in Washington, April, 1884.
fore, the Act were to be modified by the erection of protective or revenue tariffs by the colonial powers, such action would affect areas other than the Congo where American trade was significant, such as East Africa. With Senate ratification of the Act, Sanford emphasized, the United States could hold out for free entry in the entire zone and the other signatory powers would be reluctant to annul that part of the Act while the Americans continued to enjoy its provisions.69

Sanford's stand against import duties was largely a matter of personal commitment. When he had been so instrumental in winning United States recognition of the Association flag, one of his major themes had been the free entry for American products. It was not only a selling point; to him, it was a practical necessity and a valuable concession. Therefore, when Leopold sought to erect tariffs and, in effect, to cancel the major element exchanged for American recognition, Sanford found himself in the position of having involved his country in a diplomatic farce. It became a matter of personal pride to demonstrate that he had not carried out his Washington mission of 1884 solely to aid Leopold but, also, because he sincerely believed that it would benefit the United States.

69Sanford to Blaine, May 27, 1890, Diplomatic Despatches, Belgium.
Sanford refused to accept the Free State's pose of financial stringency bordering upon bankruptcy. As he had indicated previously, but now elaborated for Blaine's information, his expert opinion of Leopold's African domain was that it was operated simply as another Belgian bureau, too costly and cumbersome for a state where there were only 450 white inhabitants, nearly half of whom were officials, and where the criminal courts tried but one hundred cases in 1889. The State's military force he pointed out, numbered two thousand and was composed mostly of natives who were inexpensive by any standards. He estimated that the whole cost to Leopold for his African enterprises was only about $8,000,000 and Sanford believed that the Free State could have been sold for $25,000,000 at that time. The Congo government, furthermore, had not offered any proof in the form of formal statistics, reports, books, records, etc., to support its alleged need to "do away with the engagement that was the offer for our recognition." Sanford thought that better management, special loans, more careful expenditure, and perhaps fewer Belgian army officers on the scene would solve the problem until.

70Sanford to Blaine, May 14, 1890, ibid.
71Sanford frequently had been told by Stanley and his own men that the young Belgians being sent out by the State were in most cases extremely poor material for the tasks at hand.
increased revenue came in after completion of the railroad stimulated commercial development.

When, on the 14th of May, Terrell presented the official American position, largely the product of Sanford's reasoning with the State Department that the General Act on the Slave Trade should not be burdened with modifications or revisions of the Berlin Act, it caused great commotion and considerable hostility. The Independence Belge, inspired by official sources, immediately took issue with the American Minister's remarks, which were made during supposedly confidential proceedings, and attempted to place the United States on the defensive. Several delegates admitted privately that the American argument was reasonable and had made the Free State's proposal seem incongruous, but that they had been instructed by their respective governments to support it.

Endeavoring to counteract Sanford's influence upon his associate, the Free State delegation, composed of Lambermont, Emile Banning and Baron van Eetvelde, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, now called upon Terrell. They urged him to present an undistorted version of their

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72 Banning, op. cit., p. 135.

73 Independence Belge (Brussels), May 15, 1890, enclosure in Terrell to Blaine, May 15, 1890, No. 90, Diplomatic Despatches, Belgium.
case to Washington and sought to demonstrate that import tariffs, which held the key to the viability of the state most involved in destroying the traffic in humans, were directly related to the slave trade and thus fell within the competency of the Brussels Conference. But Terrell, while differing with Sanford on tactics, was aware of the maneuvers of Leopold and his colleagues and continued to oppose the duties.

Sanford's attitude was inexplicable to Leopold's clique. Free State representatives were patently not able to deal with him and they may well have wondered at his firm resistance to the proposals of former close associates. William Mackinnon, who kept abreast of all that transpired in Brussels through many contacts, was told that Sanford's position was influenced by personal feeling. He reproached his American friend, defended the royal position, and urged Sanford to appreciate Leopold's need for revenue. The Scotsman had suffered

74 Terrell to Blaine, May 22, 1890, ibid.
75 Banning in fact wrote: "L'attitude de Sanford surtout est inexplicable," op. cit., p. 140.
76 He had been told this by Sir John Kirk, former Consul-General at Zanzibar and then a member of the British delegation to Brussels, Kirk to Mackinnon, May 15, 1890, Mackinnon Papers, Reel II.
77 Mackinnon to Sanford, May 27, 1890, Sanford Papers, Box 127, Folder 9.
his own disappointments at the hands of the Belgian monarch but he had an undying respect for royalty and was at that time negotiating with Leopold in hopes of obtaining a portion of Free State territory for the British sphere in East Africa.78

Suspicious that Sanford's hard line was prompted by personal considerations were well founded. The cause was Sanford's growing disenchantment and mounting hostility toward Leopold. As late as February, 1889, he gave unqualified public praise to the King in an interview for the New York Herald:

King Leopold has done more with his peaceful methods and civilizing influence on the Congo than any other man of the past or present and . . . if the King is only let alone in the task he has undertaken, [the slave trade] will certainly disappear under his beneficient and humane course.79

But when the Conference entertained the subject of import duties, Sanford's repressed feelings came to the surface. He found the wily monarch becoming increasingly fixed in autocratic ideas, surrounded by yes-men, excessively pre-occupied with the slightest threat to his political

78Anstey, op. cit., p. 227. Inspired by the Cape to Cairo dream, Mackinnon eventually acquired a strip of Congo territory behind the German sphere which, added the British East Africa Protectorate, would supposedly provide the key link in the "red route." The 1890 Mackinnon Treaty was, alas, refused by the British Government.

rights, and habitually extravagant.\textsuperscript{80} Remembering his own company's tribulations and the failure to receive expected assistance from the State, Sanford became aroused by accumulating reports from Congo traders that the State government was increasingly competing with private traders and was, in fact, establishing monopolies for itself.\textsuperscript{81}

His bitterness and rancor were further heightened by personal knowledge of obnoxious practices by Leopold's Congo staff members. Missionary Grenfell was furnishing him confidential reports on State officials purchasing Africans and permitting Arab slave caravans to pass through their stations unchallenged. Leopold's employees, Sanford was told, were actively trafficking in human beings, exchanging prisoners taken in skirmishes for ivory or, in some cases, trading old women prisoners for younger, more attractive ones. Grenfell deplored the growing tendency by State employees to raid African villages upon the slightest provocation and seize hostages which must be ransomed for ivory.\textsuperscript{82} It was further charged

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{80} Sanford to Blaine, June 3, 1890, Diplomatic Despatches, Belgium.

\textsuperscript{81} Sanford to Blaine, June 3, 1890, \textit{ibid}.

\textsuperscript{82} Grenfell to Sanford, Nov. 23, 1889; June 23, 1889, Sanford Papers, Box 24, Folder 19. Grenfell was at this time, somewhat hesitant to speak out, explain-
that the State's army was composed mostly of slaves.\textsuperscript{83} Back in 1886, a Swedish employee of the State spoke of prisoners being held for three years as soldiers or laborers before their release.\textsuperscript{84} The practice was still in evidence in 1890, being employed in one case to provide workmen for the railroad although efforts were made to keep word of it from the outside world.\textsuperscript{85} Sanford declared that he knew the actual details of secret labor contracts used in obtaining construction workers in Zanzibar and that these made the State's position on slavery a "sham."\textsuperscript{86}

What had happened was that Sanford had been forced to face up to the fact that Leopold, who had constantly posed as one of the world's foremost humanitarians, was

\textsuperscript{83}Sanford to Blaine, June 19, 1890, \textit{ibid}. See also Sanford's article "American Interests in Africa," \textit{Forum} IX (1890), 418.


\textsuperscript{85}Sanford to Blaine, July 1, 1890, \textit{Diplomatic Despatches, Belgium}.

\textsuperscript{86}Sanford to Blaine, July 1, 1890, \textit{ibid}.
actually involved in one of history's greatest hoaxes. The Monarch was carving out a personal empire for himself in Africa and was little concerned about the price of the undertaking to the native peoples of the area. He had simply been using international concern respecting the slave trade to further his own ends. Everybody who had been involved in promoting the Congo King's schemes, therefore, was in some degree guilty by association. When Sanford, overcoming his earlier naivete, began to see the picture in focus, the shock was overwhelming. He had believed in the humanitarian gestures and, while he certainly understood that Leopold, he himself and many others might expect personal gain from the opening of Central Africa, he was dedicated to the concept of the "white man's burden" and thought that the whole project must benefit Africa first. Now it dawned upon him how much he had contributed toward furthering the Monarch's selfish designs. And there was the bitter experience of the Sanford Exploring Expedition whose lack of success he could now more readily attribute to Leopold's failure to provide adequate support. If the States were successful in imposing tariffs, Sanford would not even be able to console himself with the thought that he at least had secured free trade privileges for American commerce.
Great pressure was brought to bear upon the United States to end its opposition to the adoption of import duties. It was averred that continued defiance of the will of the overwhelming majority of the powers would make America responsible before history for sounding the Free State's death knell and thus preventing a great and determined effort against the slave trade. The State was more than willing to blackmail the powers with the threat of withdrawing from the Congo if import duties were not approved, and now the onus of forcing this eventuality was falling upon the United States. By June, delegates from various powers were visiting the American legation almost daily, undertaking to get the United States to fall into line so that the Conference could conclude its work. Holland was the only other nation opposing the duties, obviously because of the extensive Dutch commercial interests in the area. The Dutch stood firmly behind the United States on the matter, using the same arguments and agreeing almost totally with the American position.

When instructions at length arrived from the State Department Terrell was directed to inform the Conference that the United States would agree to negotiate a separate treaty on the tariff question with the Congo State if the

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87 Terrell to Blaine, June 15, 1890, No. 103, ibid.
assembly would raise the liquor tax and would make a declaration of the free and independent status of Liberia. Terrell delayed action for several days, explaining to Blaine that the liquor question was a closed matter and that a declaration on Liberia involved political considerations outside the competency of the Conference. He none the less ultimately presented the declaration.

It was received much as expected. Lambermont agreed that Liberia would be asked to sign the General Act but held that no statement of its political status could be inserted into the Act. Sanford favored a proposition originally made by Holland for a six month's delay on the tariff question but which all other delegates vigorously opposed. This would offer him more time to observe the financial situation in the Free State and to obtain tariff concessions for American products. But he could

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88The State Department was seeking to remove any doubt as to the relationship between the United States and Liberia. Many Europeans continued to consider the African republic an American colony, which was embarrassing to those Americans taking pride in their country's position of having no African territorial interests.

89Terrell to Blaine, June 14, 1890 (telegram); June 15, No. 103; June 16, 1890, No. 104, ibid.

90He also wanted time to ascertain how the Anglo-German Treaty on East Africa (Heligoland Treaty of 1890) would affect American trade before any final decision was made on import duties. Sanford to Blaine, June 20, 1890, ibid.
not carry the point with Blaine. To the very end, Sanford was unwilling to give up America's right to free entry; at most, he would agree to a free list for certain American products, or failing that, agreement on duties for three or four years only, but even such concessions were unobtainable.

It had been clear to the Congo Free State for some time that, due to American opposition, a separate declaration might be required for tariffs. By June, there was little doubt that the United States would never accept the General Act if it included any action favoring import duties, which it viewed as an improper and unwarranted revision of the Berlin Act. A special declaration was accordingly drawn up which provided that a ten percent ad valorem duty might be levied by the powers with territory in the free trade zone as defined in the Berlin Act. All delegations, save only the Dutch, signed both documents on July 2, 1890, the United States stipulating that it was accepting the declaration only provisionally until it could negotiate a separate commercial treaty with the Free State. Sanford favored signing the Gen-

\textsuperscript{91}The Dutch held out until Dec., 1890, when the pressure exerted by the other European governments, Cardinal Lavigerie and his missionary friends, and leading philanthropists forced their hand. Terrell to Blaine, Oct. 13, 1890, No. 142, \textit{ibid}; Masoin, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 77.

\textsuperscript{92}Terrell to Blaine, July 5, 1890 (telegram), Diplomatic Despatches, Belgium.
eral Act, which he considered "solely a philanthropic document for the protection of African races, all political matters being eliminated," but advised against accepting the special declaration or any treaty which would deprive the United States of its trade privileges.\textsuperscript{93} He continued to oppose ratification of the Brussels Act as long as the statement on import duties was associated with it. When the document came up for consideration in the Senate, that body, after long deliberation, ratified it in February, 1892, notwithstanding the vigorous opposition Sanford had offered.

Sanford died in Healing Springs, Virginia, before ratification, on May 21, 1891, but five days before his passing he wrote to the Belgian Ambassador in Washington, venting his disappointment and bitterness over developments in the Free State. He held that all sympathy for the Congo in America had disappeared because of the new selfish, restrictive, exploitative system operating in Leopold's State. He insisted, in response to the Ambassador's assertion to the contrary, that, in accepting the April, 1884, declaration the United States Senate had acted with the understanding that it was providing a free market for American products. Its action, he added, had

\textsuperscript{93}Sanford draft, n.d., Sanford Papers, Box 28, Folder 5.
also been prompted by the view that, in helping to promote the Association's work, the way would be paved for the eventual return of American Negroes to the Congo, thus providing a means of dealing with the domestic racial question. This latter claim, because of its gross exaggeration, demonstrates that Sanford had never been able fully to comprehend that others could not see the Congo in the same light that he did. For him, the Free State had offered the opportunity for a great Western civilizing mission, the answer for his own acute financial distress, a great opening for American commercial and business expansion, and even the solution to national social problems. He died seeing none of these hopes in any state of fulfillment but, at least he was spared witnessing the later horrors of Leopold's Congo which would have even further dashed his expectations.

Some historians see Leopold's early activity in the Congo as the major factor launching the European race for African colonies. All agree that the Association's appearance in Central Africa and the creation of the Congo Free State were paramount factors in the intensifi-

94 Banning, op. cit., p. 290.

95 Sanford and Senators Morgan and Gibson, but certainly few others at the time, could seriously have thought of the Congo as the answer for the American Negro question.
cation of the scramble. Sanford was in the center of these developments. He was deeply involved in the affairs of the Association and, as a member of its Executive Committee, he was in a position to work closely with Leopold in all phases of his operations after 1877. In this capacity he helped plan and direct expeditions, and eventually became thoroughly familiar with African questions.

When the Association's international position became threatened as the powers closed in upon the Congo, Sanford was called upon to perform vital services. The United States' recognition of the Association in April, 1884, was Sanford's achievement and one of great significance for Leopold's operation. It helped provide the climate which prompted Germany and France to convene the Berlin Conference.

At Berlin and in special negotiations in Paris, Sanford continued to demonstrate his diplomatic talents. He was instrumental in bringing about territorial settlements between the Association and France which in turn led to recognition treaties with all the major powers. The resultant Free State's emergence was due in no small part to Sanford's able and dedicated efforts in behalf of the cause he identified with Leopold--the opening of Central Africa to civilization and trade. He fervently
hoped that America would play a leading role in the Congo's commercial future.

In order to pave the way for fellow-nationals, Sanford organized his Exploring Expedition, which was the pioneer private enterprise operative on the upper Congo. Its two steamers the Florida and the New York were the first commercial craft to ply the waters of that region. But try as he might, he was unable to interest his countrymen. Sanford's continued efforts to convince Americans of the advantages awaiting them in the Congo demonstrated his vision on the one hand but, on the other, his inability to appreciate the overwhelming preoccupation of American investors and businessmen of that era with their own huge domestic field. Europeans, often denied rapidly expanding markets and fertile investment opportunities in their own nations, more readily turned to Africa and made fortunes there. Sanford had more of this Old World approach to overseas enterprise. The United States, he believed, should take a more active part in international trade and extend its power and influence in the process. He was one of a group of expansionists, frustrated empire builders, who were yet unable significantly to move an inward-looking America toward the outer world.
One historian has called these years the "period of preparation" for the "new empire" that the United States established in the 90's. Yet, even when American overseas commercial contacts multiplied significantly in that decade in response to the pressures of a more rapidly expanding industrial economy, it was Asia and, to a lesser extent, Latin America, but not Africa, with which the imperialists were concerned. Sanford's 1884 success in Washington and the United States involvement in the Berlin Conference, which was the logical sequel to recognition of the International Association of the Congo, were possible partly because of pressure and influence generated by him in the business community. This would support the contention of the economic determinists who see such influence as largely responsible for American expansion. Indeed, the fact that the Congo preliminaries were never extensively pursued was due to the belief of the American business community that, compared to other areas, Africa was simply too barbarous and unpromising.

In his final activity connected with Africa, Sanford demonstrated that a major motivation for his work with Leopold had been the desire to promote American trade. At

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the Brussels Conference he broke with the Belgian King when the latter sought to avoid his obligations under the 1884 treaty with the United States. He also recognized the plight of the tribesmen who were being increasingly exploited by the Europeans and earnestly fought to have the assembled powers do all in their power to uplift the African people.
APPENDIX I

Materials Sanford brought with him when he arrived in the United States, November 27, 1883, to begin the campaign for United States recognition of the International Association of the Congo's flag.*

1. A commission of full authority to undertake negotiations.

2. The declaration to be made between the United States and the Association.

3. A list of treaties concluded between the Association and African chiefs, including some copies and extracts.

4. A map of the Congo and Kwilu Rivers, with station sites indicated.

5. Various selections from the experts Wattel, Bluntschli, de Weaton and Beach Lawrence points of international law.


7. An information sheet giving the population of the Congo basin and its various regions, the number of Association agents and workers serving in the field, the organization's naval facilities and the name of its stations.

APPENDIX II

SANFORD ON THE BERLIN CONFERENCE

AND HIS ROLE THERE*

"... It does not become me to speak of my part in this transaction save that active participation from its inception with the African International Association had impressed me as it progressed with the importance to our commerce and manufactures and to our colored race and the civilization of the vast region, which the munificence of King Leopold was opening to civilizing influences. ... The dangers, too, to our citizens, Mr. Stanley and his assistants, who were liable to be treated as pirates in default of a recognized flag, influenced me in making the representations both to the Association and to the President which led up to this recognition. With regard to the "objects and purposes" for which our government is represented at the Conference, I will only speak of those which caused the invitation to participate in it.

In the first place, an American citizen, Mr. Stanley, had discovered this region and theoretically cer-

*Sanford to Frelinghuysen, n.d. (draft), Sanford Papers, Box 29, Folder 9.

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tain rights might be said to have inured thereby to the United States. Another citizen (myself) had been engaged from the outset as a member of the Executive Committee of the International Association in building up in barbarous regions this future state and securing certain rights to his country therein. And the Government of the United States had formally recognized its sovereignty and thereby acquired rights and privileges for its citizens, in so far as the Association could further [such rights], over a great portion of Central Africa. It was but a natural and friendly act that we should be asked to concert with other powers for assuring by the agreement of all the powers the benefits we had taken the first steps toward promoting.

Again, too, our presence was needful . . . to give entire legality to the acts of the Conference by reason of the rights acquired through our citizens as before stated and I would add, in view of the assertions that I have seen in print that the United States were invited to help carry out some German scheme or policy, that I have reason to believe the including [of] the United States in the first series of invitations to the Conference was first suggested by France, for the motives before given, and heartily acquiesced in by Germany.
With regard to the results of our presence at the Conference, they have been of practical value and importance, and will speak for themselves. . . . My name rarely appears in the protocols where Mr. Kasson should naturally hold the first place, and is connected therein but with two important propositions: that for prohibiting traffic in slaves on land and that for securing protection and reservations of an interior railroad for commercial intercourse between the Upper and Lower Congo around the cataracts, a proposition placed in my hands by the Association to present on its behalf [since it was] not being represented there. I may say [however,] that I have been actively engaged outside the Conference in promoting settlement of differences between France, Portugal, [and] the Association, without which settlement the work of the Conference would be unavailing, and in this I have been able to accomplish some good and prepare the way, I hope, for complete arrangements which shall define territorial limits, and that done, secure the passage of our proposition of neutrality for this narrow but only possible transit of the Association territories. . . ."
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Books


An account of several phases of Leopold's Congo venture by one of his key advisors and colleagues, particularly valuable for its day-to-day reports on the 1890 Brussels Conference.


By a member of Stanley's expedition, it includes comments on the Florida confiscation.


The foremost opponent of American involvement in the Berlin Conference furnishes critical remarks about Sanford's lobbying.


The American Consul in Paris during the Civil War describes the Garibaldi incident.

Has criticism of Sanford by a Secretary of the London Legation during the Civil War.

The explorer's early life recounted.

Includes Stanley's account of the Emin Pasha Expedition and his confiscation of Sanford's boat.

The most valuable of Stanley's books for this study, providing considerable mention of Sanford.

Includes some significant letters to figures prominent in the Congo venture.

Mentions Sanford's important American political contacts.

Lincoln's Secretary of the Navy gives some penetrating commentary on Sanford.

Articles

Daly, Charles P. "Recent Developments in Central Africa and the Valley of the Congo," *Journal of the American Geographical Society,* XVI (1884), 89-122.


——. "Léopold II et la Conférence de Berlin," Congo, II (October, 1931), 325-352.

——. "Léopold II le Congo révélés par les notes privées de Henry S. Sanford," Congo, II (February, 1931), 167-196.

Selected Sanford correspondence is furnished in these three articles by Thomson, including some important letters not now found in the Sanford Papers.

Secondary Works

Books


The controversy over Angra Pequena is covered thoroughly here.


A sound monograph which provides much data on Leopold's British collaborators and official British policies.


Although undocumented, this biography was based upon considerable research and knowledge of the subject.


Gwynn, Denis. The Life of Roger Casement. London: Jonathan Cape, 1930. Casement worked for the Sanford Exploring Expedition and later helped lead the fight against Leopold's administration of the Free State.


An economic determinist's view which makes only passing reference to the Congo.

Helpful for an understanding of the diplomatic climate at the time of Leopold's emergence upon the African scene.

Brief but useful booklet that provides an outline of Sanford's life based upon slight research in his papers. It was commissioned by Sanford's granddaughter.

Old but still valuable for conditions in the early Free State.

The best study of the period involved. It provides good material on Frelinghuysen's Congo policy.

An important contribution toward a more complete understanding of the African scramble. It places Leopold and the Congo behind the Egyptian crisis of 1882 as the primary causes of the race for colonies.

These two studies provide a detailed account of the formation of the King's African project.

A thorough treatment of the 1876 Conference and Leopold's utilization of it.

A solid examination of the King's Congo plan in operation, especially his relationship with Stanley.

A good summary of the author's comprehensive series of monographs on Leopold's early African work.


Although recent scholarship has provided a more complete understanding of certain phases of this subject, this comprehensive work remains the best overall treatment.

Probably written by Sanford, it contains some mention of his political connections and includes a letter from Bismark.


Articles


Theses and Dissertations


