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THE MOSLEM ADVANCE IN AFRICA

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WHILE Islam is steadily retreating from the European continent, and as steadily declining in power and influence, this is not the case as regards the contact of Islam with African paganism. According to the unanimous opinion of experts, the Mohammedan religion is by no means dying out, but is making considerable, and even ominous progress in Africa.

How is this possible ?

Würtz has laid special emphasis on the fact that the pacification of heathen countries and the suppression of the slave trade have been favourable to the spread of Islam.¹ Since the Mohammedan intruders are no longer allowed to raid and enslave the heathen, it is no longer to their interest that the latter should remain heathen, and accordingly they are content to extend their influence and their power by way of peaceable trading expeditions. At the same time their tacit opposition to European civilization is all in their favour. The state of peace and security, which the African has gained through the establishment of European government, is accompanied by the feeling that he is being ruled by strange and frequently very uncomfortable people. As the recollection of former sufferings fades out of his memory, this

¹ Compare F. Würtz: "Die Mohammedanische Gefahr in Westafrika"; Basler, "Missionsstudien," p. 21; Verlag, "Der Basler Missionsbuchhandlg."