The Congo Independent State.

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The Congo Independent State.

A Report on a Voyage of Enquiry,

BY

VISCOUNT MOUNTMORRES.

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PREFACE.

THE accompanying report was written immediately after my return from the Congo Independent State in the spring of 1905. Repeated attacks of illness prevented my quite completing it, however, at the time; and during the many months which elapsed before I was able to present it to the Foreign Office, several important events occurred in connection with the affairs of the Congo Independent State, including the publications of the report of the Royal Commission in Europe, and in Africa many changes in the personel and in the administration. I have thought it better to present the report to the public exactly in its original form. Its publication has been further delayed since the date on which I received permission from the Foreign Office to publish the non-controversial parts of it, by the fact that I have been absent on the West Coast of Africa. During this period again, further changes have taken place, including the deaths of both Dr. Bentley and Mr. Grenfell. The former I had not the pleasure of meeting; the latter was one of that grand old school of British missionaries, whose loss will be an absolutely irreparable one to the cause of humanity and the progress of white rule in Africa. The appointment of the Royal Commission of Enquiry was directly due to his personal representation. The Government of the Independent State, which had been deaf to the outcry of those whom, rightly or wrongly, it regarded as prejudiced parties, promptly acceded to the request of one whom it was bound to acknowledge as entirely impartial and reasonable-minded.

During the course of the eighteen months which have elapsed since my return from the Congo, my views on the condition of

affairs in the Independent State have been often much misrepresented by both sides of the controversy. My principal object in publishing this report in its original form is to remove any misunderstanding as to my views. Put briefly, they are that, whilst the condition of affairs in the Equatorial Concession territories—those territories in the Equator Province which have been handed over by the State for development to chartered companies—justifies all that has been written or said of them, much credit is at the same time due to the Government of the Independent State for the rapidity with which it has developed its vast domain, in the face of almost unparalleled difficulties, and for the success with which it has introduced many of the best features of civilisation to the native. No government in Africa is entirely free from blame in its relations with the black man, but I am firmly convinced, from what I saw and the opportunities I had for seeing much, that the Independent State of the Congo, in so far as those regions are concerned which are under its immediate rule, has no more reason to be blamed than any other. So far, however, as the concession districts are concerned, no words can convey an adequate impression of the terrible and callous inhumanity which marks the methods of the territorial companies, nor of the abject misery and hopelessness of the native population. The question resolves itself into one of responsibility for this state of affairs.

REPORT ON

THE CONGO INDEPENDENT STATE.

To H.M.'s Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

SIR,

In accordance with Mr. Villiers' letter of the 2nd of March, 1905, I have the honour to submit the following information concerning the recent tour I made in the Independent State of the Congo.

I have the honour, etc.,

MOUNTMORRES.

1. ROUTE AND PRECAUTIONS.

1. *Circumstances of Visit to West Africa.*—I left England on June 24th, 1904, as Special Correspondent of *The Globe* newspaper, of London, to enquire into the alleged mal-administration of the Congo Independent State, and I returned to this country on February 19th, 1905, having covered about 3,400 miles afoot and afloat in Africa, the greater part being off the beaten track and away from the main lines of communication.

2. *Lower Congo.*—On arriving in the Congo I spent a day and a night at Banana, five days at Boma, the capital, and then went up country, stopping at Matadi one night. Thence I travelled by the Cataracts Railway to Leopoldville, passing one night at the military station of Tumba, and two nights at Leopoldville, the industrial centre of the State.

3. *Middle River.*—From Leopoldville to Coquilhatville I was a passenger on the State steamer "La Flandre," on which it had been my intention to travel to the Upper Congo. On arriving at Coquilhatville, however, I changed my mind, and just before the steamer left I disembarked and stayed there for one week. During my stay at Coquilhatville, which is the administrative headquarters of the Equator Province, I made two excursions into the interior, visiting the native villages inland and along the river bank down stream. I then, without announcing my intention beforehand, left at a minute's notice and returned down stream to Irebu, an important military training post, which I made my headquarters for upwards of three weeks. Whilst at Irebu I made many and extensive excursions inland and as far down stream as the State post at Lukolela, and made a complete circuit of the country round Lake Tumba.

4. *The Ubangi.*—I then took passage on the State steamer "La Florida," and travelled up the Ubangi, stopping at Imesse (a State post, from which I visited the villages in the interior) and at Dongo, a large native "village." I thus reached Libenge, the capital of the Ubangi Province, where I stayed a week, during which I made two considerable excursions into the interior, visiting the principal villages within a long day's march. From this neighbourhood I went up by steamer to Zongo, the site of a former State post, which lies immediately opposite Bangui, the capital of the French colony of Oubanghi. I remained here for several days encamped in the bush, and then proceeded up stream by canoe. My arrival at Libenge was no doubt anticipated, but, as owing to the difficulty of finding paddlers at Zongo, it was impossible for the State mail to travel further until I volunteered to take it, I know that I carried the letter announcing my approach to the State officials higher up river. I touched at all the principal riverine villages between Zongo and Mokoangi, another State post, both on the State side and on the French side of the river, camped at several of them, and got on the friendliest terms possible with the native chiefs, ingratiating myself by means of gifts of merchandise. I passed four days at Mokoangi, and made an excursion of twenty miles into the interior, visiting the chief native settlements in the neighbourhood. From Mokoangi I travelled by the steam launch

"Aia"—the original steamer which the late Sir H. M. Stanley brought out with him—as far as Banzyville, an important Government station, spending eight days on the journey in order to make a thorough examination not only of all the native villages on the State side, but also of the trading stations and Government posts on the French side of the river, every one of which I visited. Banzyville was my headquarters for three weeks, during which time I made excursions almost as far into the interior as any white man has yet been, and made the acquaintance both of all the principal village chiefs and of the three tribal chieftains in this part of Africa. From Banzyville I went on, in canoe, to Yakoma, another considerable station, devoting a week to the journey in order again to have an opportunity of calling at all the villages on both sides of the river, and at all white men's stations on the French side. At Yakoma I made the acquaintance of the principal native chiefs in the neighbourhood. During this voyage in the Ubangi I was accompanied by my own personal servants, coast boys from the French and Portuguese colonies, and also by a French interpreter, lent me by the Délégué of Oubanghi, and by a small escort of four Senegalese soldiers in the French service. My paddlers and my porters, where I required them, I engaged myself by direct negotiations with the native chiefs, and I had at no time any official or employé of the State with me, whilst after leaving Zongo until I reached Banzyville my movements were unknown in advance to the State officials. The lengthy stay I made at Banzyville gave these officials time to communicate with Yakoma, though I arrived at the latter post unexpectedly to the extent of arriving a week before the date I was looked for. During all canoe journeys I camped each night in native villages, and was the guest of native chiefs.

5. *The Uele District.*—At the end of a week I travelled by canoe up the Uele as far as Djabbir, a journey which had never before been accomplished by any white man. Djabbir was one of the first footholds of the State in the interior. On arriving, I originally announced my intention of crossing the Province of the Uele, but on the Monday after my arrival I changed my plans, and in the evening started south for Ibembo, leaving behind me all but the most necessary baggage, so as to travel light. A messenger had evidently been hastily despatched ahead of me to warn Engwetra, the

first white man's station on the route, of my coming, but marching continuously I overtook him before his arrival at Engwetra, and got there quite unexpectedly. From Engwetra I took canoe next morning down the Likati direct to Ibembo, and before the nightfall on the first day had overtaken the courier who had been despatched overnight to announce me in advance. I therefore arrived both at Egwengatana and at Ibembo wholly unlooked for, and at the latter place I had some difficulty in explaining who I was and my object. I was a week at Ibembo, visiting the villages all round. I consistently announced my intention of going on up the Rubi via Buta and Bomokandi to the Nile, and even sent on a part of my reduced baggage in advance by this route, but at the last moment, when the State steamer was actually about to start, I took passage on it down the Itimbri to Bumba, on the Main River, where again I had some difficulty in explaining my business. On the way I stopped at the State posts at Mandungu and Moenge. During this part of the journey, that is to say, since leaving the Ubangi at Yakoma, I travelled without any escort whatever, and had as my principal interpreter a raw native chieftain named Chimono or Djabili, who spoke several of the native languages, which he was able to interpret for me into the official Bangala. At no time was I dependent upon the services of State employés. In order to move rapidly and attract as little attention as possible, I was at this time accompanied by the minimum number of porters and by only one boy, having left the others behind at Djabbir.

6. *Upper Congo and Ituri Forest.*—From Bumba, which is the principal transport depôt for the Upper River and its great tributaries, I continued two days later by the same steamer up river, visiting the trading station of the S.A.B. (Société Anonyme Bélge) at Jambinga, and the State posts of Barumba and Basoko, which I reached quite unexpectedly. I stayed at the latter, which is the capital of the Aruwimi Province, for two days, and then continued up river visiting the trading station of the Abir (Anglo-Belgian India Rubber Co.) at Isangi, an important native settlement at Badjoko, the Government station at La Romée, Mr. Stapleton's mission at Yakusu, and finally arrived at Stanley Falls. Here I stayed for six days, visiting the larger villages in the neighbourhood, and then left to march via Bafwaboli and Bafwasandi to Avakubi,

PANGA, UPPER ARUWIMI.

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traversing for the most part a densely-populated region in which I spent thirteen nights in native villages and two nights each at Bafwaboli and Bafwasandi. From Avakubi I went two days further to the east through the forest of the Ituri, and then returned to Avakubi, whence I descended the Aruwimi by canoe, visiting the State posts at Bomili, Panga, Banalya, Yambuya, Mokandjo, and nearly all the riverine villages, and so arriving again at Basoko. From Basoko I paid a surprise visit down river to Bumba in a launch lent me by the State authorities at Basoko, although they were not aware of my destination. From Bumba I returned along the south bank of the river, visiting the numerous fishing villages, and reached Barumba, a large agricultural post, where I disembarked in order to cross the territories of the Abir Company.

7. The Abir Country.—I had already written to Coquilhatville to the authorities there, stating that I should arrive at that town on or about January 12th, and that I should be much obliged if a steamer could be placed at my disposal in order to visit the Abir Concession. The inference from this letter would naturally be that I was coming down the Congo, and the last thing that the Abir directorate would look for would be for me actually to be wandering about their concession whilst they were waiting for my arrival at Coquilhatville. At Barumba I collected porters and started to march up unknown native pathways into the extreme easternmost corner of the Abir Concession. I camped each night in native villages, and finally reached Yahuma, the easternmost trading station of the Abir. Thence partly by land and partly by canoe along the various smaller waterways, I worked from one village to another, visiting the chief trading stations of the Company quite unexpectedly. In several of them it was not until I was leaving that I revealed my identity, as it appeared that I was repeatedly mistaken for a Monsieur Willems, a little-known agent of the Company, who was making a kind of tour of inspection on his way across the Concession. In this way I visited Bosow, Iteko, Lukolenge, Ekutchi, Boselikelo, Bongandanga, Boiela, Waka, Baringa, and Basankusu, being all the principal trading stations of the Abir Company. I called on and interviewed all the missionaries on my route, and left Basankusu on January 9th in

a State steamer which had been sent hurriedly up from Coquilhatville on hearing that I had arrived in the Concession, news which appears only to have reached Coquilhatville when I got as far as Boiela. On this steamer I visited the posts of the Lulonga Company, namely, Bokakata, Boyeka, Mompoko, and Lulonga, and the mission stations at Boyeka, Bonginda, and Lulonga.

8. *Middle River.*—From Coquilhatville I went down river on the State steamer, visiting the missions at Lukolela and at Bolobo, stopping at the State post of Yumba and reaching Leopoldville on January 20th.

9. *Lower Congo.*—I spent three days at Leopoldville, called on the missionaries in the neighbourhood, and then returned to Boma, spending a night at the new post of Zonogongo, and another at Matadi on the way. From Boma I took the Mayumbe Railway to its terminus, staying a night each at Luki and Lukula. During the whole of my journey in the Congo wherever possible I lay in native villages in preference to staying in white men's stations, though I made a point of visiting so far as possible the principal stations along my route, and of taking every opportunity to see the stations unexpectedly and at their ordinary work.

II. ETHNOLOGICAL NOTES.

Lake Tumba.

10. *Race.*—Most of the peoples met with on the lower waters of the Congo and on the Middle River, that is to say, the stretch lying between Leopoldville and Nouvelle Anvers, are well known to all who have any acquaintance with Africa, and call for no special comment, with the exception of the race lying immediately round and to the east and south-east of Lake Tumba, who are generally grouped together as the Mantumba tribes. This group, which is sub-divided into many distinct clans or sub-tribes, is in itself probably merely a division of the Mongo people dealt with at some little length later.* It exhibits, however, certain peculiarities which have led it often to be classed as a distinct people. Without having had time to examine the language closely I was unable to come to any definite conclusion on the somewhat disputed point as to whether it be anything more than a dialect of the Mongo language, to which reference is also made later.† Mr. Gamble, the missionary at Bongandanga, assured me that this was the case.

11. *Physical and Mental Development.*—The people, however, are for the most part a fine, virile race, of not the same stature as the races met in the open country in the north, but for a forest people distinctly above the general average. They are also, unlike many forest peoples, very dark in colour and of a black rather than of a brown tint. Mr. Joseph Clarke, the American missionary at Ikoko, informed me that they have a considerable religious idea, recognising an all-pervading Spirit and the immortality of a human principle. I had no opportunity of enquiring on this point of the natives themselves, as I found them a people for the most part somewhat difficult of approach. They are on the whole of a bright, cheery disposition, very well disposed

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* Paragraphs 45 and 46. † Paragraph 46.

towards the white man, and, contrary to what I was informed, showed with one exception no disinclination to receive him hospitably. In most of the villages on the south and eastern sides of the lake, where the population is considerable, as well as inland between Coquilhatville and Bikoro, they received me without enthusiasm, but without any sign of fear or objection, although I had been freely told that the inhabitants invariably fled at the approach of a white man.

12. *Arts, Crafts, and Mode of Life.*—Throughout the country the general appearance of the villages is one of considerable neglect. They consist of long, straight streets of low span-roofed huts, built continuously barrack-wise. Where there has been little or no contact with the white man the villages are dirty and ill-kept; they are placed in the midst of considerable plantations of bananas and cassava, and here and there several other forms of vegetable produce are raised. For the most part, however, there is an absence of live stock, with the exception of fowls. I found that the European duck had made its way even into the remoter villages, but goats were almost wholly absent. The people as a whole struck me as being of a high order of intelligence, though very suspicious, reserved, and somewhat surly when one attempted to examine them closely. In the villages which had come under direct white influence, such as those an hour or so's march at the back of Irebo, there was a very marked improvement, both in the general character of the buildings of which the villages were composed, and in the way in which both they and the plantations surrounding them were maintained and looked after; whilst their populations were similarly far more ready to open their hearts to the white man and to throw off the general air of suspicion with which he is treated by those who have not come into such close contact with him. One large group of villages, in particular, that of Muangi, under the rule of the sub-chief of that name, was a model of native African architecture and discipline. The little rows of huts were of scrupulous cleanliness, and were ornamented externally with elaborate reeding, all of which must have been executed with the primitive knives that form the sole implement amongst this tribe. The forges in the village were all constantly at work, and a considerable industry was done in the manufacture of these knives and of the ornamental parade spears for the village chiefs and their

notables; whilst both the streets through the villages and the approaches to them were maintained in the most spick-and-span fashion. In the plantations, besides the usual produce, large crops of tobacco were under systematic cultivation. In every respect these villages presented a very great contrast to those surrounding and abutting on Ikoko at the north-east corner of the lake. In this quarter there were very evident signs of the population having diminished enormously in recent years; whole villages were deserted and abandoned, their plantations absorbed by the quick-growing bush, and their huts falling into ruins, whilst in others the population consisted only of three or four families in isolated dwellings in the midst of a general scene of ruin. It was in this part alone that I noticed a real timidity on the part of the population. On visiting one village, Nkaki, Mr. Clarke, by whom I was accompanied at the time, was obliged to call out to the people who it was that had arrived in the canoe before they would make their appearance from their hiding-places in the surrounding plantations and forest, and come forward to meet us. He told me that in past times whenever a canoe made its appearance up the narrow waterway leading to the village crowds would assemble on the bank to greet it; and as this was my general experience in other parts I can well believe that it was the custom there also. But on our arrival the whole place bore a general air of desertion, and there was no doubt that for some reason the natives feared to let themselves be seen by the white man. An intelligent old chief showed us round the village, and gave us much information concerning himself and his people. The arms in this part consist principally of the spears already alluded to, of hunting harpoons, and of very large bows with arrows of most exquisite and delicate workmanship. The head-dress of the chiefs and notables is quite peculiar, consisting of what has the appearance of a tall hat with the brim cut off, made of a very fine basket work, blackened, and quite highly polished, probably from use. The principal chiefs in all the villages immediately round the lake wear this form of head-dress, which I saw nowhere else. The natives immediately round Ikoko and Bikoro were in the past very notable traders, and subsequently on my journey in the Ubangi I heard accounts of the long voyages they made trading in the very beautiful black pottery which they make with extraordinary skill from the mud

at the bottom of the creeks round the lake. This industry still survives although on a small scale, and to nothing like the extent to which it has been developed in other parts; but from the stories that I heard of it, it is quite obvious that in the past it was an industry of very considerable importance, and the Mantumba were held in respect by tribes as far off as the Sango on the Upper Ubangi, who used to exchange slaves and live-stock for the produce of the potters' art. To a certain extent the decay in the industry may be traceable, no doubt, to the prohibition of slave-trading, which formed the principal medium of exchange; but in a country so denuded of live-stock it will not wholly account for the decadence of the industry when it is pointed out that the trade was done with a district where live-stock abounds in enormous quantities. The decay of the people in this part appears to be due to a devastating war carried on for a long period by a rebel named Lukolongonya, who laid the whole district waste, decimated the population, and terrorised and despoiled the survivors.

13. *Aboriginal Dwarfs.*—Amongst the indigenous people of this district are a large number of a dwarf tribe, the Bua, one of the many dwarf tribes of the Equatorial forest, and as in almost all parts, these little people act as the hunters to the predominant race of the district. They live in a condition approximately of serfdom in relation to the owners of the soil, are well treated by their masters and employers, and appear happy and contented, as they are by nature born sportsmen, and revel in the excitement of the chase. In colour they are much lighter than the other inhabitants of the neighbourhood, are very small of stature, well-built, and wiry, and carry a diminutive bow and vast quantities of primitive little poisoned arrows, for the most part without either quills or barb, and consisting simply of a short length of sharpened cane dipped in a liquid poison, a vegetable extractive, which they carry in little pottery bottles slung round their shoulders. They discharge these arrows, which are carried in a quiver on the back, with almost incredible rapidity, and one little fellow, in order to display his skill, discharged some twenty arrows in such quick succession that he had fired the last before the first had reached the ground. These dwarfs are clearly very closely related to the dwarf tribes that one meets amongst the Aruwimi peoples and the Arabised tribes in the Eastern Province,* and probably represent the aboriginal

* Paragraphs 39 and 40.

forest people belonging to the same race as the Bushmen to the south. The great bulk of the forest dwellers of the present times consist of various weakly peoples—probably all of the same stock—who were originally the occupiers of the fertile lands in the outskirts of the forest track, but who, at the time of the great Bantu migration, were forced to relinquish these lands to their conquerors, and seek refuge in the gloomy recesses of the densest bush, where in turn they dispossessed the dwarfs and tree-dwellers of their ancestral hunting grounds.

The Lower Ubangi.

14. *The Zongo.*—The population in the Lower Ubangi is sparse, and is composed of various tribes of the forest people, principally Bangala, whilst in the interior the more warlike Budja, Dongo, and Bonjo tribes are found in widely-scattered villages. After passing Imesse the population is a very mixed one, some villages being Zongo, and others Bonjo, between whom there is much hatred and jealousy. The Zongo, as a whole, are small of stature, and ravaged by yaws, craw-craw, and other unpleasant diseases. Intellectually they are dull and backward. Largely a riverine race depending on their fishery, they content themselves with small, ill-constructed, and ill-kept abodes, arranged in the form of continuous barracks round village squares. Almost their only art is pottery-making from mud collected from the river bottom, and in this they are very skilful. They are poor agriculturists; their plantations are small and ill-kept, and their live stock miserable and scanty. Such Zongo villages as exist towards the interior are generally hidden in the densest bush, the pathways leading to them skilfully concealed, and the population inhabiting them timid and cowardly. The tribe as a whole has suffered greatly from inroads from the Banza, the Bonjo, the Dongo, and other warlike clans surrounding them, who in the past have made raids upon their villages and carried them off captive and slaves. At one time a very large trade in Zongo slaves was done between the Lower Ubangi and the Lake Tumba district.

15. *The Bonjo and Dongo*, who are practically one and the same people, are, I should imagine, a hybrid race, the connecting link between the forest dwellers and the people of the plains. They are a splendid, intelligent, and fearless race, hardy, large of stature, of fine physique, and singularly free from disease, almost

all the males being circumcised. Their towns are large and admirably built; the so-called "village" of Dongo has a population of at least 7,000, and in the interior, I was credibly informed by an Italian who had recently made a march to the borders of the Bangala Province, there are towns of even double this size. In these Dongo towns each street usually represents a family and the most remarkable feature of the tribe is their astounding prolificness. A family of twenty wives and four score children is by no means a rarity, and at times a man can bring forward over a hundred of his own offspring. These people are industrious and skilful in metal-working, basket making, and native textile manufactures, such as string and rope-making, net-making, the preparation of cloth from bark and from fibre, dyeing, and in rough arts such as rude sculpture and primitive painting. They are, however, a people who are cannibal by predilection, that is to say, they prefer human meat to all other, and the flesh of the white man is supposed to be superior to that of the black on account of its having a slightly salt taste. The only white man who had stayed in Dongo until the day I arrived was eaten ten years ago, and the numbers of half-buried skulls at street corners, planted as souvenirs of bygone festivities, still bear witness to the taste of the inhabitants. These people have no religion, and being by nature born warriors and hunters, they are a difficult race to keep under control. One interesting feature of the Dongo is their adherence to a caste system. In many tribes a particular calling is either honoured or despised. The metal worker, for instance, is in some parts a man of importance, in others an object of contempt. But there is, as a rule, nothing approaching a caste organisation. Among the Dongo, however, such an organisation is rigidly crystallised. Their towns are all divided into three sections devoted respectively to the warriors; the manufacturers; and the food producers. This last class is, on the river, composed of the fisher folk; inland, it consists of the agriculturalists. There is little or no admixture between the castes, whose lives are as much shut off one from another as though the three sections of the town were separated by leagues of jungle. In any given town the castes of necessity trade with one another—the fisherman or the farmer buying his canoe or his hoe from the manufacturer in return for food-stuffs, and the warrior levying on both in return for the protection he affords the community, but

in inter-politan trade the caste barrier is insurmountable: the fisherman on the river can effect an exchange with the farmer inland, but cannot deal direct with the smith or cloth-beater of any town but his own. He must, if he want a cloth of inland make, exchange his fish for cassava bread, and then in his own town find a potter who will buy the cloth and sell it again for the bread. The advantages of this complex system to a primitive and very numerous people who have arrived at a very considerable internal commerce are *(i.)* protection of home industries for each town, since almost every inter-politan transaction implies a second; *(ii.)* minimisation of the risk of serious commercial disputes. A man is not so likely to be taken advantage of by another if his exchange is confined to a class of commodity in which he is expert, as he would be were he free to barter his wares for an object which may momentarily captivate his fancy and of the true value of which he has no sure means of judging; *(iii.)* administrative simplicity, in avoiding the possibility of a community being levied on by members of another. Each caste, who rank in the order enumerated above, have their own slaves and to a certain extent their own internal organisation.

Upper Ubangi.

16. *The Bantu.*—Above Zongo Falls one is at last free of the eternal monotony of the Great Forest, and is come to a land of open downs and rolling veldt, a land of buffalo and antelope, and rich pasture. With the change of scene comes a change of population no less remarkable. The miserable forest-dwellers, skulking along game tracks through the dense jungle, or squatting idle before their wretched little span-roof barracks, give place to the sturdy, intelligent Bantu people, who stride across the plains four square to heaven and earth, in the full glare of day, or busy themselves with lusty energy in their numberless crafts and industries in and about their lofty domed or spired towns.

17. *The Banziri.*—The first section of this fine race one meets with consists of several Banziri villages, but for the most part the Banziri are on the right bank. On the State side they are not a riverine people, and the population between Zongo and Mokoangai is a very sparse one on the south or left bank. On the north or right bank, belonging to the French colony of the Oubanghi, there

are several considerable villages, some of them belonging to the Banziri, and others to the Bonjo, the Bubu, and to more northerly tribes. The Banziri, like all other races in this part, are confirmed cannibals. They were, till the advent of the white man, in the habit of breeding slaves for purposes of food, in much the same way as, and without any more compunction than, they raise goats or dogs for the same purpose, and I had good reason for suspecting that, although not openly practised, the fattening and killing of slaves has not wholly ceased. The Banziri have an evil reputation for treachery, but I visited several of their villages, on the State side, alone and unarmed, except for my camera, and found them a not inhospitable, cheerily-disposed people. They are an industrious tribe, willing and enthusiastic paddlers, of good physique, of a hardy independence, and peculiarly free from disease. Their villages are small, composed for the most part of large bee-hive shaped huts thatched with grass, scattered about among their plantations without order or design; some of them, on the river, have a frontage to the water-way, but as a rule the greater part of their villages are secluded in the bush. Their industries, whilst not so highly developed as those of the Dongo-Bonjo below them, or of the Banza and Sango above them, are fairly well advanced, and in the arts, that is to say, in the ornamentation of the doors and woodwork of their homes, and the implements they use in war and in the chase, and the intricacy of their personal ornaments, they are not surpassed by any people on the shores of the Ubangi; whilst they are also the sole people in this part of Africa who have any appreciation of the value of colour, most of the tribes preferring black, or the darkest shades of blue or maroon, to the brighter colours, both in their personal attire and in the decoration of their pottery and other domestic appurtenances. They are perhaps the most artistic race in this part of the country. Their habit of weaving beads into their hair to form an immoveable cap is exceedingly picturesque: the Gobu and the Zongo both adopt this custom locally, but amongst the Banziri I found it universal. Another distinguishing characteristic of the Banziri is the fact that unlike most of their neighbours they have a well-marked religious instinct. They recognise the existence of an all-pervading, all-powerful Spirit, though their notions concerning this Esse are somewhat vague; and they also see evidences of

A GIGANTIC VILLAGE, LOWER UBANGHI.

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individual spirits in the phenomena of nature. But whereas in most forms of animism the thunder, for instance, is the voice of a god, for the Banziri the roar of the thunder is itself the spirit; similarly the river is not the home of a deity, but the movement of the relentless current is itself a being; the wind is not the breath of a god, but the whistle of the wind in the trees is a spirit, and so, too, is the swaying of the trees. There is no taint of anthromorphism in this animism; it is essentially non-concrete, every detail of it is an abstraction. It is just such a primitive system as an artistic people might have been expected to arrive at. Whether it later develops anthromorphic tendencies it would be interesting to watch, as this would go to show that it is merely an early stage of the usual type of animism. There is in the system no idea of divinity, or god-head, no thought of worship. It is merely a quiet, general recognition of a world of spirits, which have no particular concern with the world of men. Alongside it is the usual African fetishism and devil-doctoring for the affairs of every-day life, utterly unconnected with this belief in—or rather admission of—the existence of spirits. If a tree fall and kill a man, it is not the spirit Wind-Whistle which has worked the evil, but the concrete tree, and so all the brothers of the tree must be wounded as punishment, or enmeshed with enchantments to preclude their reproducing the act. The idea of these spirits having any interest in or power over men does not seem to have occurred to the Banziri, any more than the idea that men have any interest in or power over the spirits. The system is of especial interest to students of comparative religion, in view of the fact that in many parts in the Ubangi phalic worship is common. For the Banziri ideas may be generalised as a spiritualising first, of the Life, and secondly, of movement or Force. Thus, too, do these rude savages, lost in the central plains of Africa, arrive at the same division into Vital Spirit and Physical Spirit as the classic philosophers of ancient Athens, and also reproduce the idea of a Creator Spirit, and a subordinate world of "natural" forces of the Semitic Deist and Egyptian Mystic. A religious system which can thus be brought into harmony with such diverse philosophies of more highly developed peoples, must be of a very primitive character, and may well prove to be the very origin itself of the idea of God among men.

18. *The Sango Country.*—Above Makoangi the population becomes exceedingly dense. At first there is a considerable mixture of both Banziri and Sango, and the typical villages of these two peoples are interspersed among the high huts of the various tribes making up the Banza. In some parts there is a continuous series of villages all along the bank, more particularly on the State side, and I found that whilst locally there is also a large population still resident on the French bank, for the most part the villages have been transferred bodily to the State side, owing to the animosity against the white concessionaries who have established themselves all along the right bank. It is true to say that there is a white trading house on the right bank at intervals of about ten hours travelling the whole way from Makoangai to Banzyville, and that, whilst there is a small settlement of employées in the immediate neighbourhood of each of these stations, the intervals between them are denuded of population, although there are evident indications of numerous villages having existed there in the past. The population increases as one goes into the interior on the French side, and on the State side is scarcely less dense in the interior than it is on the river bank. The Sango have a great reputation as boatmen and steamer hands among the whites of the Congo; the wheelmen on almost all the State steamers are Sango, whilst the rest of the crew is often composed of Bengala, another famous riverine race. In every respect the Sango bear so strong a resemblance to the Banza that I am convinced they are one and the same people, the former being the Wate, or riverside section, and the other the Wangene, or inland section of the race.

19. *The Banza.*—A day and a half above Makoangai one gets to the true Banza country on the State side, whilst on the French side the Bubu become the principal people for the first time. These two tribes are obviously closely allied, the latter of them being said to be distinguishable by their physical beauty. Both groups are very highly developed. The Banza have an entirely indigenous civilization for which they have taken nothing either from the white man or from the Arab. Their social development has proceeded very far and is most definite. They are an industrious people, made up of intelligent and independent clans who have taken exceedingly kindly to the white man, after having in the

VILLAGE NEAR BANZYVILLE, UPPER UBANGHI.

early days resented his intrusion in order, as they openly say, to prove which race was the better. Having recognised the superiority of the white man they have become as loyal and faithful subjects to him as they were previously resolute and honest foes.

20. *System of Government.*—The over-lordship of the whole tribe, the extent of whose country is enormous, is vested in the great Banza, whose capital bears the same name, and is about one week's march inland. Under him are various smaller tribal chieftains ruling considerable populations composed of subordinate branches of the main stock, and comparable in European terminology to clans. Under each of these lesser chieftains are the village chiefs ruling single villages, or groups of villages making up a township, and in their turn delegating authority to notables and heads of families.

21. *Character of Chiefs.*—The chiefs are distinguishable by a high order of intelligence, are very apt in retort, quick in reasoning powers, and full of a delightfully quaint humour. The free men of the better sort are also men of a high order of intelligence for a black race. These chiefs have an innate sense of dignity and a code of honour which are rare amongst natives of Africa. Abira, for instance, after having made me magnificent gifts of carved ivory and copper implements, courteously, and in a most dignified manner, refused to accept anything in return, on the grounds that I was a visitor to his village, and that I was, in fact, his guest and enjoying his hospitality; but he naïvely informed me that when he could come to see me in my village he would not be above accepting what I might see fit to give him, and when I explained that I was only a traveller in those parts, he consulted with his "boy," or principal notable, and surmounted the difficulty by suggesting that, as I was a traveller, my canoe was my home, and I might suitably entertain him there. I was therefore obliged to accompany him from his capital, Prekissa, back to the river, retreat into my canoe, and invite him on board before he would accept anything at my hands. As examples of the code of honour prevailing may be mentioned the numerous cases, in which a man having sold a wife to another, refunds the purchase price if the wife dies before giving birth to a child. Many other customs universally recognised among the Banza point to a sense of honour

and an appreciation of the sacredness of a contract being highly developed. In some parts the clan chieftain is the possessor of considerable tangible wealth in the form of mines; such an one is Abira, and his people are skilful in the reduction of ore by a process which, crude in its nature, varies not a whit in principle from the hot-blast furnace of modern civilization; whilst Gambele, ruler of another clan on the other side of the river, has large copper mines, the exact locality of which is kept a profound secret, but the output of which must be exceedingly large, as throughout the whole district from Banzyville to the junction of the Uele with the Mbomu, the native copper is that in most common use.

22. *Villages.*—All the villages of the Banza are admirably planned, well constructed, scrupulously clean, and well kept up. They are composed of lofty, thatched, conical huts, having the floor raised from the ground. These huts, in front of each of which is a picturesque shelter, are set along wide, straight streets, at the intersections of which are often buildings of a semi-public character. The style of architecture and the general planning of the villages is entirely different from that of the Banziri. These villages vary enormously in size, the capital having a population which may be gauged from the fact that there are close upon 1,000 adult males registered by name on the State records at the nearest white station. As one can compute, without fear of exaggeration, that there are at least seven persons (wives, slaves, and children) to each adult male in this neighbourhood, the total population cannot be short of 8,000 people, whilst even this figure is probably below the mark, as it is doubtful whether every adult male has been registered. In the same way Baya, the capital of the clan of this name, possesses several hundred adult males on the State registers. Each of these large towns is composed of a group of villages.

23. *Social Development.* — In each village — at anyrate in all the larger townships—are two institutions which indicate the dawn of a sense of the community's responsibility towards its individual members, namely, a maternity home and a *crêche*, huge shelters open to the air on all sides, mere thatched roofs supported on pillars. The origin of these was no doubt economic and not philanthropic. The heads of families found that, despite the

MWANGI, NEAR IREBU, MIDDLE RIVER.

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anti-septic character of their wives' huts, due to the creosote and wood-tar with which the constantly-burning wood fires saturate the interiors, the loss of their womenkind in childbed was a serious one, and so empirically they have arrived at the establishment of these open-air lying-in hospitals. Similarly the care of the young children must have kept many wives from their work in the plantations, and so the *crêches*, which are surrounded with large meshed nets to prevent their small occupants from straying at large, were set up. At Baya, where first I noticed these institutions, the present chief, as well as his predecessor, has shown a very real and practical desire to improve the township. In the words of the present man: "My father" (*i.e.*, his predecessor, probably maternal uncle) "went long journeys among strangers, and whenever he saw what was good he brought back people of the strangers to set that thing up here," and so at this present day may be seen all manners of architecture to be found within two or three weeks' travel, and many characteristics of other tribes. At Prekissa, to give another instance of the advance that has been made by this people, is a large, round cage-like building, perhaps 25 feet in diameter and 20 feet high, set on a prominent site on a central hill. Rude, even ludicrous as this structure be, it is a symbol of the first groping of the native African after enlightened government: for it is a parliament house—an assembly room where the representatives of the villages under Abira's chieftaincy meet to deliberate and advise their ruler. Few buildings in the world can vie with this pretentious ill-made cage for historic interest.

24. *Crafts and Industries.*— These people have arrived, presumably empirically, at many of the most modern developments of both the pastoral and the agricultural arts. Their plantations are extensive, and diligently and intelligently looked after, whilst the abundance of flocks—goats, poultry, and dogs—may best be deduced from the fact that at many of the small villages the local ruler would present me with from three to five animals and as many fowls when he came to greet me, and that almost anywhere a goat can be purchased for a fathom of cheap cloth. Their other industries consist, throughout the whole people, of mining, smelting, forging, and working iron and copper, of hunting and fishing, basket and string-making, preparation of native cloth, the carving of ivory, and the fabrication of elaborate and highly-ornate wooden domestic implements and furniture.

25. *Intellectual Development.*—They are a musical race, and have many distinct forms of musical instrument, the most common being five and seven-stringed guitars. The Banza have a rude but not wholly primitive religion. They believe in, or, at anyrate, relate legends, and hold superstitions concerning each river and forest, and indeed almost all natural objects. The crocodile, rare in these parts, is the Mercury of the river god Dua. The transmigration of souls is almost universally recognised amongst them, and a chimpanzee is always regarded as a re-incarnation of a previous chieftain, whilst the leopard is in many parts considered the habitat of the spirit of some deceased native famous for his cruelty.

The Headwaters of the Ubangi.

26. *The Population generally.*—Above Banzyville the population for a time continues very dense on the State side and on the islands in the river, more particularly the Isle of Yä. Then, although there is no dearth of population on the State side, the French side is the more populous of the two. But I found that migration is gradually going on from the right bank to the left bank, and I came across two villages, of which one was in process of moving its habitat from the French side to the State side, and the other had only just established itself on the south side. At one point just above the inflow of the Koto river the population on the French side is as dense as lower down it is on the State side, and some of the villages in this part are peculiar for the ornate character of the native buildings, minarets and cupolas making their appearance for the first time, and pointing, I should fancy, to the influence of a distant Arab civilisation. Before one reaches Yakoma the population is again almost wholly located on the south bank, and above this point, along the Mbomu, the French side is almost deserted, whilst the State side is covered with native villages.

27. *The Dendi.*—The races in this part are composed of several branches of the Dendi and the Sakara people. The latter are closely allied to the Niam Niam, whilst the former are a distinct race and vary very much from all others in this part. They are a lean, ragged-looking people of nothing like the stature or the physical beauty of the Banza tribe. The men wear, as a rule, a long thin

A VILLAGE SCENE, LOWER UBANGHI.

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beard, and frequently also a military moustache. The villages are moderately well kept and well constructed: those lying close to the waters edge are as a rule skilfully hidden from the waterway. The fact is rendered the easier in this part, as one is come again into the regions of the great equatorial forests, and leaves the country of open mountains and down-like plains. Differing from all other people in this part, the Dendi invaribly turn their villages fronting the interior with their backs to the waterway, so that one might even walk through them without suspecting the near presence of the river, save by the noise of the rapids close to which this race usually establishes itself. Although it is often thought that they belong to the same stock as the Banza, I formed the opinion that they really belong to the more timid and less virile races of the forest. So far as their personal appearance, their mode of life, their customs, and their social and industrial development are concerned they differ in every particular from the Banza tribes, and as I was the first white man ever to complete the journey through their country from Prekissa to Djabbir, I believe a mistake to have been made in their classification, owing to lack of information concerning them. I found them, although a simple and not highly intelligent people, a cheery race, willing, humorous, faithful, and with a highly developed sporting instinct. When I made my paddlers understand that I wished to accomplish a journey that no white men had previously been successful in performing, they entered so thoroughly into the spirit of the thing that it was with difficulty I could persuade them ever to stop at any point I wished to visit. The rivalry among the various canoes in my outfit to be the first to arrive at Djabbir got so great and their occupants into such a frenzy, that scarcely a morning passed without my discovering when I came to start that one or other of them had gone forward in the night. Although, as a rule, it is impossible to persuade natives to leave their own homes for any considerable distance, it was with some difficulty that I persuaded these men after five days continuous paddling for twelve and thirteen hours a day, to return to their own homes, as they expressed their desire to paddle me back to the white man's village in Europe, to show that they could go anywhere or do anything. Unfortunately, the drawback of these people is that they are perhaps the most quarrelsome race to be met with in Central Africa, and it seems to be impossible for any two villages to live in amity one with the other. Their warfare consists,

so far as I saw it, principally in raids, made by one village on another to carry off women folk and food stuffs. Their timidity as a people leads them to avoid fighting as far as possible, and therefore these mutual raids assume almost the character of a game, in which each side tries to reach the village of the other and get back home with the spoil first. Some of the villagers with whom my paddlers were not on speaking terms tried to raise objections to our passing, but they were very amenable to pecuniary reasoning, and a few Tarbiches, or a pair or two of sand shoes will buy the scruples of a whole district.

Friendliness of the Natives.

28. *All along the Ubangi* from Zongo Falls to the junction of the Mbomu and the Uele, the inhabitants would come flocking down to the water's edge, shouting and cheering as soon as the approach of a white man's canoe was announced, and this was the case not merely with the riverside villages but even with those lying at a considerable distance inland. No sooner had the news that a white man was approaching reached them, either through the medium of the tom-toms, or by that mysterious agency by means of which gossip travels amongst the native races of Africa, than they would come running down to the river, along the native paths and game tracts, so that the bank was continually dotted with clusters of natives dancing and shouting wherever a clearing presented itself in the thick bush along the water's edge, or swarming the trees that overhung the river when no such opening presented itself. Whenever it became evident that I intended to put in at any point, crowds of enormous proportions would flock to the spot from all directions, and the noise of their selo-ing and cooee-ing was often almost deafening, whilst during the whole time that the canoes were alongside the bank the crowd would grow in size, and often the anxiety of the natives to welcome the white man was a source of inconvenience, as they did not hesitate to clamber into the canoes, all the time shouting and dancing with unmistakable pleasure. At those points along the river where the population was densest, and where the villages succeed one another in almost unbroken line, it was practically impossible to put in at each one, and in these cases the whole population of those villages at which no stop was made would run

A LANDING PLACE, LOWER UBANGHI.

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cheering and shouting along the banks through the succeeding villages, their number continually growing, keeping pace with the canoes, sometimes for a couple of hours at a stretch, until at last a stop was made. The chiefs of each of the villages would then come to pay a formal though necessarily silent visit, bringing with them goats and fowls, eggs, bananas, and a variety of other produce, which they presented with considerable ceremony and with the utmost pride. If it is known that the white man cares for native curios, the ordinary inhabitants, too, will go to the greatest trouble to please him by making him presents of such as may exist in their neighbourhood, and thus in a very short time, owing to the additions to one's collection and to the large amount of live stock that is presented to one on the way, one's outfit rapidly grows in size. The customs governing the actual details of the way in which the traveller is received vary with the district; thus, between Banzyville and Yokoma, the natives along the river bank are so cordial in their welcome that, not content with running along the bank to cheer the canoes until they stop, they work themselves up into a state of excitement in which they leap into the water and swim out to the canoes, and forcibly dispossess one's former paddlers and take upon themselves, often not without a certain amount of struggle, to conduct one through the next stage. The custom is somewhat analogous to that in this country of unhorsing the carriage of a popular local character and dragging it to his home, but is one which when adapted to the case of a canoe incurs on the recipient of the honour considerable discomfort and no small amount of risk; for when one is in a somewhat frail and none too well-balanced dug-out canoe, and an excited struggle is going on between the natives in the water and the occupants of the canoe, one is fortunate if one escapes with nothing worse than getting all one's equipment wet. When one goes ashore one is followed by crowds of the inhabitants, who cheer and dance round one unceasingly. Where one puts up in a native village the occasion is taken to keep high festival all night, and the inhabitants of neighbouring villages are soon attracted by the sound of the tom-toms and the brass jangles. By the light of torches and of great fires, to the sound of a very babel of native music, dances are kept up the whole night through, whilst an ever-changing group of natives constantly surrounds the white man's tent or hut as the case may be, and on many occasions so closely

do they press about one when at one's evening meal or resting after a day's march, that their attentions are literally oppressive. On all these occasions, apart from the ceremonious gifts of the chief, the villagers themselves would delight to feed to repletion my paddlers or porters. At first, uncertain as to whether I should be able to obtain paddlers with facility, I engaged a number at Zongo to take me as far as Mokoangai. But later, when it became evident that there was never likely to be any difficulty in finding more persons willing to serve one than one could usefully employ, I fell into the practice of engaging them from one village to the next, or for a single day's work, and on these occasions, after they had been sufficiently regaled in the village in which I stopped for the night, they would return again to their homes, whilst next morning the chief would call for paddlers or bearers, as the case might be, and invariably the response was immediate and more than sufficient. The chief would send either his ceremonial officer or some near relative—a nephew or sons—to conduct me to my next stopping place, and put me in touch with the succeeding chief, and in this way one is passed on from village to village, and from tribe to tribe, and although one of course invariably rewards both the chief and the people who volunteer to serve one, whilst they on their side never refuse to accept one's gifts, yet they always point out that what they do they are doing gratuitously.

THE UELE.

29. *Arab Influences.*—Throughout the province of the Uele the population has long been in contact first with Arab and then with white civilisation, with the consequence that they have imbibed much of both influences, and their native habits and manner of life have been much modified. Close to Djabbir, one of the first white settlements to be established in this part of Africa, is the township of the so-called Sultan of Djabbir, a grandified clan chief who was given considerable powers by the State owing to the assistance he rendered in pacifying the country in earlier days. He wears the uniform and receives the rations and pay of a white captain in the Force Publique or native army, and he suffers from an inordinate sense of his own importance; to such an extent, indeed, that he now refuses to visit the white settlement, and insists, if communication

A VILLAGE IN THE MAKING, LOWER UBANGHI.

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has to be made with him, that the white man shall visit him, as he claims to have seniority over him. During the time that I was at Djabbir, matters were almost at a deadlock. The so-called Sultan's nephew came with Djabbir's principal notable to visit me and to invite me to visit him, explaining in terms that he could not visit me. As I did not wish to be a factor in this struggle for prestige between the white and the black, I left the district without visiting "the Sultan."* I found the road to Engwetra a well constructed one leading through a continual series of Arab villages, inhabited by semi-civilised subjects of Djabbir or of his vassal, Engwetra. These villages are responsible for the upkeep of the road. From Engwetra, where a new state post is being established on most picturesque lines, I continued by canoe down the Likati to its junction with the Rubi at Egwengatana with practically no population on either bank, save an occasional small village of Arabised mud huts, which I found to be settlements established by the State for the purpose of providing relays of paddlers for its transport service.

30. *Old Soldiers.*—On the Rubi, below Egwengatana, there are enormous well-kept villages inhabited for the most part by old soldiers of the Force Publique. The villages, built of mud and sun-dried bricks, are close copies of the better class houses in the white stations, modified here and there by the Arab influence in the neighbourhood. The races in this part can of course not be clearly defined, as its inhabitants are those, who, having been drawn from all parts of the State, have been in close touch with the white man and with the comforts of civilisation far too long to care to return to their own homes in their own villages, and therefore establish these settlements where they can continue to live as they have been in the habit of living in State posts. When I made one or two excursions from Ibembo into the interior, I found that the influence of these well-kept civilised-looking villages is spreading to the raw natives who are rapidly taking to an Arabised manner of living. There can be no doubt that this civilising influence is travelling very rapidly with most beneficial effects, as contrary to experience in many parts of Africa, the natives in this part seldom revert to savagery after having once lived in even the most primitive type of civilised circumstances.

* Djabbir has been executed since this report was written, as the result of the Expedition against him mentioned in the footnote to the next paragraph.

Below Ibembo, on the Itimbri, are several considerable villages, those on the left bank inhabited by the Aruwimi races, and those on the right bank by Ngombe and Budja. When I passed, this latter people were in revolt, and their relentless hostility, coupled with the way in which they are scattered amongst other peoples, has rendered them a disturbing influence in the good government of this part of the State for many years past, and one which it has hitherto been almost impossible to cope with. They are said to be a very treacherous people, and I was urgently warned not to visit their villages unarmed. I did so, however, in two cases, and whilst I found them surly and inhospitable, they made no attempt to offer violence. There was no doubt, however, as to their being evilly disposed towards the white man and resenting his intrusion.*

Upper Congo.

31. *Mixed Races.*—From Ibembo to Stanley Falls, the Congo is in parts densely populated, although for considerable stretches between Bumba and Basoko not a single village breaks the level monotony of the equatorial forest on either shore. It was on purpose to make a close examination of the population of this part that I paid my subsequent surprise visit from Basoko to Bumba and back. I went down the stream by the north or right bank, and returned back the south or left bank of the river. It is almost impossible to generalise about the races, as they are so mixed. On the way up stream, before one reaches the Aruwimi tribes on the right bank, there are large clusters of ill-kept, dirty-looking villages peopled by absolutely naked savages of the very lowest type. Some of these are debased Bangala, a hardy and active people in their own region. Others of them are Ngombe, Bawangata, Mongo, and lower types of the Bozoko, which last-named people also furnish a very much higher type found between Basoko and Stanley Falls and along both banks of the Lower Aruwimi.

* NOTE.—Since my return the Budja has been brought into entire submission by the expedition that was fighting against them when I passed through their country. The trouble which was drawing on between the white administrator and Djabbir was brought to a head by the theft of arms on the part of Engwetra from canoes in the State transport service, and an expedition was, after much tedious negotiation and constantly renewed threats, at last sent against them. What the result of this expedition is I do not know, but to an impartial observer, it would appear that both he and his overlord Djabbir ought to have been taught their position towards the white man long ago. Their insolence and its evil effects on neighbouring peoples must have constituted a distinct menace to every white station in this part of the State, and the leniency with which they were treated was obviously construed by the native as synonymous with fear and weakness.

IMESSE, LOWER UBANGHI.

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32. *Fishing Villages.*—On the ill-defined left bank of this reach of the Congo one finds half hidden in the bush and secluded up the innumerable creeks and backwaters many very small fishing villages, little clusters of rude leaf shelters without any definite character or permanence of structure. The majority of these groups consist of not more than ten to twenty of these flimsy little erections, without the smallest attempt at cultivation round them, nor even at clearing the bush in their vicinity. They appear to be planted down haphazard wherever the receding high waters have left a scrap of marshy shore, or the tornadoes have torn away a few square yards from an elevated edge of the great forest. These villages, if such they can be called, are in part merely seasonal stations to which natives from the neighbourhood come down to ply their fishery during the time of receding water. During the whole day those in this category are completely deserted, whilst their occupants, strangely amphibious, go down to the great water, and with nets, traps, poison, and by hand gather its harvest amid the overhanging branches along the marge. Naturally these villages are as a consequence neglected and dirty, and the presence of any population might easily escape the attention of a passer-by who has to strain his eyes to the utmost to make out the dusky heads and shoulders of the natives as they move with incredible stealth shoulder-deep in the dark waters, among the submerged trees, or crouch in motionless silence beside their traps and fishing weirs in the forest gloom of the creeks. It is not until the eye has got used to picking up these scarce distinguishable figures in the brown shadows of the forest that one comes to realise that one is ever in the presence of so great a cloud of human witnesses.

33. *Prevalence of Elephantiasis.* — Another part of these primitive settlements is inhabited by a pathetic population, all afflicted with elephantiasis in its most grimly grotesque stage of excessive development. According to the sufferers, the vermean parasite which is the cause of the malady is water-borne, and every season claims fresh victims from among the fisher folk who return no more to their own villages when the fishery is over, but continue, in obedience to a primitive quarantine, to live in little segregated groups on the shifting edge of the river. The awful deformity of many of these folk, especially the women, is hideous in the extreme,

and to find oneself surrounded by a whole people distorted out of all recognition as human beings, is comparable only to being suddenly transported into some Dr. Morreau's Island, where a race of parodies on humanity drag out a life of indolent hopelessness in circumstances of sordid squalor. Those who can no longer ply their silent calling on account of their deformity, lie idle and immovable around their huts, mere helpless misshapen masses of corrupt flesh, scarce able to drag their ponderous forms from the cooking pot to their sleeping place and back again each day. And so in a settled gloom which there is no lifting they are condemned to lie and contemplate that river in which in other days they were wont to exercise an agility and a cunning so deft as to outdo the nimbleness of the very fishes themselves.

34. *The Mongo Wate.*—Besides these two classes of fishing settlements there are several larger and, in comparison with them, well-kept villages of the Mongo people referred to later.* As is apparently always the case, the Wate, or riverine, branch of the race is not so highly developed as the Wangene, or landward, branch. But, whilst the Mongo in this region have not reached the high level of their brothers lying inland between the Launoa and the Lomami, they are certainly far in advance of the forest dwellers in the Abir country, and among them the white man is sure of a cordial welcome and willing hospitality, whilst in some of the villages such industries as net-making, cloth-beating, and pottery have attained to as high a pitch of development as anywhere in the forest area, with the possible sole exception of the Aruwimi.

35. *Above Bazoko—Canoe Dwellers.*—The population up-stream from Basoko becomes more and more dense, and after passing the mouth of the Lomami, there is a continual succession of considerable villages on the left bank and even one large native trading settlement, founded by the former servant of a State official. It is in this stretch between Basoko (that is to say, the mouth of the Aruwimi) and Ɓadjoko (the native trading settlement referred to) that one sees the largest numbers of native canoes of anywhere on the main river. There is a whole people whose ethnological standing has not been definitely established, who may be said to be canoe-dwellers. Instead of living in villages, they have plantations on the

* Paragraphs 45 and 46.

IMESSE—CHIEF WITH HIS NOTABLES, LOWER UBANGHI.

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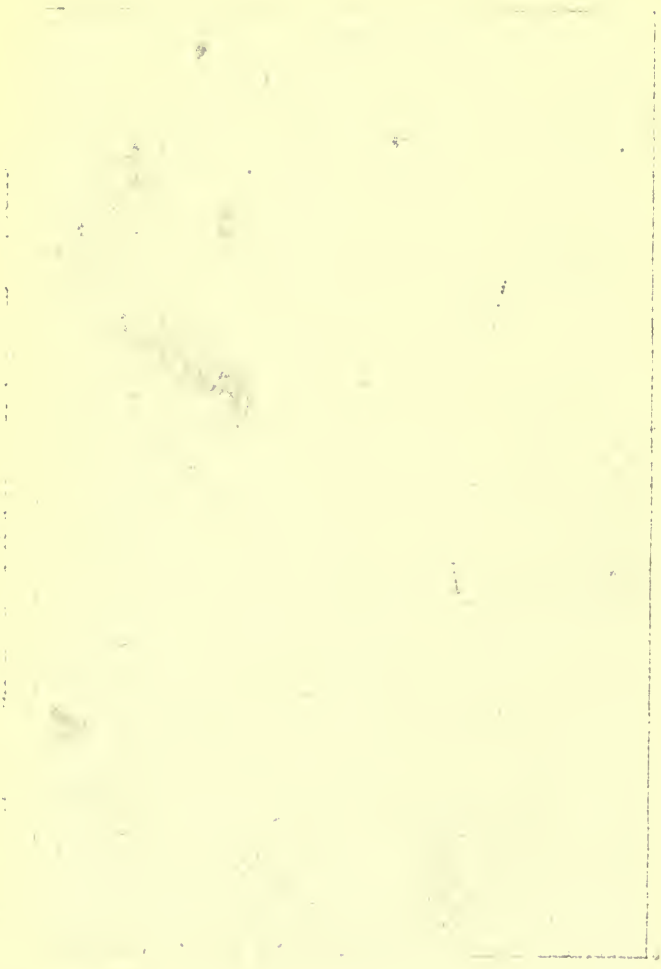

islands and they pass their whole lives in their large canoes in which are shimbecks, constructed of native mats. Here their children are born, and from here their dead are cast into the river as a substitute for burial. By extensive enquiry amongst these people, I established the truth of these statements, and I found them to be a cunning and keenwitted people in which the commercial instinct is very highly developed. They go trading from one village to another, mainly in the produce of their plantations and of their fishing, but also to a certain extent in any commodity which comes their way. They are the Bedouins of the river, and it is from them that Badjoko receives his principal supplies of food-stuffs and all native produce in which he trades. As may be expected of a people living such a life, these canoe-dwellers are not industrious in the ordinary sense of the word, nor have their arts or their industries developed very far, except in the directions necessitated or connected with their immediate calling as itinerant peddlers. Thus, while themselves innocent of clothing or even of tattooage or staining, their paddles are beautifully carved and ornamented with bands and knobs of brass which give them a very showy appearance. Similarly, whilst keen traders and clever bargainers, they are thriftless and improvident, have no social organisation and no desire to better themselves in the scale of existence.

36. *Arabise and Aborigine.*—As one nears Stanleyville, the influence of the former Arab occupation becomes more and more plainly marked. The raw natives, still Mongo for the most part, exist in considerable numbers along the banks of the river, but immediately one moves inland, especially on the South bank and above Stanleyville, one finds the Bakumu, Wagenia, and Bakusu tribes, who have established themselves in the whole of the Eastern part of the State and brought with them their Mohammedan religion, their Arab dress and general civilisation. The contrast is nowhere more plainly marked than immediately about Stanleyville itself. Here one finds a large and thriving township in every sense of the word Arab, peopled by the imported tribes and under the general headship of a bonafide Arab. The scene might well be laid in Morocco. Within a minute's walk one comes upon a fishing village of the most primitive description, peopled by naked savages and composed of little huts about five feet high, which are ranged round the three sides of each of a series of oblongs, closed by a rude barricade on the fourth side, where they give on to a straggling ill-kept

native roadway. From this road one has the impression of looking through the bars of a cage at wild animals in a menagerie. Whilst in almost daily contract with the white man, and in as close touch with him as their Arabised neighbours, who allow no opportunity to slip of making money out of him, these primitive people are as timid as the raw forest tribes, and retreat like wild animals from the large space in front of their hovels into the little huts themselves, on the approach of a stranger, whether an Arabised black or a white man. Up to the present it has been found impossible to reach them with a view to their betterment by any of the ordinary means of government. But a small boy, a native pupil of Mr. Stapleton's, the Baptist missionary at Yakusu, has at last accomplished that which Government officials and white missionaries alike have been powerless to achieve; he has awakened in this people a desire to improve themselves; and daily I saw the boy inside one of the enclosures sitting surrounded by its entire inhabitants, while he taught them, children and adults alike, to read and reckon from first primers. It would be difficult to arrive at the exact age of this little reformer, but I do not think he could have been more than eight years of age himself. It ought to be mentioned that he is no solitary instance of this kind of thing, for I found another small native, again a pupil of Mr. Stapleton's mission, carrying knowledgment and enlightenment in the same way to another village at which I touched, close to the mouth of the Lomami.

Forest of Ituri.

37. *The Natives generally.*—Arab influence extends all through the forest of the Ituri. The aboriginal population seems to have been almost wholly displaced. In the course of a long month's march, one may easily escape seeing more than perhaps two or three villages of the indigenous people, who, like all forest people, are a feeble and backward race, easily displaced by hardier and more intelligent peoples, and there is no doubt that, as the State officials frequently allege, the Arabised tribes make use of their supremacy to exploit and impose upon the aborigines. I stayed in two or three villages of the latter, as well as in many villages of the Arabised tribes. The villages of the true natives were dirty, ill-kept, ill-constructed, the natives themselves timid and at the same time grasping, feeble both of intellect and of physique, short of

stature, and revelling in a most repulsive tattooage, and the most eccentric garishness in personal ornament and attire. It is here that mutilation of the lips of women is practised most extensively, some having the upper, and some both upper and lower lips extended by means of an ivory disk let into the flesh to form a kind of beak, and others again drawing the nether lip down by means of a large crystal, until it hangs below the chin. Most of the indigenous tribes are good huntsmen, never leaving their huts without their little bows and exquisitely-made arrows, which they use with extraordinary rapidity and considerable skill. In many parts their huts are little better than leaf shelters, grouped together into villages of varying sizes, but, as a rule, exceedingly small compared with villages of the Arabised population. Plantations are almost wholly non-existent, or consist of ill-kept, overgrown patches of bananas and cassava only. Between Bafwaboli and Bafwasendi there exists an indigenous people of a slightly higher type, whose villages are somewhat better constructed, more permanent in character, and more cleanly in appearance, whilst the plantations surrounding them are at least up to the standard of those on the middle river.

38. *The Arabised Tribes.* — The Arabised villages form a startling contrast; exceedingly well-built in an Arab style of architecture, the large white houses with their deep verandahs supported on white pillars are scrupulously clean, and kept in a condition of perfect repair. All the better houses have a central open hallway with raised daïs round it, on which mats are spread, giving the whole a typical Moorish air. These villages are invariably well placed in carefully-selected sites on the crest of hills within easy access of a mountain stream. They are large in extent, symmetrically planned with streets crossing one another at right angles, and surrounded by the most extensive and most varied plantations that I saw anywhere in Central Africa. As a rule, standing in the principal street one looks over often some hundreds of acres of carefully-tended crops, which stretch away in all directions down the slopes of the hills and across the surrounding valleys. Maize, rice, bananas of many kinds, plantain, cassava, colocassia, yams, Madagascar potatoes, European potatoes, tobacco,

coffee, millet, canary seed, and in some few cases wheat, are all scientifically and assiduously cultivated with every sign of agricultural skill. The work of clearing such large tracts in the heart of this, perhaps the densest forest in the world, and of tilling and keeping in order the ground with the primitive appliances at the disposal of the population, gives irrefutable testimony of the energy of the Arabised tribes. The people are hospitable to an embarrassing extent, welcoming the stranger at a considerable distance from their village, loading him with gifts of live stock and farm produce generally, and placing the best house in the village at his disposal. The chiefs and notables are intelligent and well-conducted. They all read and write, and are well versed in the Koran, of which, as well as of other Mohammedan devotional books, there are always copies in each village. I engaged several of the Arab chiefs I met in conversation, and was astonished to find that not only had they a good rudimentary knowledge of general geography, being able to point out without the smallest hesitation the general direction of Mecca, of Europe, and of Zanzibar, but were also perfectly capable of understanding the details of the maps I had with me. They were in fact, in a primitive way, a civilised people; and in all the larger villages, Mohammedan schools are established, attendance at which is compulsory on all the children, by order of the chiefs and notables. The men are all dressed in the traditional Mohammedan robes of spotless cleanliness, and are most devout and rigorous in their observations of the formalities of their religion. Their women-kind are neither veiled nor cloistered, but are all well clothed in a simple robe of bright colours from the shoulder to the foot, and are treated with a degree of respect and consideration far ahead of that prevailing amongst Africans generally. The largest Arabised village of all that I came across was that in the neighbourhood of Avakubi, to the immediate west of which extends what is really a large Mohammedan town, composed of a group of so-called villages having an aggregate population of several thousands.

39. *Mombouti Dwarfs.*—In addition to these two classes of population in the eastern part of the State, there is also a large sprinkling of the old soldier class, identical with that which I found along the banks of the Itimbri, though in the character of their villages, the spotless cleanliness of their population, and the extent

ARABISED WOMEN DANCING AT AVAKUBI VILLAGE.

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and excellence of their plantations, the Arab influence is clearly visible. Between Bafwasendi and Avakubi, and again east of Avakubi, there is also a few members of two dwarf tribes; the more important and best known of these is the Mombouti. They are of much the higher order, and are the pigmies referred to by many travellers. The men are 4 feet 2 inches to 4 feet 6 inches in height, have large brachyocephalous heads, and long black beards, which grow freely and make them remarkable in a continent where almost all the population is clean shaven. The women are considerably shorter than the men. Both sexes run practically naked. There is little or no tatooage amongst them, and practically no attempt at personal adornment or ornament of any kind. They live sequestered in the depths of the forest in small groups of tiny huts, usually hemispherical in shape, but sometimes of the ordinary span-roofed type. They have no plantations whatever, are born hunters, and are energetic and skilful in the trapping and killing of game of all kinds. They are an amusing, laughter-loving, mischievous people, whose great amusement it is to make raids on the plantations of neighbouring and more powerful people, and even those round the white settlements are not immune from their devastation. They will descend on a banana grove and strip it bare in a single night, invariably leaving, however, portions of the carcasses of antelopes or any other game which they have recently killed, by way of payment; and when caught red-handed in these raids they argue that their procedure is the same as that of the white man, who makes no plantations himself, but takes produce from those who have plantations, and gives them other things in exchange. Desultory attempts have been made to civilise this people, but without the smallest success. Owing to the ease and rapidity with which they move their habitations as soon as their locality is discovered, it is impossible to tax them or to get into close touch with them; whilst those who have been brought into white stations to perform their share of the contract labour, have been so miserable and have pined so rapidly in the unaccustomed restraint of ordinary modes of life that it has always been found necessary to release them again.

40. *A More Primitive Type.*—I was fortunate in seeing one group of the lowest type of pigmy. There is some dispute as to

whether these are a separate race from the various tribes of dwarfs already referred to, or whether they are merely a debased type of the same race as the Bua or Mombouti. I came upon them in a dense thicket of undergrowth through which I forced my way tracking an antelope. Some tiny arrows fell close to me, and looking up I saw in the trees what at first I took to be a group of chimpanzees, scuttling about and springing from branch to branch, and then stopping in curiosity to look at the intruder in exactly the same way as do the larger apes. It was difficult accurately to guage their proportions, but I should doubt if any of them were over 3 feet 6 inches or at most 3 feet 9 inches in height. They appeared to have the same exaggerated length of arm as the simians. They were absolutely unclothed, had features as flat and foreheads as receding as the chimpanzee, and, but for their use of the bow and arrow, would have seemed more nearly allied to the apes than to the human race. They showed their teeth and jabbered in exactly the same fashion as do apes, and it would be difficult to imagine that the noises they emitted could possibly form any regular intelligent language; whereas, by the way, the Mombouti have a clearly defined though primitive means of communication. I much regretted not to have had an opportunity of making a closer examination of this settlement. Monsieur Wieslet at Avakubi, who also has exactly in the same way broken in upon a group of this strange little people, assured me that he had seen their habitations, which consist, he said, of shelters in the forks of the trees made by plaiting the smaller boughs together. In the hurried glance that I had of them, my attention was more occupied by the people themselves than the trees in which they were moving, and it did not occur to me to look for any shelters, so I cannot say definitely that they do not exist, but I certainly have no recollection of noticing them. I also received from another white man in the neighbourhood a positive assurance that he had seen what he described as a group of chimpanzees who retreated into just such shelters as Monsieur Wieslet described. He maintained that they were chimpanzees and not pigmies, but I venture to think he must have been mistaken in this. This mode of living is further borne out by the fact that amongst many of the native peoples the pigmies are referred to as "our brothers who live in the trees"; though the same expression also includes the larger apes.

VILLAGE NEAR BANZYVILLE, UPPER UBANGHI.

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The Aruwimi.

41. *The Mobili.*—The peoples of the Aruwimi and of the Ituri have so often been described and classified by other travellers, that, interesting and distinctive as they are, it is unnecessary to speak of them in any great detail. They vary enormously amongst themselves, as the population between Irumu and Basoko is made up of an enormous number of entirely distinct and separate tribes, whose character, development, mode of life, dress, architecture, habits, and customs vary infinitely. Some of them, such as the Mobili in the neighbourhood of Bomili, are a backward forest people of repulsive appearance and extraordinary timidity and indolence, who are much oppressed by their more virile neighbours. In times past they were subject to continual raids by the surrounding peoples, and were carried off into captivity whole villages at a time, so that over a very wide area one finds their descendants in slavery amongst other people at the present day. The characteristic architecture of this people is of the span-roofed type, and their huts are the most diminutive of any that I saw, with the exception of those of the Mombouti. In many cases the apex of the roof was not more than 4 feet 9 inches high, whilst at the eaves their height would be about 3 feet or less.

42. *The Lohali.*—As one descends the river, these little span-roofed huts, clustered together in untidy groups and peopled by a dirty and indolent race, suddenly give way to the extraordinary and beautiful structures of the Panga division of the Lohali. This people, artistic, and for natives in this part energetic, build themselves the most picturesque villages that I saw during my journey, and deck themselves out with considerable taste in the most ornate of native apparel. The principal form of structure consists of a small square four-walled hut, as a rule, almost exactly six feet square in the interior. The walls are about four feet in height, but it is the roofs that are the characteristic feature of this part. They are carried to an enormous height like four-sided squares, and being constructed wholly of leaves stuck horizontally against the basket-work frame, have the appearance of huge clipped yew trees. The Panga tribe build these in groups and clusters round little squares, varying them with small span-roofed huts and span-roofed shelters supported on highly-polished substantial wooden

pillars. The squares or courtyards are enclosed by leaf screens stretching from hut to hut, and the entrance to each hut is not from the courtyard but from the back, access to which is given by doors in the leaf screens. The courtyards themselves are kept scrupulously clean and well brushed, and contain nothing but the seats of the occupants of the huts, and in the centre the smouldering logs which form the source of fire. All the domestic litter and domestic operations are confined to the back behind the leaf screens. In these villages trees are planted, or at anyrate left standing, so as to form shelter at intervals in the courtyards and along the connecting streets from one courtyard to another. This people is exceedingly skilful in the making of native cloth from bark, and of hand-made string and thread, with which they ornament it in elaborate designs. Most of the personal ornaments of the women are of white metal instead of brass or copper. They wear little clothing other than a cincture with a tail of plaited string behind. The men, however, wear voluminous loin-cloths of native manufacture, various leopard-skin belts and shoulder straps for carrying their knives, which are of elaborate design and enclosed in fanciful sheaths, and over their heads wear either a well-oiled close-fitting skull cap of native-made cloth of a softness and delicacy approaching that of China silk, or else a wig made of monkey skin, often displaying wonderful skill in the arrangement of partings, and in fit. Beneath the skull cap or the wig, as the case may be, the hair is plastered with oil and clay to a firm solid mass. The chiefs and notables wear high mitre-shaped hats of the finest basket work painted with the traditional design of eight red diamonds. As one approaches Banalya one comes to another division of this tribe who also construct the quadrilateral spire-shaped huts of the Panga, but who arrange them in long severe lines, the length of straight streets devoid of trees or other shade, and this difference is the keynote of the difference in the character of the two tribes. For whilst the essential feature of the Panga is picturesqueness, that of the Banalya is sombre dulness. The village abutting on Banalya is interesting for the fact that its chief Lupululu is he, who alone of the chiefs of the Aruwimi, extended a friendly hand to the late Sir H. M. Stanley, and piloted him up the river.

ARAB HOUSES OF ARABISED TRIBES AT AVAKUBI, ON THE UPPER ARUWIMI.

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43. *Bazoko.*—Below Banalya the character of the people entirely changes. They are principally degenerate Bazoko, and form a sulky, ill-disposed race, who give constant trouble, and amongst whom I found travelling exceedingly difficult. Two of the tribes I found at war with one another; and at many parts I had practically to drift down the river for want of paddlers, as it was quite impossible to hire them. More than once when I had hired paddlers they took the first opportunity of deserting, and in one case when, in order to avoid this, I abstained from putting in at the shore at any point during several hours, they refused point blank in the middle of strong rapids to do a single hand's turn of work. This people was, without exception, the most difficult and intractable of any whom I met, and I was not sorry to leave their country.

The Abir Territories.

44. *The Ngombe.*—The portion of the Congo Independent State lying between the Congo on the north and west, the Lomami on the east, and the Ruki or Tchoppo on the south, is peopled principally by two tribes: the Mongo, by far the larger and more important, who inhabit the whole district south of the Lopori, and the Ngombe, who inhabit the central and eastern part of the strip of territory lying between the Lopori and the Congo. Although both these tribes are distinctly forest peoples, with all their characteristics, there are vast differences between the two. The Ngombe, by far the more highly developed of the two, are a repulsively ugly race, whose tatooage consists of raising fleshy excrescencies all over the face and person without any definite design. They are a turbulent, warlike race, and have never yet been brought wholly into subjection by the State authorities. There is, in fact, an almost constant state of warfare prevailing on a small scale between the European and black along the ill-defined southern bank of the Congo at the part where it curves farthest towards the north, and on the northern bank of the Lopori it is only at one or two points that the white man has been able to establish himself with anything approaching security. The Ngombe are reported to be a peculiarly savage and cruel people who make continual inroads on the weaker and less advanced tribe to the south of them, and also from time to time cross the Congo and

make raids on the natives to the north. They are also said to be extremely treacherous, and their country is practically closed to the white traveller on account of the danger which is said to exist in traversing it. This race is essentially a hunting people, skilled in all the arts and devices of the chase, and very clever in the trapping and slaying of the elephants and other big game which abound in this region. I visited one of their villages near the only white man's station of any importance in their country, Boselikolo, and was fortunate in seeing the inhabitants preparing to start for one of their hunting excursions. They were armed with large and well-made nets constructed of native string, with cunningly-fashioned spears and harpoons, and with small bows and arrows of exquisite workmanship. Altogether it struck me that they had reached a very high stage in the manufacture of all implements of the chase. All the villages of this people which I saw were constructed on much the same pattern, being composed of dirty, dishevelled-looking span-roofed huts, built continuously along filthily dirty streets, and having little or no plantation about them. The villages themselves are enclosed by palisades, and by elaborate gates of heavy beams so constructed as to fall and crush any undesirable intruder, whether a savage animal or a human being; a precaution which is very necessary in a part infested by leopards. Their domestic utensils and appliances are primitive and scanty, and their agricultural implements consist solely of knives and machetes of the rudest description. Their men-folk wear nothing but a loin cloth, and their womenkind run practically naked and are almost wholly destitute of any form of personal adornment or ornament. I was well received in those villages which I visited, but without any signs of enthusiasm or any attempt at a friendly welcome. There was no giving of presents nor reception by the chief, and one felt that one's presence was suffered rather than enjoyed, and on the earnest representations of my native following I abstained from spending a night within easy access of any of their habitations, a precaution which would seem to have been necessary judging from the accounts of white men who have been fallen upon in the night when enjoying the hospitality of this turbulent and dirty people.

45. *The Mongo* is a group composed of many sub-tribes, and they are said, and from what I saw I can well believe the statement, to have degenerated greatly in some parts since the advent of the

VILLAGE IN ABIR COUNTRY.

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white man in their neighbourhood. East of the Launoa, a tributary of the Lopori, the Mongo, perhaps on account of their contact with the Arabised tribes along the Lomami, appear to have advanced to a much higher state of civilisation than in other parts. Here one finds them well clothed in native fashion, .bearing arms, and skilful in the manufacture of the implements of the chase and of agriculture, whilst their domestic utensils and appliances are ornate and elaborate. They build themselves large villages with span-roofed houses with verandahs, detached from one another and set on each side of wide, well-kept streets. The villages are placed, as a rule, on the summit of hills commanding extensive views of the surrounding forest, and consequently in evidence from a long distance. The plantations about them are extensive and well kept up. The people themselves are of a cheery, humorous disposition. In this part the white man is received with almost as much enthusiasm and evidence of delight as amongst the Banza and other northern races. The chief and his notables meet the visitor at á considerable distance from the village and escort him personally to the guest-house, whilst his entry into the confines of the village itself is greeted with the beating of tom-toms and the cooee-ing of the general population, who crowd round with continued cheering, often until a late hour at night. The bearers from the previous village are greeted with intense delight by the whole population, and on the following morning the chief provides the white man with fresh bearers and an escort of notables to convey him to the next stopping point on his road. All those who are thus selected to do the white man service come eagerly running forward dancing, singing, shouting, and clapping their hands, this last and the congratulatory hand-shaking being peculiarities of this people, of whom the traveller carries away the pleasantest recollections.

46. *Degenerate Section of the Mongo.*—Immediately before reaching the Launoa, however, a marked difference is noticeable in the race. The villages are smaller and not so well kept, and the population shows evidences of timidity which contrast strangely with its somewhat embarrassing attention immediately to the east, and at last one reaches a part where on the approach of a white man, so far from his being received with joy, his presence

is the signal for the whole population to flee from their village. Bearers are difficult, nay, almost impossible, to obtain, and one experiences for the first time the sensation of belonging to a hated race. I visited and stayed in many of the villages in this part, employed the natives largely as bearers and paddlers, and I found them in all respects a typical backward forest race, dirty, indolent, timid, and sulky, desiring only to be left alone to lead a slug-like existence, and depending on the bounty of nature to supply their scanty wants with the least possible exertion on their part. They seem wholly devoid of anything approaching the religious idea, and are of the very lowest order intellectually. Their language, however, is, curiously enough, a highly-developed one, and of considerable beauty, but whilst the vocabulary is a large one, the range of ideas which it covers is extraordinarily limited, the result, no doubt, of a type of mind which revolves continually round a small cycle of primitive ideas. Further on, along the Lopori itself, and in all the country to the south of it along the Maringa, the Yekokora, and the Bolombo, its principal southern tributaries, and in the country lying between them, one scarcely sees a village worthy of the name. Here and there one finds evidences of former considerable settlements with ruins of deserted huts and plantations that have fallen out of cultivation, and are being gradually absorbed by the all-devouring tropical bush. Occasionally one or two huts or one end of these former settlements, will still be occupied by a surly, silent, depressed people, who neither greet one nor flee before one, but accept one's presence with a dull indifference. But, for the most part, the population, which seems small, occupies nothing more substantial than the rudest leaf shelters, isolated in groups of two or three in the thickest and least accessible parts of the densest forest. Rarely does one see a sign of native habitation along the river banks, and such as one does light upon consist often of nothing more than a couple of palm branches lashed together to form a shelter. Arts, crafts, industries, there appear to be none; agriculture is at its very lowest ebb; stock of any kind is absolutely non-existent, and during my journey in this part of the country I scarcely saw even a fowl, and found it almost impossible to procure an egg. Naturally among such a people clothing is of the scantiest, and ornament unknown. The spears, knives, and shields, and other implements, which one finds to be exceedingly rare, are crude in

BANALYA, UPPER ARUWIMI.

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design and clumsy in structure. Physically the race is degenerate, being extremely small of stature and meagre of build. The individuals who compose the population fall an easy prey to every kind of disease, and on two successive occasions I had the painful experience, in the one case of a paddler, and in the other case of a porter, commencing the day to all appearances in health, and dying of pneumonia before nightfall. The rapidity with which these people fall ill and die is almost incredible to anyone who has not been brought into personal contact with them. They make no attempt to resist disease, and accept death with a fatalism which goes far to encourage it. Almost the only similarities traceable between the people east of the Launoa and those in the basin of the Lopori were the habit among both of the men to strip stark naked in carrying or paddling—the only cases of this which I saw—and the hand-shaking ceremonies, the elaborate "grips" being the same in both cases, and bearing a curious resemblance to those common amongst Freemasons in this country.

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This deals with all the peoples with whom I was brought into contact who are not already intimately known to all acquainted with Africa.

III. THE GOVERNMENTAL SYSTEM.

PRINCIPLES OF ORGANISATION.*

47. *The Constitution.* — The Congo Independent State is, of course, in fact as well as in name, an absolute autocracy. The Sovereign is the sole source of legislative power, as he is the chief and only executive. At the same time the present Sovereign has of his own free will and accord delegated certain functions to nominated officials, and in this way a recognised constitution has sprung into existence, though it exists only at the will of the Sovereign in the exercise of his unfettered power. How far this may be in accordance with the ideas and wishes of the Berlin Conference, it is not for me to discuss. I merely relate the fact as I find it.

48. *Central Government.* — The Sovereign communicates his will to the administrative functionaries of the State through the medium of his Chief Secretary of State, who is also the sole legislative agent, enactments being made "by and with the advice of our Secretary of State." This Secretary of State is by Royal enactment the head of the Central Government, and is charged with the carrying out of the decrees of the Sovereign, and countersigns his enactments. The Secretary of State is assisted in the first place by a Cabinet with a Chef de Cabinet or Premier at its head, and secondly by a Department of Secretary of State, discharged by four functionaries — the Treasurer-General, the Secretary-General for Foreign Affairs, the Secretary-General for Finance, and the Secretary-General for the Interior.

49. *Department of Secretary of State.*—The Cabinet of the Secretary of State deals with the organisation and the functions of the different services of the Central Government, and controls the appointment of officials in these services. The Treasurer-General is responsible for the general account of the receipts and disbursements of the State, its public debt, and the administration of the treasury. The functions of the Secretary-General for Foreign Affairs comprise international relations, the diplomatic and consular

*Certain changes have been made in the Governmental system and in the administrative machine since my return.—M.

PANGA, UPPER ARUWIMI.

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services, extradition, civil status and probate, &c., of foreigners; questions arising in connection with foreign shipping, commercial associations, and immigration; the postal and telegraphic services; the judiciary; civil, commercial, and colonial law; philanthropy, religion, and public education. The duties of the Secretary-General for Finance are concerned with the general budget of the State; the devising and levying of all kinds of taxes; commercial and monetary statistics and returns; internal and external trade; the fiscal system; the system of land registry and tenure; crown lands, railway concessions, mines. The Secretary-General for the Interior is occupied with the administration and policing of the various provinces of the State; the native army, arms, and munitions; the State maritime service and transport service; scientific collections; public health and medical service; means of communication; rationing and general service; public works; agriculture and plantations; construction, upkeep, and furnishing of the buildings of the State; commercial exploitation of the State forests. Each of these Secretaries-General and the Treasurer-General controls a group of departments, each having its departmental chief and secretaries regulating the discharge of individual duties, and this organisation composes what is officially known as the hierarchy of the Government.

50. *The Governor-General* is appointed directly by the Sovereign for life or during the pleasure of the Sovereign, and is nominally head of the local government; although in the case of the present occupant of the office it has been his custom to reside principally in Europe and to act chiefly as an intermediary between the local administration in Africa and the Sovereign in Belgium. His office is therefore at the present time somewhat anomalous.

51. *Local Government: Vice-Governor-General.*—The active direction of the local administration in Africa is in the hands of a Vice-Governor-General, also appointed directly by the Sovereign, and resident in the capital of the State at Boma. This official ranks personally with the Secretaries-General, but functionally is subservient to them. His appointment is usually for one year. It is frequently prolonged, and past holders of the office continue to retain the personal rank of Vice-Governor-General even after they have ceased to discharge the duties attaching to this office.

Like most ranks in the system of government of the Congo Independent State, it is a purely personal rank, rather than a functional one, and the ex-Vice-Governors-General, although having the same precedence and privileges as the Vice-Governor-General in office for the time being, may and do as a rule act simply as Inspectors of State. The Vice-Governor-General acts and communicates with his subordinates through the medium of the State Secretary at Boma.

52. *Inspectors of State.*—The Inspectors of State are a body of higher functionaries performing duties of general inspection, whether as travelling inspectors through the State as a whole, or as supervisors of particular departments. Besides the ex-Vice-Governors-General the body of Inspectors of State is recruited from those officials who have in the ordinary course been promoted to this grade for long or distinguished service, or else by appointment on distinct commissions by the Sovereign himself. For instance, recently Signor Armani, an Italian diplomatist, was selected by the Sovereign to conduct an inspection of the State, and to report on certain troubles which from time to time arose in connection with the employment of Italian officers. Similarly, Major Warnant, of the Belgian Headquarters' Staff, was given a Royal Commission to inspect and report upon the native army and the military system of the State, and has since been appointed Commander-in-Chief of the native army, whilst retaining his personal rank as Inspector of State.

53. *Consultative Council.*—The local administration in Africa is divided into various departments, consisting of the Departments of Finance, of Forestry, of Agriculture, of Transport, of Posts and Telegraphs, of Army, of Marine, of Land Registry, of Medical Service, of Civil Status, and of Politics, or native affairs. At the head of each of these departments is a minister responsible for the conduct of the department and all its detailed management. The Inspectors of State, the Minister of Justice, the State Secretary, and the Directors of the foregoing various departments of Government form a consultative body to advise the Vice-Governor General, without, however, having any actual control over or restraint on his executive power. "The Governor-General (i.e., the Vice-Governor-General) shall take the opinion of this Council on all

measures of general interest which he may have occasion to put in force or to propose to the Central Government. He is not, however, obliged to conform to this advice" (Decree 10th October, 1894, section 10).

54. *Judicial System.*—From the very fountainhead downwards the political administration is separated from the judiciary, the Minister of Justice ranking with the Vice-Governor-General, and being answerable not to him but direct to his Sovereign in Europe. This complete separation of the ordinary administration from the justiciary, although familiar to British ideas, is strange and unusual to those accustomed to the Continental system, and is a noteworthy example of the way in which the Government of the Congo Independent State is compounded of the elemental features of very diverse recognised systems.

55. *Quasi-Official Departments.*—Besides the regularly-constituted Government departments, there are many undertakings of a semi-state character which are carried on through the medium of less regularly constituted offices, working in close touch with and under the chief control of the administrative; such, for instance, is the so-called Railway company of the Great Lakes, which, to all intents and purposes, is a State undertaking, but is carried on under the form of a company. There is also a close link between the Administrative and the various Catholic Missionary establishments and certain philanthropic institutions, such as the Colonie Scolaire at Boma. The detail, duties, and organisation of all these various departments is fully elaborated in the Decree of the 10th October, 1894, quoted above. ("Codes Congolais," by Alphonse Lycops, 1900.)

The Administrative Machine.

56. *Executive Departments.*—All the usual departments of colonial administration are present, with the exception of that generally known on the Continent as "Ponts et Chaussés," or Ministry of Roads and Bridges, which, curiously enough, is wholly absent. The reason for this omission is probably to be found in the fact that the whole state is so rich in navigable waterways that in the first opening up of the country no need arose for the creation of artificial means of communication; but now that

throughout its whole area all river districts are thoroughly open and organised, the need will no doubt be felt of supplying cross communications to traverse the internal districts, and bring them into touch with the main waterways. On the other hand, many administrative departments not usually found in so young a country are very highly developed.

57. *Judiciary.*—The machinery of justice is entirely under the independent control of the Minister of Justice at Boma. It consists in the first place of a well-staffed high court, from which appeal lies to a supreme court, with independent judges of appeal, who sit as a rule three at a time to hear appeals. The judges of the high court sit singly, and the fact that the high court is posted at Boma, on the lower Congo, separated by the cataracts from all the centres of activity in the State, undoubtedly leads to a great delay in the course of justice, and to a very great inconvenience. There was some talk amongst officials of a movement to establish a high court of justice either at Coquilhatville, at the centre of the Middle River, or else to separate it into two, and to have one part sit at Stanleyville, on the Upper River, and the other at Leopoldville, on the Lower River. Either would undoubtedly be a great improvement on the present method. The judges of the high court and the court of appeal are lawyers of high standing and great reputation, of whom several are Italian, and so far as from personal contact I could judge, men of the utmost impartiality. In addition to the high court there are, both at Boma and at several of the principal centres throughout the State, "Juges Substituts," whose functions correspond roughly to those of the examining magistrates in the French system. They have executive power only in the simplest cases: in all other matters they are merely substitutes for the Crown prosecutor (Procureur Général), though at the court at Stanleyville the judge substitute has definite judicial functions, and sits daily in court, with an assessor and a clerk of the court, to try all cases except those of the highest importance or criminally affecting a white man. At Boma and at Stanleyville there are also State advocates, white barristers who are sent out from Brussels to act as prosecutors in Crown cases. From amongst these the judge substitutes are chosen, and as many of them are quite young men, newly qualified without any previous experience of natives, or

indeed of legal administration, it follows that many of the judge substitutes are men of insufficient experience and insufficient strength of character to discharge the very important duties which devolve on them in the absence of judges of the high court in the interior of Africa. The administration of justice at Stanleyville has, I believe, been uniformly good, owing to the fact that the judge substitutes selected both to serve in the regular court at Stanleyville, and also for travelling on circuit through the eastern provinces, have been chosen with care from amongst the most experienced of those who have already served as judge substitutes in other parts, or have been specially sent out from amongst men of experience in legal administration in Brussels. Ordinary administrative officials can act magisterially in matters of simple police in their own district. They also act as officials of civil status or general registry, and through the medium of the list prepared for the purposes of the imposts, the general registry of the State is rapidly being brought to a very complete condition.

58. *Prisons.*—Under the control of the Department of Justice also come the prisons of the State. The principal establishments of this kind are at Boma, Basoko, and Stanleyville, the first two being by far the largest and most important. At Boma the prison consists of a large compound enclosed in a fence in a salubrious position on the slope of the plateau. In this compound are several buildings—the barracks of the police, or warders, of the usual native bamboo and palm construction; the bungalow of the director of the prison; the comfortable row of native houses for persons under remand; the kitchens and offices, also of the native pattern; a small isolated house that does duty as an infirmary; and last, but most important, the prison proper. This is a huge galvanised iron building, which is divided into two parts, one consisting of a number of small but well-found double rooms reserved for Europeans. The other part of the building is an enormous hall, divided by partitions into compartments of varying size to accommodate from two to twenty native prisoners each. The whole is scrupulously clean, with the stern, cold, shining cleanliness of an English prison. Each cell or room is provided with a kind of reversible plank bed, which tips up on end during the day time. Having visited every metropolitan prison, and many provincial

ones, I can testify that the blacks at Boma are at least as well off in prison as are our own people in Wormwood Scrubbs or Pentonville. They are chained in pairs, it is true, but the chain is merely a thing of about the weight of a light dog-chain, and is of great length, so that carrying is not nearly so great a hardship as is endured by the members of every chain gang in the United States or in Europe. The prisons at Basoko and Stanleyville are in appearance more imposing than that of Boma, consisting in both cases of large embattled, fort-like structures of brick and stone. I went over both, and spent some little time examining the provisions made for the prisoners, and so far as I could judge they were well cared for, and certainly well fed. During the day time they are taken out in chain gangs to do work about the station, and are given an opportunity, night and morning, to bathe in the river. The prisons themselves are, owing to the solidity with which they are built, cool in even the hottest weather, while the scrupulous cleanliness with which they are maintained, and the simplicity of their appointments, is the guarantee of their sanitary condition. The prison at Stanleyville has a stone courtyard planted with shady trees, round which runs a series of verandahs from which the wards or dormitories open. During the large amount of leisure which prisoners are given they lie about on these verandahs, in apparently the utmost comfort, and they are never chained except when actually at work outside, and even on these occasions the chains are often removed in order to give them greater freedom for performing their tasks. In addition to the regular civil prisons there are, at almost all Government posts, houses set apart for the retention of military prisoners, and for employees of the State undergoing temporary punishment. In the majority of cases these prison houses are well looked after and their occupants humanely treated. This, however, is not the case with the so-called hostage houses existing in the territories of the larger concession companies which are fully described later, and which are in no way connected with the judicial or with the prison system of the State.

59. *Philanthropic Work.*—Included in the functions of the department of justice is the general regulation of missions and the control of the State-supported philanthropic institutions, the most important of which is the Colonie Scolaire at Boma, an

orphanage on a large scale for the education and maintenance of native or mulatto children who have been either deserted by their parents or deprived of them by warlike operations. This establishment, which is a large one, is admirably planned for its purpose, is well maintained, and scrupulously clean. The teaching staff is principally recruited from the Catholic missions, and there is no doubt that the system of education in force must be an effective one judging from the results obtained. Almost all the children in the Colony both read and write, most of them speak French fluently, and a large proportion, in addition to having learned some useful trade or art, are fairly capable musicians, and from amongst these an orchestra is selected, which performs very creditably. Most of the boys in this institution are destined for the native army. Instead of entering the ranks in the ordinary way, they pass an examination which entitles them to join as non-commissioned officers. They spend six months in the military school at Boma, learning the actual technical side of their work, and thereafter become exceedingly useful subordinate officers. Throughout the Congo I met many of the pupils of this institution, and never had any difficulty in recognising them owing to their superior intelligence and general air of civilisation. There is no doubt that the institution is doing good work, and it is only to be regretted that there are not similar establishments at other points in the State. Most of the missions, both Catholic and Protestant, do a large amount of educational work. Indeed, it is fortunately true that the energies of most of them are devoted to raising the general status of the native rather than to imbuing him with merely dogmatic teaching, which in his primitive state he is ill-adapted to receive. Mention is made elsewhere of the excellent work which is being done in this direction by several of the Protestant missions, more particularly Mr. Stapleton's mission near Stanley Falls. The Catholic missions, which are on a far more elaborate and extensive scale than any of the Protestant missions, do on the whole perhaps more proselytising work, pure and simple, though much of their educational and civilising work is also excellent. They are to a certain extent State-supported, and as a consequence are better found in the actual structures of their establishments than the Protestant missions. Partly for this reason, and partly owing to the difference of policy adopted, they do not do so large an

amount of purely technical teaching, and at several even of the largest I found no provision made for the teaching of trades such as building, brick-laying, carpentering and joinery, schools of which are in a flourishing state in almost every Protestant mission. At one time in certain districts an experimental system of compulsory education was introduced, and the missions, irrespective of denomination, were charged with the duty of teaching the juvenile population, who were compelled to attend their schools. This system was enforced for a short time in almost every district immediately surrounding any mission station. Unfortunately, owing to the disagreement which arose between some of the Protestant missions and the State authorities, the whole of the former, rather than be under any apparent obligation to the State, refused to accept the benefit they derived from this system, with the consequence that it has fallen into abeyance, and many of the mission schools, which formerly were in a flourishing state, have now few pupils. So much good was undoubtedly being done by the obligation imposed on the natives surrounding the mission station to send their children to be taught, that one of the greatest benefits that could be conferred upon the indigenous population of the Congo at the present time would be to get over the difficulty between the Protestant missions and the State with a view to re-introducing the compulsory education system. The Catholic missions still receive the benefit locally of this system, but so much of the pupils' time is occupied by religious observances that there is not the same opportunity for effective education as appears to have been the case in the Protestant missions.

60. *Civil Register.*—The department of *état civil* is being organised and developed with extraordinary speed for a savage country. "Legitimate," *i.e.*, monogamous, marriage is a recognised institution, carrying with it the same advantages and obligations as in a civilised community. Most people—even several of the missionaries I met—are of opinion that in this direction the State is advancing perhaps too fast, as for many reasons the social condition of the native tribes is ill-adapted to so artificial a system. In a country where for want of other forms of food a mother must nurse each child for two years, it is unwise to expect a man to confine himself to one wife, and when natives do, owing

to the inducements the State offers, embrace monogamy, it is usually in form rather than in fact. The actual registry of births, deaths, and civil status is a remarkable and praiseworthy undertaking, which entails enormous work on the officials charged with its preparation. At first, owing to the use that was made of this register for the levying of the so-called taxes, the natives in some parts shewed the greatest disinclination to their names appearing on it, but, as a rule, they have come to find that with the immunity from taxation comes also the loss of all the advantages of civilisation. A man not on the register, owing to his having hidden away at the time the census of his village was taken, dare not appear in any form subsequently; with the consequence that his neighbours discover they can with impunity oppress him, steal his wives, or inflict any other injury on him without his daring to complain to the white official, for fear of its being discovered that he has wilfully avoided registering himself; and now in most parts the native raises no objection whatever to the register, and the chief, so far from resorting to every expedient to deceive the white man as to the inhabitants of his village, as was the habit until a short time ago, now in many parts eagerly assists in the work of the registry, as he looks on the unregistered subject as a source of endless trouble.

61. *Taxes and Imposts.*—The Government of the Independent State is unique in that it is carried on without any taxation in the sense in which the term is ordinarily employed. There is nothing approaching either a direct or an indirect payment by the population to defray the cost of the Government of the country. Instead, a system has been adopted which has been very severely criticised, principally by those who are completely ignorant of its true nature. It is obvious that it would be quite impossible to collect a revenue from a savage people wholly strangers to any monetary system, unless the payment were made in kind; and the general impression seems to prevail in this country that the fiscal system enforced in the Congo Independent State is a taxation in kind. Now, this is wholly at variance with the facts. The State system of raising a revenue is, briefly, founded on the principles, first, that all unoccupied lands and the produce thereof belong to the State; and secondly, that a government, whether

autocratic or communal, has an inherent right to defray its expenses by turning to advantage the property it possesses. The Government of the Independent State has granted concessions over a very small part of its territories to companies on what are practically profit-sharing leases, that is to say that the Government holds shares in the chartered companies which work these concessions, and from this source a small portion of its revenue is derived. The great majority of its revenue, however, is the result of directly operating its own lands, which, being largely forest, are enormously wealthy in wild rubber, and, in parts, in wild coffee. The taxation or imposts consist in an obligation on the part of the male adult population to work for the State, and enable it to turn its resources to profitable account. For this work the natives are paid. The work exacted is of many different kinds. A zone or secteur is assessed in proportion to its adult male population for so many soldiers, to serve in the native force; for so many regularly employed labourers to work in the State posts and State plantations; and for so many hours of casual work in rubber collecting, wooding, fishing, porterage, paddling, or food production. The State functionaries are obliged to take a census of every village in their district; a census of figures is not in itself accepted as sufficient—the lists must contain the name of every adult male who is assessable for the impost, and no man can be assessed, although there may be the strongest presumptive evidence that he exists, unless the chef de poste can furnish his name, point out his residence, and show definitely that he actually exists in the flesh. It is thus quite impossible for a village to be assessed beyond the number of its adult male inhabitants. In some districts, in order to avoid the assessment, the natives were very cunning at hiding their existence from the State officials. Districts may therefore be, and sometimes no doubt are, assessed under their just due, but they can never be assessed over it. The chiefs of each village or of each tribe are then called on to furnish their levy of soldiers and of workers, and about this there has never been the smallest difficulty. The applicants, even in the most remote parts, far exceed the numbers required. By general consent the lot of the soldiery and of the regularly employed labourers, who sign contracts for a term of years, is a happy one. The evil that is alleged to exist is in reference

to the assessment for rubber collection, transport services, and food production.*

A district, having furnished its levy of soldiers and contract workers, is "taxed" for its quota of rubber, porterage, paddlers, and wood or food. *(a)* The villages nearest the white stations are usually drawn on for transport service and for food supplies;—the riverine villages for paddlers, fish, and wood; and the interior villages for porterage, and for *chikwanga* (or cassava bread), bananas, game, and other products of agriculture or the chase. *(b)* The more distant villages are called on for rubber. In the case of all these "imposts," no individual can be called on to devote more than forty hours a month to the Government service. Naturally in the case of food, wood, and rubber requisitions, the quantity of produce which this will represent is largely a matter of individual opinion on the part of the local administrator, but there are elaborate regulations governing the method by which in each district the calculaton shall be made, and providing for its periodical revision. Payment must be made for all work done at a rate which varies in different districts—absolutely in accordance with the local conditions prevailing, and relatively in accordance with the changing value of the commodities in which it is made. That is to say in one district the native's time may be estimated as worth 5c. an hour; whilst in another it is reckoned at 3c. an hour, and at the same time in the former neighbourhood the cloth or salt, or other merchandise, in which payment is made, may be 33.3 per cent. cheaper than in the latter; so that for forty hours the native in the one place will receive, say, three fathoms of cloth as the equivalent of two francs, and in the other only one and one-fifth fathoms as the equivalent of fcs.1.20 at the dearer rate.

62. *Native Army.*—In former times no distinction was drawn between the civil and the military side of the administration. The administration, in other words, was an entirely military one, and officials were ranked according to their military grade. For some time, however, the two sides—the civil and the military—have

* It is impossible for me to speak of the manner in which the system has been operated in the past, during the period when the State was gradually feeling its way towards the present method. With this period I have no direct personal acquaintance. Most of the criticism that I have seen is directed, not at the system now in force, but rather at those tentative earlier methods which have since been abandoned. Criticisms of these may have been fully justified.

been kept resolutely apart, and the civil administration is now systematised as indicated in succeeding paragraphs. In one or two cases, where a small number of men are provided for the security of an isolated post, the administrative officer in charge of the post acts at the same time as commanding officer of the company. But these cases are growing rarer, and, generally speaking, it may be said that the military organisation is entirely independent of the civil administration. The military organisation consists of a large native army officered by white men, down to the grade of "Chief Petty Officer" *(chef sous officier)*. The headquarters of the native army is at Boma, where at the present time it is under the command of an Inspector of State, Major Warnant, of the Headquarters Staff of the Belgium Army. He is assisted by a very complete headquarters staff, through which he communicates with the provincial commanders in the districts of the State. Each province has a detachment of the native army assigned to it, under the command of a first-class commandant, who is responsible for the purely military operations of his detachment, for their distribution through the province, and for their military regulation and discipline. He holds them, however, at the disposition, so far as their active service is concerned, of the administrative head of the province. In addition to the ordinary provincial divisions, there are large depôts established at various points of the State, on the one hand, as training centres for recruits, and on the other for the maintenance of a sufficient reserve, which is drawn on for detachments for the various provincial divisions. The native army is recruited, as has been mentioned, by levies furnished from each district, as an obligation on the population taking the place of taxation. No difficulty whatever has been found in obtaining recruits in this way, and, as a rule, the number offering themselves in any district is far in excess of the actual requirements. I was unable to arrive at the exact figure of the full establishment of the native army, but from the figures which I was able to obtain, my estimate of the total army does not exceed about 14,000 native soldiers. Owing to the readinesss with which men offer themselves for military service, not only is the regular establishment maintained almost entirely from picked recruits as the result of a selection amongst the total candidates coming

HUTS AT PANGA ; NATIVE VILLAGE ON UPPER ARUWIMI. THE FIGURE IS THAT OF A BOY, VERY SHORT.

forward, but also in each province a volunteer force is attached to the division of the regular native army in that province. These volunteers form an integral part of the provincial division, the sole distinction between them and the regular soldier being that instead of being sent away for their training to one of the regular training camps, and then being drafted to any province in which soldiery may at the moment be required, their entire service is confined to their province of origin. The soldiery, whether volunteers or regulars, are engaged for a first term of seven years. They can thereafter re-engage voluntarily for further terms of three, five, or seven years. From the outset they are well lodged in excellently built barracks, or private houses, as is the case in most districts. They are well fed, clothed, and looked after, and those who are married legitimately are entitled to have their wives on the strength, in which case each woman receives not only for herself and her children accommodation and allowances, but is also, after the first term of service, paid a regular wage. The payment to the men and to their wives depends not only upon the grade of the soldier but also upon his length of service, and increases very rapidly with every re-engagement, after the first, so that by the end of ten or twelve years' service a native corporal or sergeant may, with his wife, be drawing, in addition to bread, lodging, and clothing, about two shillings a day, a payment that is, of course, to a native in this part, an exceedingly handsome income. Natives, when newly recruited, after having being examined by the medical man in charge of the province, are shipped down to one of the large training camps, where for six months they undergo training to fit them for regular service. Detachments of recruits are arriving at these training camps almost every day. They have then to be registered, returns as to the arrivals and acceptance are furnished both to headquarters and to the district whence they emanate. Each case is individually dealt with and entered in the books. If for any reason a recruit is rejected, he has to be returned to his village of origin at the earliest possible moment, and the State officials are responsible for his safe arrival there. Those that are accepted are drafted into the various training companies, assigned quarters, and on the very next day commence their training. With raw savages drawn from every part of a country 800,000 square miles in extent,

speaking different languages which are entirely unintelligible to others, and often unused to the form of life in which they suddenly find themselves, never perhaps having been further than seven or eight miles in the virgin forest from their own birthplace before the transfer by rail and steamer seven or eight hundred miles to a brick-built town, it is not surprising that considerable difficulty is experienced in handling these new levies. The adoption of the Bangala, a semi-artificial language, as the official medium of communication with natives, has gone far to simplify one of the great difficulties that arose, as the elements of this language are very rapidly spreading into even the most remote parts of the State, and the fact that it is based on the adoption of those root words which are common to a number of languages, renders it easily intelligible even to those who hear it for the first time. With this medium of inter-communication, the first thing that the native has to be taught is to distinguish his left hand from his right, plurality from unity, and other elementary ideas, the simple colours being amongst the most difficult of those to which in his native condition he is often a stranger. For hours the recruits will stand in detachments doing nothing but holding out alternately their right hand and their left to the raucous shouts of "Droit!" and "Gauche!" Within a few days an extraordinary change comes over even the most primitive of these recruits. They seem to acquire an art of turning themselves in automata, and before six months' training are up they perform the most complicated evolutions and drill in large bodies with a precision and a uniformity which no European troops could vie with. In such an operation as grounding arms, where in Europe the command is followed by a rattle as the rifles touch the ground, in the Congo a similar command is accompanied by one short sharp clack as every rifle goes to place simultaneously. Besides the ordinary routine of drill the native soldiers are trained in various physical exercises, and are encouraged to occupy their leisure in various healthy recreations, such as swimming and hunting. In most training camps a mid-day bath is compulsory, and all life in these camps is regulated with the most minute precision It would be imagined that on the face of it the enormous change which these recruits have suddenly to undergo in their whole method of life and in everything that affects their health would lead to an enormous mortality among

the less fit, but actual experience proves that the very great care that is taken of the men on their first arrival, and the healthy life and good food, result in a wonderful improvement in the physique of all, more particularly the less well developed, and that so far from the mortality being higher in a training camp than elsewhere, it actually in these centres sinks to its minimum of anywhere in the State. The utmost precautions are of course taken to prevent the spread of infectious diseases, and each training camp is provided with an isolation station at some distance from it, carefully selected in such a position that neither surface drainage or water supply, nor air shall bear the taint from it to the main establishment. These training camps are, as has been said, exceedingly well built, usually of brick, though in some places of adobe, the particular model on which they are designed depending upon the officer in command. In the majority of cases a system of independent houses for each married couple, or for every two bachelors has been adopted. They are arranged in regular lines, with small gardens round each, and the men there soon acquire a habit of life closely approximate to that of civilisation. They take a pride in the ornamentation and decoration of the interior of their houses. They acquire a taste for deck chairs and for metal cooking utensils. When afterwards they are drafted to one of the large depôts, which are in outward appearance and general conduct similar to the training camps, they carry with them these newly-acquired habits. Their innate intelligence and their gift of imitation render them very soon exceedingly useful members of the community, and when their term has expired they have become so thoroughly imbued with white civilisation that something like ninety per cent. of them, rather than return to their former savage mode of life, form little colonies apart and establish themselves in villages organised almost on a military basis, in which the chieftaincy devolves on the man of highest army rank. The small minority who do return to their villages carry with them those habits of life and those ideas which they have acquired during their close intimacy with the white man in military service. In either case, whether in their separate colonies or in their own home in a native village, they act as a leaven on the whole community about them, and form, perhaps, the most valuable engine of civilisation at work in the whole of the

Independent State. One may reckon, if the establishment be about 14,000, and the average term of service somewhere about eight years, that there are at least 1,750 of these men who have reached a high degree of civilisation and acquired a taste for a decent mode of life being distributed every year amongst the raw savage population of the interior of Africa. At the same time quite a considerable percentage of them succeed in saving sufficient sums of money during their military service to enable them in after life to live amongst surroundings of considerable comfort, which, acting on the natural covetousness of the black man, become a great incentive to him to work voluntarily in order to have the means of acquiring those articles, the possession of which he envies in the retired soldier.

63. *Police.*—In addition to the military organisation there are in certain large centres police forces under the control of the civil administration. At Boma, Leopoldville, Stanleyville, and Basoko, such forces exist, and in the main provide an efficient and serviceable body of men who discharge their duties with considerable discretion and ability. These forces are recruited principally from time-expired soldiers.

64. *Land Registry.*—All native villages, with their plantations and the fully occupied lands immediately surrounding them, are registered as the communal property of the village, and the title is vested in the chief for the time being. These lands cannot be parted with by the native community without a special decree of the sovereign himself, which is now rarely granted. All other land, such as much of that in the Lower Congo basin, which is occupied by individual natives, is registered in their names, and is their absolute individual freehold to transfer and dispose of as they see fit. The transfer is effected by entry in the register, and the whole machinery of conveyancing thus reduced to its simplest form. Unoccupied lands are regarded as the property of the Crown until conceded to individual persons or corporations. Thus the two prime sources of title to land in the Congo Independent State are a transfer from a native owner or a concession from the Crown. As fast as lands are brought within the purview of the land registry, a work which is proceeding with extraordinary rapidity in view of the enormous area of the State, and the remote-

ness and inaccessibility of many parts of it, detailed topographical plans are being prepared of it.

65. *Department of Agriculture.*—This department is very fully organised and very highly developed. At Eala, near Coquilhatville, there exists a large tract of country which has been devoted to botanical gardens and nurseries, and also to experimental farming and stock raising on an exceedingly large and comprehensive scale. Experiments are here made with almost every kind of useful crops and trees raised in any part of the world, in tropical or sub-tropical climates. Of those which prove adapted to the conditions prevailing in Central Africa, nurseries are formed, and seeds or other means of propagation supplied in large quantities to all the State stations where they can be raised. Corresponding work is done in the experimental farms with the view of testing the adaptability of various breeds of stock to the conditions prevailing. The whole establishment is under the direction of Monsieur Pynaert, who received his education at Kew, and subsequently in Ceylon, British India, the Straits Settlements, and at Hong Kong. The establishment is made practically self-supporting by the distillation of various essences, and by the sale of the produce raised other than that required for propagation. In many of the State stations which I visited, and most notably at Yakoma and at Banzyville, the results of this system are making themselves apparent. At the former of these two stations there is a large horse-breeding establishment, with something like thirty head of thoroughly acclimatised and principally locally-bred animals; whilst at Banzyville there are large areas under rice cultivation, in a part of Africa where it would never be expected that rice could be made to grow. During my visit to Banzyville some forty tons of rice were harvested of an excellent quality, and when I left, more than one-half the area under cultivation had yet to be cut. It was probable that the total yield for this, the third year of the experiment, would exceed eighty tons of rice. In many other stations both horse and cattle are to be found in considerable quantities. Mules are being bred in the eastern province and in the province of Uele, and in all the eastern portion of the State rice, maize, Madagascar potatoes, and other foreign crops are now raised extensively, not only in the State stations, but by the natives in their villages; and the extent of the

country which has in this way in recent times been brought under cultivation by the indigenous population must be exceedingly large. The large coffee and cocoa plantations owned by the State at Ikoko and at Coquilhatville have frequently been referred to; it is only necessary to add that similar plantations are to be found at many other of the stations which I visited, the largest, perhaps, being that at Mokondjo, and between this station and Basoko at the mouth of the Aruwimi. But it is, of course, to rubber that the Department of Agriculture devotes most attention, and the most remarkable results, as is well known in this country, have attended the experiments that have been carried on at Eala, as to the growing of rubber, to the discovery of new species of rubber-producing plants, the invention of new processes for the collection and recovery of the latex, and for the coagulation of latices which have hitherto been regarded as refractory. So extensively is this part of the work of the Department of Agriculture looked after, that there are now under the care and cultivation of the State or of native villages under State direction, many millions of caoutchoutiferous plants which, it is estimated, will be in full production at the end of twelve years from the present time. In all parts where a rubber-producing plant of any kind can be grown the State officials are charged with the duty of making plantations of them, and of maintaining these plantations; whilst in many parts the system has also been introduced of encouraging the natives to make such plantations in the immediate neighbourhood of their villages, and in these districts the rubber impost of the State is remitted to those villages which maintain a rubber plantation of a certain number of rubber-producing plants; the exact proportion depending upon the locality and the kind of rubber grown. Each of the plants, whether the tree, herb, or vine, thus maintained, is carefully numbered and registered, and the work of looking after these plantations is no inconsiderable part of the duties of the State officials. All along the Upper Ubangi the natives have taken very kindly to this system, and the plantations are increasing at a very rapid rate; it would certainly be an under estimate to calculate that at the present pace the number of rubber plants cultivated under State encouragement will be at least doubled by the time those at present planted come into bearing. All traders collecting rubber, as well as all officials in charge of State

posts where a rubber impost is in force, are under the obligation to set and tend five hundred young rubber plants for every ton of rubber sent down to the coast. Another interesting branch of the Department of Agriculture is that which concerns itself with the breeding and domestication of elephants and their adaptation to the service of man. The headquarters of this department are at Bomokandi, but hitherto the success attending its experiments have been small, as most of the animals, whether bred in captivity or caught young, are found to die before attaining to fourteen years of age.

66. *Transport.*—Another department of the State which has reached a high pitch of perfection is that of transport; and the facility, the speed, and the safety with which goods can be sent to even the least accessible regions reflect the very highest credit on the excellent and detailed organisation which has been established. The means of communication are, as has already been said, principally those of the great waterways, and as a consequence, the most important branch of the transport service is the fine flotilla of stern-wheeled steamers ranging in size from fifteen to five hundred tons which ply on the Congo, and on all its principal tributaries. Where cataracts or rapids render the waterways unnavigable by steamers, an excellent canoe service has been established, the canoes in some parts attaining to a size which enables them to transport four or four and a half tons of merchandise at a time. In some cases large works have been carried out to remove barriers from rivers, and to throw open to steam navigation their principal reaches. In other cases again, a canoe service exists to work reaches barred by a series of rapids, whilst steamers have been put on the rivers above these points. Leopoldville, the headquarters of the principal river service, which is under the chief control of the inspector of State governing the Stanley Pool province, is equipped with extensive building and repairing slips, and with a considerable deep water dock in which the largest steamer can be brought alongside. The work of building and repairing the steamers is carried out by a staff of one hundred and twenty white men, with the assistance of a considerable number of educated coast men, and large hordes of native regularly paid labourers. The speed with which the steamers, even of the largest class, are built at this centre, is indicated by the fact that when I went up country on July 19th,

the first of the five hundred tons steamers had been comparatively recently laid down, and was little more than a skeleton on the slips; I came down country again on January 20th of this year, just six months afterwards, and I met the second of these large steamers on its first voyage up the river, it having been laid down after the first was launched; and in the meanwhile a large three hundred and fifty ton barge had also been built, and all the repairs and renewals of the entire fleet of steamers had never for one moment been interrupted, whilst it included the practical re-building of two which had met with serious accidents. At Leopoldville, by the way, the experiment is being tried of adapting camels to the service of the State, and there are a considerable number now in regular use, with, I believe, satisfactory results; and though the district is largely a low-lying and swampy hollow from which rocky hills rise abruptly—a district, in fact, which one would have pre-supposed would have been ill-adapted to the camel—yet only one out of the consignment of ten taken out in the steamer by which I arrived, had died when I came down country, and this was an old and used-up beast that had with difficulty supported the journey on arriving. All the others had been in continual hard work, and had showed no signs of any ailment. An experiment of great interest is that being carried out in the Uele province, where a great artificial motor road has been laid from the Nile at Redjaf, to within a few miles of the Congo river at Buta, and a regular service of traction engines established. The wash-outs in the rains, however, render the service costly and difficult to maintain. Similar essays on a smaller scale are being made in other parts to solve the porterage difficulty.

67. *Medical Service.*—The medical department of the State has in recent times been much improved and enlarged. I am given to understand that up to within quite recent times it left much to be desired both as to the provision made for the treatment of native patients and also as to the medical facilities for white men in the State. At the present time there is a handsome and very complete native hospital at Boma, stone-built on model lines, with accommodation for various classes of patients, and every facility for their careful treatment. It is in charge of Dr. Zerbini, a well-known Italian authority on tropical diseases, who has two white qualified assistants to help him. At the outset the hospital was

VILLAGES NEAR BANZYVILLE, UPPER UBANGHI.

(To face p. 68)

used almost solely by the employés of the State, and the ordinary natives were disposed to avoid it; but in recent times the number of casual out-patients has been showing a steady increase, and when I left the Congo from thirty to fifty a day were being regularly treated. In this hospital is a well-appointed operating room, post-mortem room, and other establishments for carrying on research work. At Leopoldville a similar institution was in course of construction on my way down the river, and was then nearing completion. Hitherto there had been nothing of the kind at this, the most important commercial centre in the Congo, with the exception of some rude wooden shanties with practically no convenience for treating patients. At both Boma and Leopoldville there are also hospitals of the Croix Rouge for the reception of white patients, entirely staffed by white doctors and white nurses (Sisters of Charity). There is also at Leopoldville a very well equipped and actively occupied school of pathology and medical institute, where more particularly research work in bacteriology is carried on, and in this department the Independent State of the Congo has in recent years been exceedingly active. Medical missions have been at work in various parts of the State, staffed principally by Englishmen, making a thorough investigation into various tropical diseases, more particularly the sleeping sickness and tic fever. A very large amount of money has been set aside for the carrying on of this work, and every possible opportunity is afforded to the medical men connected with these missions for making their inquiries of real benefit. They are given the right of unlimited transport. Steamers are placed at their disposition, and they have the free use of the hospitals and institutions of the State, with the right to ask for returns on any points in any way bearing on the subject of their inquiries. At a simple request of a member of one of these medical missions, a circular is sent to every official in the State requiring information on any point that may be of value, such as the presence of any particular class of insect, the prevalence of any particular disease, the habits of natives where these diseases exist, the primitive views held by natives concerning them, and all other matters which may throw any light on the causes or the successful treatment of tropical maladies. The medical staff proper of the Independent State furnishes a medical officer to each administrative centre of the

provinces, and also one or more to each of the large depôts of the native army. At each of these points there is as a rule a house of perhaps three or four rooms set apart as a kind of cottage hospital, but in many places the facilities for treating patients in these establishments are of a very primitive description. Medical supplies, however, are furnished on a very liberal scale to every white official of the State, who in addition to medicine cases given for his own use supplied with full directions and stocked with drugs in tabloid form, is also furnished with a supply of remedies for common ailments for distribution to natives. Medical comforts in the form of preserved liquid milk, champagne, Burgundy, port, and liqueur brandy, as well as certain invalid luxuries, are furnished regularly to each official, and though the supply is not an extravagant one, it is certainly ample when confined to its proper use, which, as far as I could learn, is usually the case. Perhaps a more valuable department of the medical service is that connected with the vaccination system in force. At Malela is a large vaccine farm, from which vaccine is supplied to every head of a station on receipt of a demand, and each head of a station is responsible for seeing that he always has on hand a sufficient supply of vaccine to meet all requirements. It is his business to see that as far as possible every native in his district is vaccinated. At first, I was told, considerable difficulty was experienced in inducing the natives to come forward to be vaccinated, but within a very short time, when they had learnt the objects of vaccination, their terrible experience of the ravages of small-pox in the past led them gradually to embrace the opportunity afforded of guarding against a recurrence of the outbreaks, and now no sooner do the natives hear through the medium of the boys in a station that a new supply of vaccine has arrived than they come flocking in from all directions to be vaccinated, and the difficulty that has to be guarded against is the waste of vaccine through continual re-vaccination of the same subject, as the native will often come month after month to be vaccinated. In every part of the State that I visited, I found this eagerness to be vaccinated the greatest incentive amongst the native population to overcome their natural timidity, for even in those parts where the black population showed signs of shyness in approaching the white man, they were ready to come at any moment to ask to be vaccinated. The system of tracing

the efficacy of each sample of vaccine is an excellent one. Every tube as it is sent out from Malela is accompanied by a form bearing a reference number which indicates the calf supplying the lymph and the exact history of its production. Each tube is supposed to be sufficient for fifteen cases, and the head of the station is responsible for seeing on receipt of this tube that full particulars of each case vaccinated from it are recorded on the form accompanying the tube. Thus the number of incisions must be filled up in each case; the appearance of each scar recorded at intervals of six days for three weeks. At the end of this time the form must be returned to Malela. Much good is also being done amongst the natives by the medical service in instructing them practically in the elements of hygiene. From time immemorial even the most primitive of the natives have had certain traditional hygienic observances, which have gone far to keep their villages in a state of comparative sanitation, but in the interior these precautions are not always effective, more particularly where there is a scanty water supply, and the influence of the white man, as directed through the medium of a series of pamphlets on hygiene distributed by the State to all its officials, has been in many parts to work an extraordinary change in the cleanliness and health of native settlements in the immediate proximity of white stations.

68. *General Service.*— For the general administrative work of each Government station a large number of natives have, of course, to be engaged, whilst the Transport Service, the department of Agriculture and Forestry, and the Domaine Privée or State lands, also engage large bodies of natives by regular contract at schedule rates of pay and subject to definitely regulated conditions. These contract workers, who are all grouped together under the general term of "travailleurs," are, as a rule, engaged for three, five, or seven years, though in special cases they may be engaged for as short a period as three or six months; and where difficulty is found in obtaining these labourers voluntarily, in order to avoid resorting to compulsion, it has been the habit to commence by engaging them for a few days or a few weeks at a time, and to encourage them to continue their service. A case in point is afforded by the service of the Great Lakes Railway, where the Engineer-in-chief, M. Adam, finding it impossible to get the Bushmen, upon whom he had to

rely for contract labourers, to come forward in sufficient numbers on long terms, began at the outset by engaging them for three weeks. Within a few months the natives, appreciating that they were well treated, overcame their natural timidity, and M. Adam informed me that he now, if he wanted to, could engage double the men he requires for terms of seven years each. The contract workers in the service of the State, in whatever capacity they are engaged, are so far as pay and allowances and privileges are concerned, on very much the same footing as the soldiery. Their principal forms of occupation are: 1—Service général, the general up-keep and repair of the stations; 2—Transport, acting as firemen, wooders, and general hands on the State steamers, and as wood gatherers at the wood posts; 3—Department of Agriculture and Forestry, the labour on the plantations of the State; 4—Domaine Privée, the work in connection with the levying of the rubber impost. These four great groups of regularly-engaged workers, as well as the large army of boys and personal servants privately engaged by individual white men, and publicly engaged for the officials, form again like the soldiery a continual spreading leaven of civilisation in the country, though by no means so effective as the soldiery, owing to the absence of the physical and moral training received in the native army. With reference to the wood posts it should be pointed out that a dual system is in force. At some of these posts, which are established for providing wood for firing the steamers, the wood is provided as an impost levied on the neighbourhood similar to the fish levy, the chikwanga levy, or the rubber levy. At others, however, such as those on the Middle River, where the requirements, owing to the large number of steamers passing, are very heavy, the wood posts are manned by regularly-employed labourers, and the surrounding neighbourhood has not necessarily any obligation to fulfil in reference to the wood posts. There is no doubt that the general adoption of this system would be highly beneficial.

69. *Commissariat.*—Not only does the State pay its agents well, judged on a Belgian scale, but it also rations them, and the machinery which is necessary to carry out just this one department of administration is in itself sufficient to cause perpetual wonder. The difficulty of sending accurately in good condition and

punctually their whole food supply to 2,000 white men scattered about up and down in the forests and jungles of a tropical country two-thirds the size of Europe, is very great. The supplies sent vary with the grade of the recipients, but in all cases are the very best obtainable of their kind, and are certainly, in the case of the subordinate officials, far superior to anything they are used to in Europe. To give an idea of the kind of supplies sent to the Chef de Poste in a solitary station where there is only one white man: He receives his supplies every three months; they consist of a bottle of red wine a day, a plentiful supply of flour, of cake, of plain dry biscuits and dessert biscuits, sardines, pâtés and potted meats of various kinds (foie gras, pheasant, larks, &c.), preserved tinned meats, bacon, marmalade, jams, pickles, sauces, condiments, preserved soup, tea, coffee, butter of two qualities for cooking and table purposes, sugar, rice, preserved fruits and vegetables (both dried and tinned, including asparagus points, green peas, French beans, spinach, &c.), candles, matches, soap, milk, and in short not only every necessary but even many luxuries, and all on a most lavish scale, whilst all that is sent is of the best quality obtainable. The pâtés come from Fischer's of Strasburg, the marmalade from England, the jams and preserved fruits from St. James, Paris, the table butter from the Danish Creamery Co., the milk is "Bear" brand unsweetened, the vegetables are from Malines, and finally, although Belgium is the sugar country of the Continent, the whole of the sugar supplied is British cane sugar, it being believed that cane sugar is of a greater dietetic value than the national beet sugar. There is no putting the matter in the hands of contractors and leaving it to them. Each detail of the supplies is thought out separately and individually. They are collected from the various quarters of the earth to a central emporium at Antwerp, where they are packed in what are known as "chop boxes," varying from the smaller ones containing everything that is necessary for a traveller during a fortnight, to the larger supplies for a big station during six months. From Antwerp they are consigned directly to the transport emporium of each province with invoices; there a functionary checks them to see that all is in order, passes them on to the capital of the province, whence they are distributed to the various stations in strict accordance with the rank and the number of white men in each station. In addition,

in the transport emporium of each province reserves are kept to supply functionaries whilst in transit from one point to another, and also to make up wastage and ullage. But these reserves are no haphazard matter; they are accurately regulated to fit the needs and the requirements of the provinces during the ensuing twelve months, for in this country of lengthy distances and leisurely communications, everything has to be arranged at least a twelve-month ahead. Thus the solitary white man in his remote post sends in to the chief of his Secteur any suggestions he may have to make for his future year's supplies, any preferences he may have, or any complaints as to the quality or quantity of food supplied. The Chef de Secteur collects and tabulates all these for his district, works out the number of functionaries who will be changing their posts on promotion or on leave during the coming twelve months, adds this to the list of requirements, sends the whole batch on to the Chef de Zone, who in turn elaborates it with the general requirements for the Zone in the same way, and sends it on to the Adjoint Superieur of the province. Thence it goes to Boma, where the requirements for all the provinces are tabulated and regulated, complaints and suggestions noted, and the whole forwarded to the State packing house in Antwerp, so that to-day in Antwerp the case is being packed for the agent who a year hence will be starting out to relieve the home-coming official at some remote post on the Eastern frontier, and that case in due course will find its way to Boma and thence to Stanleyville, marked "Falls Voyageur," with a number corresponding to the number on the requisition in answer to which it was sent, and in due course it will be handed out to the new-comer on his reporting himself at Stanleyville.

70. *Exchange Goods.*— There is a similar complex organisation for the supply of the merchandise which takes the place of currency, merchandise whose whole value depends on its variety and its rapid adaptation to the ever-changing fancies of the natives in each particular district. The success of a Chef-de-Poste or of a Chef-de-Secteur will very largely depend on his ability in foreseeing these changes in his particular locality. To-day, black beads, red jerseys, or leather belts may be the fancy of the moment; whilst next year these will be absolutely useless, and the natives

will ask for nothing but salt, indigo drill, and leather sandals. The list of merchandise supplied by the State is of extraordinary length and variety, and the rates at which it is calculated as the payment of the natives are, by consent even of the most hostile critics of the State's administration, astonishingly low. Thus, to give an instance, when natives despoiled me one night of every article of clothing I had with me except the pyjamas I slept in, I made good my loss from the State stores with white drill suits at 11 francs, khaki suits at 4.50 francs, and blue suits at 9 francs. In addition to these, in different districts I saw in the State stores striped flannel suits at 14 francs, good serviceable boots (of which I myself bought and wore a pair) at 9 francs, sand shoes at 2 francs, knives of all kinds, nickel spoons and forks, mirrors, tobacco, sandals, belts and straps (which are also very popular), buckles, socks, shirts, jerseys, fezes, felt hats, brass ornaments, wraps and shawls, and a hundred and twenty-seven different kinds of stuffs. In the course of conversation, Mr. Grenfell, the famous head of the Baptist mission on the Congo, remarked that they were utterly unable, despite the advantages of cheap transport granted to them, to get the goods they required for payment of their employees at anything like so cheap a price as that at which the State supplies them to the natives in the far-off interior. This rate, of course, differs in different parts, as the further one gets into the interior the higher becomes the burden of transport which goods have to bear, but I saw many instances in remote parts of the advantages that accrue from the State's perfection of organisation. At Mobaye, on the Ubangi, on both sides of the river the principal currency is "machetes," spear-head shaped pieces of flat soft iron* On the French side these are paid to the natives as corresponding to 62 centimes, on the State side they are taken to represent 45 centimes only. The consequence is that the native who works or brings supplies to the white man finds that he receives half as much again apparently from Bulai Matadi as he does from Franchesi, although normally the rates of pay on the two sides of the river are the same. The

*The term machete has in the currency sense become entirely divorced from the implement usually known by this name. The flat pieces of iron were, presumably, originally intended to be machete blades, but they have long ceased to bear even a resemblence to the instrument.

supply of merchandise is an even more complicated matter, though at first sight simpler, than the provisioning of the State agents, for the Central Government in Belgium is naturally dependent entirely upon the information it receives from its officials on the spot, who in their turn can with difficulty inform themselves of the state of the European markets in various commodities, and in addition the supply of merchandise is a three-fold one. There is (1) the merchandise necessary for general purposes in the State, such as the payment of casual workers, paddlers, porters, &c., and the purchase of food and supplies for the personnel of the poste; (2) that required for the payment of the Force Publique, and of the regularly-engaged employees of the State; and (3) that needed by the "D.P.," namely, for the payment of the rubber brought in by natives by way of taxation. These three departments are kept strictly apart; their accounts kept separately, and the merchandise for each department ear-marked for that particular purpose from the time it leaves Antwerp until it is paid away.

71. *Government Pamphlets and Publications.*— One of the most remarkable features in the whole of the Congo is the elaborate series of circulars and open letters which are distributed amongst all the officials. There are two regular publications—the *Bulletin Officiel*, which deals with all points relating to trade and commerce, and is the official medium for the publication of all public decrees and ordinances, and can be obtained by the general public, and the *Receuil Mensuelle*, an administrative publication containing service orders and instructions. An annual form of this latter publication, the *Receuil Administrative*, embracing also all official circulars, is published each year. Besides these two regular publications, a constant stream of circulars and open letters flows from the administrative headquarters of this State, and percolates down to the least important official. Some of the circulars which came under my notice, as they made their way from the fountain-head at Brussels to the tyro hidden in the depths of the bush, were an object-lesson on the individual attention devoted to the most trivial particulars. Not only are explicit instructions and useful hints and statistics given for every detail which can affect the good government of the country in any phase, but also extraordinary care is taken to ensure the

comfort and health of the *personnel.* Thus, to give an instance, one circular I came across was headed "On a substitute for fresh vegetables." It called the attention of the Chefs-de-Poste who lived where fresh vegetables were with difficulty obtainable, to various native plants which might be used as substitutes, and in particular one known as "Elephant's Ear," the leaf of which, the circular went on to say, might be made to represent exactly European spinach, and thereafter followed the whole regular Mrs. Beeton's directions as to the cooking of it. Other circulars gave various suggestions on such points as the following:—Making of nails from the strip iron used to bind bales; the crushing of river shells to provide lime; simple ways of recognising various useful or dangerous insects and shrubs, including the tsetse fly and the different kinds of mosquitoes; simple remedies for common ailments; and, in short, it is not too much to say that at some time or another in this wonderful series of paternal circulars, hints may be found on every possible phase of tropical life.

Local Administration.

72. *The Provinces of the State.*—For purposes of local government the whole State is divided into fourteen provinces, viz.:—Maritime or Banana, Boma, Matadi, Cataracts, Stanley Pool, Lac Leopold II., Kwango Orientale, Equateur, Lualaba Kassai, Bangala, Ubangi, Uele, Aruwimi, and the Province Orientale, this last being by far the largest, and embracing the whole of that portion of the State to the east of the Lomami River and south of the Aruwimi River, or a rough parallelogram stretching from 2° N. latitude to 13° S., and from 24° E. longitude to 30° E., with an area of about 270,000 square miles. The smallest is the Districte de Banana, measuring only 20 miles in extreme length and under 10 in extreme width, and having an area of about 120 square miles in all. For the most part these provinces follow natural and ethnographical lines of division. The larger ones are divided into zones, and the smaller ones, as well as the zones of the larger ones, are sub-divided into secteurs. Each secteur consists in its turn of a group of postes.

73. *Grades of Administrative Officials.*—The grades of officials by whom the various divisions of the State are administered are as follows:—First, Commissary-Generals (Commissaires-

Généraux), which is the highest rank of local administrator. Next, District Commissioners (Commissaires de Districte or Chefs-de-Zone), who are of three grades, namely, first, second, or third class. These four grades, namely, the three grades of District Commissioners and the Commissary-Generals, form what is known as the personel superieur de districte, or higher functionaries. The lower functionaries, or personel inferieur, consist first of the Chefs-de-Secteur, who again are of three grades—first, second, and third class, and of the Chefs-de-Poste. There is a very sharp line of distinction between these two groups of officials, a distinction which may be compared to that existing between the commissioned and the non-commissioned ranks in the British army, both in the social status of the class from which the two are drawn and in the difficulties which exist in passing from one group to the other. Before an individual can under the present régime enter the personel superieur de districte, whether at the outset or by promotion from the lower grades, he must not only produce evidence of his being socially fit for the position and well educated, but must also pass an examination which forms an exceedingly severe test of his all-round intellectual ability, and satisfy the authorities that he possesses the highest qualifications as to personal character and general fitness for the discharge of important administrative duties. The tests which are now imposed upon candidates for service in the upper grade of officials are of so exacting a nature that none but those of the highest character and the best education can possibly attain to any post of independent responsibility. There is another distinction between these two classes of officials. In the personel superieur de districte, rank is entirely personal and not functional, whilst in the personel inferieur the very reverse is the case, and a man holds a certain rank only so long as he discharges certain functions, and solely in virtue of those functions.

75. *Provincial Government.*— Each province is under the administrative charge of the chief, who may be compared to a provincial governor in the British colonial system. These Provincial Governors are almost invariably of the rank of Commissary-General, though in one or two cases a first-class District Commissioner will discharge the duties of provincial chief in the case of a smaller or

less important province. In the largest province, the Eastern, as well as in the most important, alike from a commercial and a political point of view, Stanley Pool, the provincial governor is as a rule chosen from among those who have attained the rank of Inspector of State. The zones or districts into which the larger provinces are divided are placed in charge of first or second-class District Commissioners, whilst the more important secteurs of those zones or of the smaller provinces are controlled by third-class District Commissioners, and the less important secteurs generally by Chefs-de-Secteur of varying grade. Each poste is in charge of a Chef-de-Poste. The Provincial Governor is assisted in the discharge of his functions by an Adjoint Superieur who is a District Commissioner usually of the first class, and whose duties correspond to those of a colonial secretary in British colonies. In the administrative capital of each province the various departments of government are represented by departmental officials attached permanently to the respective services of these departments.

76. *Native Chieftaincies.*—During recent years the position of the native chiefs has been greatly improved. The more important of them are now recognised as the lawful rulers of their people, and the only limits placed on their power in all matters coming within the purview of native law and usage in the government of their people is that imposed by the dictates of humanity and good order, as the following extract from an official circular will show:—

INTERIEUR. BOMA, *le 17 Avril*, 1904.

No 41/f.

CIRCULAIRE RELATIVE AU CARACTERE POLITIQUE ET ADMINISTRATIF DES CHEFS INDIGENES RECONNUS ET A LEURS POUVOIRS SUR LEURS SUJETS.

Les autorités territoriales, ne s'étant jamais rendu un compte bien précis de l'organisation et du fonctionnement des chefferies indigènes, en tant que rouage politique et administratif, ni de l'importance du facteur que le Gouvernement mettait entre leurs mains, en instituant légalement les chefferies indigènes, il importe d'exposer le caractère de l'institution au point de vue juridique et administratif.

L'investiture gouvernementale accordée aux chefs indigènes, apporte la consécration du gouvernement a l'autorité qui est attribuée aux chefs indigènes par les coutumes, pourvu que ces coutumes ne soient pas contraires a l'ordre public.

La chefferie indigène reconnue constitue donc en réalité un petit Etat dans l'Etat.

Le chef indigène exerce les différentes attributions qui lui sont données par les coutumes. En règle très générale, il a le pouvoir de commander et d'assurer l'exécution de ses ordres par des châtiments. Il réunit dans sa personne les divers pouvoirs qui, dans nos Etats civilisés, dépendent du souverain, mais sont délégués par lui aux trois grands organismes, législatif, exécutif et judiciare.

De par l'investiture gouvernementale, les actes du chef indigène reconnu, dans les limites des us et coutumes, sont donc légitimes.

Le chef indigène reconnu, qui a agi tel dans la limite de ses pouvoirs, ne peut être inquiété; notament, les sanctions qu'il aurait apportées à l'exécution des ordres, qu'il pouvait donner en vertu des us et coutumes, sont légales et ne peuvent être l'objet de poursuites répressives.

Bien plus, le gouvernement entend assurer au chef indigène, agissant dans les limites de ses pouvoirs, l'appui de son autorité et de sa force matérielle. Aussi l'aide de la Force Publique et des autres rouages administratifs, tel par example, le service pénitentiaire, doit elle être acquise au chef indigène reconnu, agissant dans l'exercice de ses attributions.

Indépendamment des pouvoirs, que le chef indigène possède comme tel, d'après la coutume indigène, et qu'il consacre et justifie, le gouvernement désire attribuer aux chefs indigènes, confirmé dans leur autorité, le caractère de délégué du pouvoir souverain, pour assurer au moyen de l'autorité que leur reconnaissent les us et coutumes, l'exécution des ordres gouvernementaux.

Sous cette face, le chef indigène constitue en réalité une espèce de fonctionnaire de l'Etat, dont les pouvoirs s'exercent sur les indigènes soumis à son autorité, et selon les mêmes regles, que celles relatives à l'exercice de son autorité comme chef indigène. Certains domaines cependent échappent, en principe du moins, à ses pouvoirs comme délégué du gouvernement; c'est ainsi notamment, qu'en ce qui concerne les infractions auxquelles la loi attache des sanctions pénales, il n'a d'action sur le délinquant que si celui-ci est abandonné par l'officier du Ministère public à la juridiction effective du chef local et à l'application des coutumes indigènes.

Agissant en sa qualité d'agent du gouvernement, le chef indigène a droit au moins au même appui que celui qui doit être accordé, lorsqu'il agit pour l'exécution de ses décisions en tant que chef.

Il importe peu d'ailleurs en principe, que les sanctions que la loi apporte à l'exécution de ses prescriptions ne soient pas celles, que le chef indigène, agissant dans la limite de ses pouvoirs comme tel, prétendrait exercer pour assurer l'exécution de la loi.

Le caractère fonctionnaire que le chef indigène, agissant pour l'exécution des ordres du gouvernement revêt vis-à-vis de celui-ci, n'existe pas, en ce qui concerne les indigènes soumis à son autorité.

Pour eux, c'est le chef qui ordonne et comme tel, il lui appartient d'assurer l'exécution de ses ordres selon les règles indigènes et notamment d'apporter à ses décisions, les sanctions que les coutumes indigènes lui octroient.

La seule restriction a l'autorité des chefs indigènes reconnus réside dans la nécessité pour eux de ne pas aller, dans les décisions qu'ils prennent, a l'encontre de l'ordre public, c'est à dire des principes qui sont à la base de l'organisation de la société, telle qu'elle est comprise et voulue par le législateur.

Cette limitation aux pouvoirs domine toute la matière. Elle s'applique tant à l'exercice des pouvoirs du chef, envisagé exclusivement comme chef indigène, qu'en ce qui concerne les pouvoirs qu'il voudrait exercer pour assurer l'exécution des ordres du gouvernement.

Elle porte autant sur les ordres qu'il peut donner que sur les sanctions qu'il voudrait y apporter.

L'autorité du chef cesse dès que les mesures qu'il a prises sont contraires à cet ordre public ; non seulement l'obéissance de ses sujets ne lui est plus dûe et l'appui de l'Etat doit lui manquer, mais le chef entre en conflit avec la loi et encourt les sanctions qui peuvent être attachés à son inobservation.

La détermination des lois qui intéressent l'ordre public offre de très grandes difficultés. L'examen de ce point doit être laissé à l'intelligence, à la prudence et au tact des autorités de l'Etat.

Les limites assignées aux instructions ne peuvent fournir que des exemples.

C'est ainsi qu'en matière de droit privé, le chef indigène ne pourrait legitimement prendre de décisions qui porteraient atteinte à l'organisation des familles constituées selon le règime du code civil et d'après les formes voulues par celui-ci, aurement dit, entrées dans le statut Européen.

D'autre part, il ne pourrait établir l'esclavage, aller à l'encontre de la liberté religieuse ou de celle du commerce ou commander des actes contraires à la loi pénale.

Toutefois importe-t-il à nouveau de remarquer qu'il peut user des mesures coercitives et de répression, pour sanctionner, comme chef et dans les limites de ses pouvoirs d'après les coutumes, l'exécution de ses ordres.

Mais ses sanctions elles-mêmes seraient contraires à l'ordre public, si leur caractère s'éloignait de nos idées de répression ; notamment, si elles constituaient des tortures corporelles, des mutilations ou d'autres actes de cruauté ou s'entouraient de pratiques superstitieuses, telle que l'épreuve du poison ; en un mot, si elles allaient réellement a l'encontre de nos idées d'humanité et du but civilisateur de l'Etat.

Les châtiments corporels semblables à ceux utilisés par l'Etat et dans une mesure identique à celle employée par celui-ci, infligés par le chef indigène d'après la coutume, ne seraient évidemment pas contraires à l'ordre public.

Telles sont, exposées en grandes lignes, les règles qui font participer les chefs indigènes reconnus à la vie politque de l'Etat.

De cet exposé se dégage l'importance du facteur civilisateur que le gouvernement met aux mains des autorités territoriales, en plaçant les chefferies reconnues sous leur direction et leur surveillance; il rend sensible l'efficacité que peut avoir un emploi judicieux de ce rouage; enfin, le rôle des autorités territoriales et judiciaires se précise: aux prmières, des rapports continuels avec les chefs indigènes, des instructions et recommandations incessantes, une direction et une surveillance de tous les instants et un appui moral et matériel, pour maintenir et augmenter l'autorité du chef dans un but civilisateur; aux autres, et dans le cas, où elle est requise, une intervention pleine de prudence, pour ne pas énerver inutilement l'autorité du chef et détruire ou simplement affaiblir l'influence qu'il doit avoir et dont le gouvernement entend se servir dans un but de progrès.

Le Vice-Gouverneur General,
COSTERMANS.

In some parts I visited, the principal chiefs of the neighbourhood were accorded in everything that concerned the internal regulation of their tribes' affairs the utmost authority, and they were given to understand that they could rely upon the State to assist them in upholding this authority, the only limitation of which was that it must not be used contrary to the dictates of humanity and of good order. Thus all barbarous punishments and customs, trial by ordeal or by lot, slave-trading, and cannibalism were forbidden to them; also they could enforce no order subversive of public order, detrimental to the authority of the State, or in opposition to the general laws and regulations of the State. Further, the chief is debarred from personally passing judgment in a dispute between any of his people and himself, or in any question directly affecting him or his authority. With these exceptions, and subject to certain restrictions as to the carrying out of penal sentences, he has full power to enforce the usages and customary laws of his tribe, to maintain order amongst his people, to punish offenders, and to deliver and enforce judgment in all disputes, whether criminal or civil. There is always, however, an appeal to the white official from his judgment, except in matters

relating purely to native usage and custom of a non-criminal nature, and all cases directly affecting the person, property, or authority of the chief himself must be referred directly to the white official. In the more serious criminal cases, such as those for which capital punishment is prescribed by native usage, or where the offender is sentenced to personal detention or restraint, or to forced labour, for a longer period than fifteen days, or to corporal punishment of more than ten strokes, the sentence cannot be enforced until it has received the sanction of the white official. In the case of capital punishment the sentence can only be carried out where it would be permitted under the State laws, and the execution must take place in the presence of the white official in the State station; as must also corporal chastisement where the punishment exceeds ten strokes, and this chastisement is limited by the same restrictions as apply to that ordered directly by the white man in the case of employés of the State. In the case of personal detention or of forced labour, the white official must satisfy himself that the sentence is carried out under conditions compatible with European ideas of humanity, and if it is impossible, either owing to distance or from any other cause, for him to be sure that there will be no departure from these ideas, and that the prisoner will be fed, or given opportunities of feeding himself, and be subject to no torture or cruelty, the State official must order that the sentence be served in the State station. In many of the tribes the right of appeal is seldom taken advantage of, and the chief practically never has to call on the State for assistance in enforcing his authority, and as these tribes are those which had reached the highest pitch of development prior to the advent of the white man, and have their customs and laws more clearly defined, they are also the better tribes, in which there is least fear of any abuse on the part of the native chief of his power. Thus it comes about that some of them, especially in the north, are practically autonomous, in all except that which concerns capital offences or any dispute between the chief and his subjects. In return for this authority, certain responsibilities are imposed upon the chief: the sanitation, improvement, and up-keep of his villages, and of means of communication between them, and from them to neighbouring groups of villages, as well as the up-keep and tending of plantations and crops and of compulsory rubber plantations for

the State, and also generally the good communal administration of his tribe, are duties for the performance of which he is personally answerable. He is, however, given perfect freedom in the distribution of tasks amongst his own people, and of the individualising of the necessary work for discharging these responsibilities, and any regulations which he issues in these respects are, after they have received the sanction of the white official, binding on his subjects as laws of the State. In the same way the taxes or imposts levied on his tribe take the form of a tribute from him to the State, but he has the option either of making his own arrangements with his subjects for the collection of the requisition, or of divesting himself of responsibility in this direction by handing it over to the white official, and in this case the imposts are individualised, as where there is no "chef reconnu." In either case the white man must satisfy himself that only adult males capable of work are called upon to furnish the impost, and that in no case are they called upon for more than forty hours of work a month per man. Here again it is found that in the case of the larger of the more highly developed tribes the chiefs keep the authority in their own hands, and deal personally as tributaries with the State, but in order to avoid friction, the rulers of those tribes whose people have advanced to the stage of individual proprietorship, prefer that the payment for the rubber, ivory, and other produce brought in in the satisfaction of the impost should be made direct to the individual furnishing it, subject to the deduction of a small percentage which the chief retains for his own personal or for the communal use.

77. *System of Administration.*—The chief principle underlying the government of the Congo Independent State is that of de-centralisation of authority and individualisation of responsibility to the maximum possible extent. Each administrative official is directly responsible to his immediate superior for the good government of the area placed under his control. Thus the Chef-de-Poste is held responsible for the control and administration of his poste by the chief of the secteur in which it is situated. The latter in turn is answerable to the chief of the zone (or of the province, as the case may be) in which he is placed for the efficient discharge of the administration of his secteur. The administrator of the zone in his turn is responsible to his Provincial Governor,

who himself is answerable for the good governing of his entire province to the Vice-Governor-General at Boma, and each throughout this gradually diverging stream of administrative power has direct control and command over the governmental departments which are represented in his area; so that, in fact, each administrator has as the unit under his control, an organism which is in itself a reproduction in miniature of the complete organisation of the State; although, of course, it is true that for simplicity in administration each department is not necessarily represented at every poste, and there are exceptional instances where certain departmental functions are controlled through the department concerned, instead of by the administrative official. These, however, are simply exceptions which are necessary in the carrying out of the work, and do not affect the principle which underlies it. Thus, of course, in a remote station it would be impossible to provide individual officers to discharge the duties representing each of the different departments of State, and instead the one administrative officer acts in many different capacities; or again, at the headquarters of a secteur where a very limited amount of transport work or of forestry, or of any other departmental duty has, owing to the exigencies of the locality to be discharged, it is simpler to place it for the purposes of these one or two restricted duties under the control of a neighbouring secteur, where the departments in question are of necessity more actively developed. On every detail of every part of his work each administrator must report to his immediate superior. Thus the Chef-de-Poste furnishes at frequent intervals reports to the chief of his secteur; the Chef-de-Secteur in turn reports to the District Commissioner, and the latter will communicate with the Provincial Governor, who is in direct touch with the Chief Executive at Boma. In similar fashion all instructions percolate down from the Vice-Governor-General through this channel of communication to the Chefs-de-Poste. Every detail of the routine work of every official is closely regulated by a most comprehensive and remarkable series of regulations which are explicit on the minutest particulars with which he will have to deal. For any departure from these regulations an official must obtain leave from his immediate superior. At the same time, as means of communication in a country covering so vast an area and so newly organised are necessarily slow, nothing is done that can possibly interfere with the initiative

of an enterprising functionary. If he acts on his own responsibility in any matter, an actual departure from the strict letter of the law is palliated, if the action is one which is justified by circumstances, and for which permission would have been granted had there been time to ask for it. This fact is thoroughly recognised. It is not accepted as an excuse in cases where action or want of action has led to an injury to the public service that the official was guided by the strict letter of the regulations. He must on his own responsibility use his own judgment and stand by the results. If they have been disadvantageous he will suffer. If they have been to the public good he has done his duty.

78. *Inspection.*—In addition to the returns and reports which local officials must prepare and keep in connection with every department of their work, they are further subject to a thorough and searching system of inspection, first, by their immediate superiors, secondly, by the adjoint superieur of the province as representing its headquarters, and thirdly, by the travelling inspectors of State, as representing the headquarters of the African administration. The first of these classes of inspection is a regular one. Each official of functional grade higher than that of Chef-de-Poste must at regular intervals visit the stations of each of the officials immediately under his charge; that is to say, that working downwards the adjoint superieur of the province on behalf of the provincial governor inspects the administrative centre of each of the zones of the province at regular intervals. In the same way, each Chef-de-Zone visits the headquarters of each of the secteurs composing his zone so many times a year, and in his turn each Chef-de-Secteur inspects each of the postes in his secteur periodically. At these regular inspections the inspecting official goes through the whole mass of returns and all the books of accounts of the station he is inspecting, checks them with the returns that have been forwarded to him in due course, examines all the stocks both of trade commodities in the station for the payment of wages and expenses, and also of produce received by way of impost from the natives, checks these with the stock books and other accounts of them, visits every part of the station and sees that it is in good preservation and sanitation, and devotes a certain portion of his time to the hearing of complaints (*a*) on the part of the employés

CANOES AT BADJOKO, NATIVE TRADING STATION NEAR STANLEY FALLS.

(To face p. 86)

of the State, and (*b*) on the part of the ordinary native inhabitants of the district. The two other classes of inspection—those by the adjoint superieur and by the State inspectors—are usually of the nature of surprise visits, and are no less thorough and searching in their character than the regular periodic visits of the immediately superior officer. In the case of both classes of these inspections, the inspecting officer has an ample opportunity in traversing the district in question on his way to and from its headquarters station to form an accurate impression of the efficiency of the official in charge in the performance of his more regularly administrative work in regulating the district under his charge and maintaining order in it. It would be practically impossible for any undesirable official to continue for any length of time without his deficiencies being revealed to his superiors.

State Officials and Government Station.

79. *Engagement of Officials.*—Belgian officials are distinguished from foreign officials in the terms of their engagement. The former are all subject to one system, whilst the appointment of the latter is often regulated by treaties between the Congo Independent State and the foreign countries in question. Generally speaking, as far as I can understand, officials are appointed for a term of three years without any assurance of re-engagement. In the case of Belgians a definite agreement is entered into, but in the case of other nationals the appointment is often merely from year to year. Appointees to the lower grades of office are sent out as non-commissioned officers in the native army, as accountants, as clerks, as transport agents, or as technical employees in the various executive departments. The promotion in the native army and in the different executive offices follows an ordinary course. The newly-appointed administrative official on coming to Africa is assigned to a province, at the capital of which he reports himself, and is then by the administrative head of that province assigned to a zone, or, where the province is not divided into zones, direct to a post in which he commences as assistant, learning his duties for a term of at least six months. After this he is placed in charge, probably, of a small isolated post, and his future success in the service depends largely on the promise he shows of ability during this period of his

career. At the end of his first term of three years, if he has met with average success, he will have worked his way up to be a Chef-de-Secteur of the second class. He may prolong his terms for a period not exceeding six months, and as a rule a further promotion usually follows such prolongation. He then returns home, and in the case of his first term of service, his appointment is at an end. This applies to the appointees in the lowest grades of administration. A large number, in fact probably the majority, of the personnel superieur receive their appointment not by way of promotion from the inferior grades, but directly on entering the service. In either case, however, whether by initial nomination or by promotion, the same qualifications are exacted before a candidate can be appointed to any rank in a personnel superieur. An official in the personnel superieur is, like a member of the personnel inferieur, appointed at the outset for one term only. In either case, after an obligatory vacation of at least four months in Europe, an official can apply for re-engagement, and thereafter his appointment is a permanent one. The terms served in Africa are always of three years, with an optional prolongation of a further six months and an obligatory vacation of at least four months in Europe. All officials serving for two terms of three years each, at the end of their second term are assigned, although the State undertakes no obligation in this respect, a certain sum in the Great Book of State of Belgium. The amount represents such a capital as will produce an income of a certain proportion of the annual salary attaching to the appointment which the official held at the end of his second term of service. Thereafter, a further sum is inscribed in the Great Book for each year's additional service, the amount always bearing a fixed proportion to the salary being drawn by the official at the end of that year's service. In this way it is possible for an official at the end of four terms (a minimum of twelve years in Africa) to be inscribed on the Great Book of State of Belgium for a sum which will return an income approximately equal to the salary drawn during the last year of service. In addition to this, the State again without giving any undertaking to do so, usually recompenses officials for any special service rendered, either by a direct pecuniary gift, at the time, or by assigning a certain further sum in the Great Book of State. These "inscriptions dans le grand livre" practically amount to the allotment of a Belgian government annuity, to which

the recipient becomes entitled on leaving the service of the Independent State, and they therefore take the place of any pension. The salaries paid to the State officials are peculiarly low in comparison with those ruling in the British Colonies, but, on the other hand, the Congo officials not only receive on appointment a full and absolutely comprehensive equipment for Africa, but also during the term of their service are provisioned by the State, and receive various allowances for carriage and postage, so that to all practical purposes their salaries represent a net gain, and may be said to represent the proportion of their earnings which they are able to save. Various regulations are in force providing that an official can only draw a certain proportion of his salary during his actual service in Africa, so that he has on his return to Europe always ensured a certain saving, and as, even of the amount standing to his credit on his return, he is not permitted to draw the total until he finally retires from the service, every official finds himself at the end of his service possessed of a certain amount of capital directly saved by himself through the instrumentality of the State, as well as of the annuity inscribed in the Great Book of Belgium.

80. *Duties of Officials.*— From what has already been said it will be seen that the duties of an administrative official, more particularly in the remoter stations, are very complex. In the first place each official is answerable for the good government and order of the district immediately under his charge. He exercises the double group of functions embraced under the headings of native politics and police. Under the first heading comes all the work connected with the settlement and arrangement of intertribal affairs and the general civil administration of the peoples in the district over which the official presides. Under the second come all the details connected with the maintenance of law and order, and the administration of the criminal law in minor matters. A great part of the official's day is taken up with hearing complaints and petitions on the part of natives, and the subjects with which he has to deal are as intricate and as multifarious as those which come before the London police magistrates, embracing everything from the most intimate minutiæ concerning the domestic affairs of the native household, to the graver questions connected with intertribal rights and other matters which, if tactlessly handled, may lead

to serious consequences. Further, the administrative official is often an official of civil status, and is therefore responsible for everything connected with the general registry of births, deaths, and marriages, and with the administration of civil marriage in those parts where the natives have embraced the monogamous system. The work in this connection is a highly complicated one, and occupies a very large proportion of the time which a civil administrator devotes to clerical work. For purposes of permanent preservation, every record in connection with the general registry must be entered in triplicate, one part being retained at the local station, the other two parts being forwarded to the headquarters of the province, one of them to be retained there, and the other to be forwarded for preservation amongst records of the general registry at the capital, Boma. As the amount of detailed information which must be entered concerning every person on the register is very large, and as the penalties exacted for any errors, however trivial, which occur in these entries are very severe, it follows that the work connected with the department of civil status is no sinecure. In the larger stations the civil administrator or political officer does not concern himself with the work of the departmental services otherwise than to supervise and control generally those specially occupied in this work; but in the smaller stations, where these departmental services are not separately represented by special employés attached to them, the administrative official must himself perform all the duties connected with them. These fall under several heads. The first, which is present in every station, is that connected with the general service, the upkeep and maintenance of the station, the actual structure and fittings of its public buildings, the maintenance of roads and means of communication, and sanitation and hygiene. Connected with these departments is the feeding and payment of all employés and the consequent details connected with the levying of food imposts, with the payment both of the general contract workers, and of the natives who are levied on for food supplies and for casual work. For their efficient discharge these duties demand considerable organising talent and no small amount of tact in striking the medium between the demand of the contract workers and the interests of those who are levied on to supply these demands. As in every detail of his work, the

official charged with these duties must keep elaborate records and furnish regular and systematic returns concerning every item, and these returns must be furnished in duplicate, a requirement which, when every line must be separately manuscribed, entails a great expenditure of time and trouble, but is undoubtedly a great safeguard against unfair dealing towards the natives on the one hand, or towards the State on the other. Next, in many of the smaller postes, the administrative official has charge also of the complicated work relative to the rubber and other collection imposts. In these cases he is also a transport officer, and has to attend not only to every detail of the collection and purchase of the rubber or other natural products exacted from the natives and the payments for it, but also of the proper preservation and preparation of the produce for transit, its packing and its conveyance to the headquarters or transport depôt of his province. This latter work alone necessitates the handling of a complex organisation to ensure a supply of canoes and paddlers on the waterways and of porters overland, and also in some cases the management of the smaller steamers and the provision of fuel for them along their course. In all these connections the official has to play the part, as well, of general trader and storekeeper on a large scale, seeing that every payment must be made in the varied exchange goods referred to elsewhere. Finally, in some postes, the administrative official is also responsible for the State plantations of rubber, cocoa, coffee, rice, maize, and other crops, and also for the fulfilment of their obligations by those natives who have been entrusted with the upkeep of rubber plantations in lieu of a rubber impost. It is obvious that where one man has to concern himself with so many diverse duties, each one of them a part of an exceedingly complicated system, he has practically no time from week's end to week's end for rest or recreation, and the few moments during the waking hours of the day which are not actively engaged in the transaction of necessary business are, as a rule, devoted to reading pamphlets and circulars forwarded from headquarters, and to acquiring knowledge on points which may be of value in the various departments of administration. To the outside observer it occasionally appears as if in this system there was an unnecessary waste of time over the red-tape formalities connected with the

preparation of returns and reports; but as the system has had to be devised to be applicable, not merely to the most reliable of those who have to carry it on, but also to the least responsible, this enormous mass of formal clerical work is probably a necessary safeguard.

81. *Position and Character of Administrative Officials.*—I understand that in the early days of the Independent State of the Congo, the social standing of the majority of the officials left much to be desired. At the present time, whilst in many of the subordinate capacities European non-commissioned officers and persons of similar social position are employed, the officials in all the more important posts are men of good standing and of the very highest education, a considerable number of them being army officers in the best regiments of Italy, Norway, Sweden, France, and Belgium. In every part of the State which I visited, where the country is directly administered by the central government (that is to say, in every part but the concessions of the Abir and Lolonga companies in the basin of the Lopori and Lolonga rivers) I found the officials to be almost without exception men well chosen, with a high sense of their responsibility, and an extraordinary enthusiasm in their work. It is astounding to witness the whole-hearted zeal with which the officials of the Congo Independent State devote themselves to their work. Each one seems to make it a matter of personal pride to surpass all his predecessors in the amount of work which he can accomplish during his three years. He spends his spare time in devising methods for making bricks in a district where clay is unknown, inventing a substitute for mortar where lime does not exist, or studying the latest publications on tropical botany in order to develop the country under his charge. The regular hours are from a quarter to six a.m. to noon, and from a quarter past two till six; and the majority of the officials, not content with this, spend an hour or more over clerical work in the evening. Wherever one turns one sees in every grade of official an enthusiasm and a pride in work, and an esprit de corps which have a very real bearing on the discharge of duties. There is an emulation amongst officials; each wishes to have the best built, the most beautiful, and the most prosperous station. In the same way, I found on all sides a desire to win the confidence and the admiration of the natives;

to be on good terms with those under their charge seems to be the highest aim, so far as I could judge, of the officials of the Congo State, and one never heard two or three of them talking together without the conversation sooner or later coming to a heated discussion, in which each upheld the splendour of his own station, the tranquillity of his own district, and the amiability and excellence of the population under his charge.

82. *Government Stations.*— In consequence of this spirit of work which imbues the officials of the Congo Independent State, the white man has opened up the country with an incredible rapidity. Where only a few years ago the European had never penetrated, there are now splendid State stations and an organised system of government. Indeed, it is almost true to say that the further one goes up the country, the better, more substantial, and more beautiful are the stations one sees. The older ones there has in many cases not been any attempt to re-build, but ones more recently erected have been built on the most modern plan. "Solitary posts," stations, that is, where there is only one white official, are in this respect equal to the larger ones, which form the seats of the provincial governments. No one could help being struck with their excellence. Almost without exception they are admirably planned, laid out with an eye to effect, along wide straight avenues of bamboos, breadfruit trees, poppoyes, acacias, oranges, citrons, and other shade trees, whilst at the intersections of the main thoroughfares there are usually ornamental groves gay with tropical flowers. The roadways themselves are well laid and exquisitely maintained. All the principal buildings are of brick, of various picturesque designs, with wide verandahs raised from the ground. The roofs, supported on ornamental pillars, are of grass, palm, or banana thatch, and of several different kinds of construction, according to the facilities afforded by the neighbourhood. As a rule the houses of the whites have enclosed flower gardens at the back, and in most stations, fitted shower baths in specially-constructed outbuildings are found attached to each residence. There are always extensive and well-stocked kitchen gardens, which afford a constant and plentiful supply of all kinds of European and other vegetables, whilst fruits of all kinds are cultivated extensively. The sanitation in all stations is excellent. Where no drainage exists, separate

earth-closets are attached to each house, and are cleansed daily by a public service. These remarks apply equally to the stations to be found in the most remote and inaccessible regions, as to those on the main ways of communication. The public offices, stores, and other official buildings are generally grouped conveniently together; the residences of the white officials form a quarter by themselves, as a rule, in the most conspicuous and desirable site; and the native lines in which the soldiery, labourers, and other employés are lodged, are without exception designed and built with no less care and consideration for health and comfort than the European quarter itself. In many stations they are still of whitewashed adobe construction, but are generally separate houses, and always well built and maintained. In many of the stations each hut in the native lines has its own separate garden, and in all the most scrupulous cleanliness and neatness is rigidly maintained. It is, in fact, the custom to make the wives of the employés of the State who, when legitimately married, are "on the strength" and receive special wages and allowances, responsible for the tidiness of the native quarter. Immediately after the morning roll-call they are marshalled in detachments to sweep the avenues, to weed, and to remove every trace of litter. In the same way the strictest regulations are vigorously enforced to maintain the native quarter in a thoroughly sanitary condition. Frequent inspections are made of the huts, which the natives very soon come to take a pride in keeping neat and tidy, and decorating with trifles, to resemble as nearly as possible the houses of the Europeans.

83. *Construction of Stations.*— Not less remarkable than the excellence of the State stations are the difficulties which have had to be overcome in many instances to effect their construction. In all cases they represent the individual exertion and ingenuity of the officials who have been quartered there. They are laid out and directed at practically no cost to the government. To give one instance, typical of the origin of all, the case of the training camp, Irebu, may be cited. When the present commandant, then a young lieutenant, was commanded to take over the camp, which was in process of formation, he found merely a large irregular cluster of native huts, surrounded by the squalor and filth of the ordinary Congo village, which had been hastily adapted to serve temporarily

as habitations for the raw levies of natives who were to be trained into soldiery. At the junction of the Ubangi, the Congo, and the Lac Tumba Canal it was low-lying and damp, and surrounded by open bush. The first act of the young officer was to clear the whole site, to drain it, to lay out and construct wide roadways, to plant them with shade trees, and to set the native recruits to work constructing lines of wooden, grass-thatched huts to serve as a temporary camp. These recruits were, of course, drawn from every district in the Congo State, spoke a babel of tongues, unable to understand their fellows or to make themselves understood. Some of them had never been out of their villages before in their lives, and none of them were skilled in any ordinary handicraft. Being a training camp the commandant was not allowed to engage skilled labourers. It was only in the intervals in his multitudinous duties connected with turning fifteen hundred such crude savages into a military force, provisioning them and their womenkind, regulating the whole affairs, financial, military, and political, of the camp and district immediately surrounding it, and tending unaided all the clerical work connected with receiving and despatching drafts of men, that he was able to teach some of the men under his command the rudiments of carpentry and building. To add to his difficulty, owing to the fact that a recruit is only six months in the training camp, no sooner had an individual become somewhat proficient in these industries and able to impart his knowledge to other natives, than he was drafted away as a finished soldier to take up his work in some other district; the consequence was that the commandant was continually having to train fresh workers. But, despite this, within little over a year from when he arrived, the whole camp had been re-modelled and re-built. He then decided to re-construct it in brick, but had not more knowledge of brick-making than any other ordinary army officer would have. He personally searched the whole neighbourhood for clay, experimented with it in his evenings, and at last found a substance from which serviceable bricks could be made. But cement and mortar in a neighbourhood where lime was unknown appeared at first to present unsurmountable difficulties, which again his own ingenuity enabled him to overcome by using a paste made of soft clay and starch prepared from the cassava. With these materials to hand, he designed a series of brick houses, and then with his own hand

commenced the building of them. His non-commissioned officers and himself in this way taught the native recruits the arts of brick-making and brick-laying. The joinery presented a further difficulty as nails were of course quite unobtainable. All the bales and packing cases in which the supplies of merchandise and the rations for the station were sent were, however, fastened with bands of strip iron, and from these he set to work to hammer out nails. The only things for which he was obliged to requisition the government were the carpentry tools. To-day the station is as fine, if not as large, as any on the Congo river, and its picturesqueness and beauty is unsurpassed. The houses are large, airy, well constructed of brick, arranged round large flower-planted public squares with an enormous parade ground, on which the whole fifteen hundred men can be exercised at one time, and with a frontage to the river formed of a long river-side avenue, with a lawn-like slope leading down to the water's edge. It is only fair to state at the same time that a superior functionary passing Irebu at the time when construction was in course of progress, was so struck with the work that was being done that he called the attention of the government to it, and from that time forward the commandant had the advantage of a skilled artizan assistant. It is not to be wondered at, when a similar history can be related of almost every one of the beautiful stations one sees in the Congo Independent State, that the officials who have been so intimately connected with their origin take the keenest personal pride in their welfare and good government. The central authorities are not slow when they hear of such energy to mark out for rapid promotion those who give evidence of it, whilst equally they are quick to remove any who may be wanting in that spirit of work which is the characteristic of the Congo official. When one remembers that similar stations are to be found in districts which only a very few years ago were untrodden by Europeans, and are still uncharted on the maps published in this country to-day, the wonderful zeal of the functionaries of the Congo Independent State becomes evident; and when one realises further that the whole of that vast country—to have traversed which only sixteen years ago was considered a feat on the part of the greatest explorer and traveller of recent days, who on his return christened it "Darkest Africa"—is to-day parcelled

EXPERIMENTAL FARM AT EALA.

(To face p. 96)

out in its remotest parts into districts, each with a white man presiding in one of these admirable state stations, one is forced to admit that the rapidity with which the country has been developed is unprecedented, even in Africa.

84. *Voluntary Work of Officials.*— It is not, however, merely with his own personal comfort in erecting a healthy, well-constructed, and beautiful station that the Congo State official occupies himself, apart from his ordinary duties. In his spare time he is also continually engaged mapping the region in which he finds himself, and for this, no State official ever dreams of making a journey without preparing a sketch map of his route as he travels, and these are checked one against the other, errors removed when the route is traversed again, and so by degrees the mapping of the country in the most minute detail is carried forward. He also occupies himself with the meteorology and climatology of his district; with the customs and habits and ethnology of its population; and, above all, with its mineral, commercial, and agricultural prospects. He is continually studying the botany of the region, its geology and soil, and experimenting in the growth of various crops, and on all of these points he is continually making reports to the department of the Central Government concerned. In these voluntary labours the State energetically seconds the efforts of its subordinates. Every facility is given him for carrying on his experiments, whether in arboriculture or agriculture, in the raising of stock, the breeding of mules, or the prospecting for minerals. Seeds are liberally supplied to all who ask for them; information of the most detailed kind contained in a series of able pamphlets kept constantly abreast of the latest knowledge by the publication of monthly supplements, is given to every official; whilst circulars are constantly being issued informing officials in one part of the progress of the work of those in others. At the same time encouragement of a more substantial kind is given with no niggard hand to those whose exertions result either in new knowledge which is likely to be of material benefit to the country, or in any remarkable development of the resources of the country, or in opening it up. The State official who works whole-heartedly has the pleasant assurance that his labour will not go unrewarded.

85. *Mode of Life of Officials.*—The great care which is taken of the official of the State is not a purely selfish regard for his comfort and convenience. There can be not the smallest doubt that the sanitary and comfortable conditions under which he lives, the freedom from all difficulty in provisioning himself, and the avoidance of all those errors which arise from inexperience or from carelessness in looking after his creature comforts, tend to render him far more efficient than he would otherwise be, and so make for the public good. In addition to this the result which has been achieved in reducing the mortality amongst the white officials is scarcely credible. Omitting Boma and Matadi, the two towns which may practically be said to be on the coast, being to the seaward of the Crystal Mountains, and therefore experiencing the evils of the coast climate, the mortality amongst government officials in the Congo Independent State has been reduced from the enormous proportion of approximately fifty per cent. of deaths during the average term of three years to a mortality of roughly two per cent. per annum. Nine years ago only one half of those who went out in the service of the State had any chance of returning to their homes alive on the completion of their time; whereas, to-day, the mortality, which it must be remembered embraces sunstroke, as a rule the result of carelessness, and suicides induced by the necessarily trying and often lonesome life in the tropics, is to-day not very greatly in excess of that in large towns in Europe. Of course it is perfectly true that the bulk of the officials are in the prime of life, but it is also equally true that there are many of advanced years whose constitution has suffered by lengthy terms in a hot climate. So far as I can learn there is no other tropical country in the world in which the white mortality is so low as in the Congo Independent State, and it follows as a corollary that illness is proportionately more rare than elsewhere in similar climates. The benefit of these two facts to the public service is so evident that it need not be laboured. Another benefit that accrues to the public service from the care which is taken of the officials is that which follows indirectly from their living amid surroundings of ordinary comfort and ease. The white officials in only too many tropical countries are forced to make shift as best they may in circumstances of the utmost discomfort, with the natural consequence that they become negligent

of their personal appearance, of their health, and eventually casual in the discharge of their duties. In almost all the State stations which I visited, I found that the life of the officials, even of those who were solitary in remote posts, followed as nearly as possible the lines of official life in Europe. The majority of them shaved daily, and at any hour of the day are neatly and carefully dressed either in uniform or in the regular white costume of the tropics. Dressing for dinner is a very general custom. It is exceedingly rare to see any of that slipshod neglect of personal appearance which leads the officials, more particularly in parts of the French Congo, to appear at all hours of the day unshaven, in pyjamas or at most in loose blue overalls. The natural consequence is that men who are habituated to living decently, and with the same regard for outward appearances as in Europe, are punctilious in the discharge of the minute details of their duties, and become generally more careful and more exact in their work, than do those who neglect every outward formality. Further, there is a very definite and distinct effect produced on the native mind by seeing the representatives of white civilisation invariably under conditions which lend a certain dignity to his appearance. I am strongly of opinion that whatever additional cost may be entailed by the thoughtful care the Independent State of the Congo takes of even its humblest functionaries, it is fully repaid in their superior efficiency in the discharge of their work.

86. *Unsatisfactory Officials.*— In generalising, concerning the officials of the State, it must always be borne in mind that there are, of course, exceptions. During the whole course of my journey I was struck with the fact that I scarcely met with a single government official who could definitely be described as undesirable, so far as I was able to judge of them; and in the State posts I had every facility of forming a fairly accurate estimate of the value of the white men stationed in them. The intimacy of the contact into which one is thrown with the European, living in close proximity with him in the remote interior of Africa, is necessarily so great that it would hardly be possible for him to deceive one with regard to his character for any length of time. In most of the State posts which I visited I spent several days in the closest and most constant touch with the officials in them, and the opinions

which I formed are the result of careful observation. In the one or two cases where the officials did not seem to come up to the general standard of the others whom I met, in their zeal and their ability, it could scarcely be said that they were actually undesirable. The most that can be alleged against these one or two is that they did not exert themselves with the same enthusiasm, or that they did not display the same ability and zeal that the majority of their colleagues did. I also noticed that the distinction was largely a national one. The most satisfactory of the State officials were all of them Belgians; roughly speaking, one half of the officials of the State (one thousand and ninety out of two thousand) are Belgians by nationality; the remainder are composed of Italians, Scandinavians, Swiss, French, German, Greek, and English, numerically in the order given. The Scandinavians are almost exclusively military officers, and discharge their duties punctiliously and with ability; but their whole manner and ideas are cast in too militant a mould to make them good administrative officers, and in very few cases are they employed on the civil side of the administration, although one or two of the most highly placed civil officials are Scandinavians, who have proved themselves hard working and exact in the discharge of their duties; but their work is of a more mechanical order and their character somewhat harder than those of the pre-eminently successful officials, to whom I have just referred. The Italians are also largely engaged as officers of the military force; a large proportion of them are also employed in the civil service of the State. One of the most energetic and successful of all the district commissioners whom I met was an Italian, and all that I have said with regard to the best class of the State officials applies to men such as he; on the other hand, almost every unsatisfactory State official whom I met was an Italian, and I was not surprised to learn, and, indeed, personally to experience the fact, that they are far from satisfactory even in the capacity of military officer. To say this, however, is not by any means to condemn all the Italian officials.

Opening-up of the Country.

87. *Cable Communication.*—The Congo river, which on some of its upper reaches is from twelve to eighteen miles in width from bank to bank—and in times of high waters, when these banks

are submerged, perhaps twice this width—gains the sea through a narrow and precipitous gorge easily spanned by a telephone wire. The flow of water at the mouth is reckoned to amount to 2,000,000 gallons a second. The force of the current and the depth of the channel through the gorge are consequently very great indeed. Owing, it is said, to this combination of circumstance, it has not been possible to establish direct cable communication between the mouth of the river and the outside world, and telegrams must either pass by boat to and from the cable office at St. Paul de Loanda or St. Thomé, or else be transmitted via Brazzaville, whence there is a land line to the north-west coast. When I was in Africa this line was about to be linked up with the telegraph system of the Independent State by means of a cable across the river at Kinchassa.

88. *Telegraphs and Telephone.*—But whilst the State is thus strangely isolated from the outside world so far as a direct cable is concerned, there is established in its domains a very extensive and, in view of the difficulties, efficient telegraphic and telephonic system, of which the headquarters is at Leopoldville. Boma, Matadi, and Banana are thus in telephonic touch with the commercial centre and with one another, and lines, both graphic and phonic, are operating from Leopoldville the whole way to Coquilhatville. Interruptions and delays are caused not only by the violent tornadoes, storms, and electric disturbances to which any equatorial region is subject, but also by the persistent animosity of the elephants which abound in some parts along the line. To establish this line it was deemed necessary to cut an open track through the heart of the virgin forest—in itself a mammoth task. As at first this track was not wide enough to prevent fallen and uprooted trees at the sides reaching the line and doing it damage, it has been gradually and almost continuously widened at great labour and expense; and the cost and trouble of keeping down the quick growing, rank, tropical vegetation along this huge band of clearing is enormous. For many reasons it would have been better to have run the line through the dense bush, without any clearing; first, because in the densest bush trees rarely fall or are uprooted even in the most violent storms, being sheltered by the surrounding growth, whereas a clearing exposes the trees on both sides to the full fury of the blast, and, when in a direct line, acts as a huge

draught pipe through the forest; secondly, because the clearing becomes a natural high road for the troops of elephants who would probably but rarely have their notice directed to the line, were it hidden in the forest, whereas now it is a conspicuous challenge to them the whole length of their route; thirdly, because the heavy cost of poles—iron rails in the present case, which the elephants bend to mere tangles—would be saved by carrying the line from tree to tree; and fourthly, because the original outlay in cutting, and the annual expense in maintaining the clearing would be saved. On the whole, however, the line works well, but at a very great expense, though there are probably few days in the year when there is not a breakdown at some point or another along its course. The line is to be continued to Stanley Falls. There are, both at Stanley Falls, and on the headwaters of the river above Stanley Falls, as well as at other points, various other shorter systems successfully at work.

89. *Roads.*—One of the most interesting experiments of the Independent State has been its indomitable and wearying struggle to construct automobile roads. In a country which at some seasons is in parts little more than a swirling, eddying sea of waters draining into certain great channels—a country where the rivers rise as much as fifteen feet in a few hours, where tornadoes of irresistible force are of daily occurrence—the difficulty of maintaining a roadway is gargantuan. Yet from the Nile at Redjaf to the Rubi at Buta, from the Uelle at Djabbir to the Likati at Engwetra, and from close to Lake Albert at Irumu to the Congo at Stanley Falls, as well as at one or two other points for shorter distances, wide roads have been constructed and are maintained in a fair state of repair. For the most part they have had to be cut through the dense forest, driven by workers who have slowly hewed their way towards a pioneer, with nothing to guide them but the sound of a mid-day gun. On sections of these roads a service of automobiles—traction engines—is established, but works only irregularly, owing to the constant wash-outs along the road.

90. *Railways.*—In railway development the Congo Independent State has been no less enterprising than in other public activities. Scarcely was that wonderful engineering feat—the Cataracts Railway—completed after a long series of disasters and

unforeseen difficulties, which would in most cases have led to the abandonment of the project itself or at least to a disinclination to embark on any new ventures of the kind, than a whole series of other railways was planned and work on them commenced. Strictly speaking, these railways are all in the form of independent companies, but while the Cataracts Railway has maintained its separate entity, it is to a large extent subject to the control of the State. The same applies to the short line of some forty miles of narrow gauge now working through the Mayumbe forest to the north of Boma, which is eventually to be produced to the French frontier. The elaborate system, known as the Great Lakes' Railway, is, however, simply a department of the State in the form of an incorporated company. At present, of this system there is some thirty-five miles of the line from Stanleyville to Pointierville actually complete and working. On the rest of this line little remains to be done but the actual laying of the rails. The "automobile road" from Stanley Falls to Lake Albert is the road-bed of another line of this system. A third is being cut from Kasongo on the Congo to Gundo on the Lomami; a fourth is surveyed from Fundi Sendi to Buli—the total length of all the lines of the system being much about 1,000 miles through the depths of the hitherto unpierced forest. The effect of the first of these two lines will be to avoid the cataracts immediately above Stanley Falls, and so save three or four days in time and an enormous value in lives, labour, and produce; of the second to reduce the journey between Stanley Falls and Lake Albert from two months to three days, and relieve a vast population of the terrible hardship of porterage; of the third to bring Kasongo and the head waters of the Congo within fifteen days of Leopoldville, as against from two to four months now; and of the fourth to avoid the long series of impassable cataracts above Fundi Sendi, and bring the extreme south-east of the State into close touch with Stanley Falls. The full benefit of these changes can only be appreciated by those who have undergone the fatigue, delays, and hardships of the present means of communication, and witnessed the expenditure of energy and produce they entail. The immensity of the task involved in carrying out this change can scarcely be measured. Apart from the difficulties of survey, of cutting the path for the line through the forest, and of constructing and maintaining the

road bed already alluded to, the undertaking is handicapped by every rail, every tie, every bolt, having to be brought out from Europe, carried by rail from Matadi to Leopoldville, laboriously and slowly loaded by hand on steamers, and then borne weeks up the great river in small consignments.

Some State Regulations.

91. *Engagement of Native Labour.*—Several of the regulations laid down for governing the dealings of white men with natives in the Congo Independent State have already been referred to; such, for instance, as the provision that no native, other than an able-bodied adult male, may be requisitioned for State "imposts," and that in no case may such requisitions entail more than forty hours per month of work; that all work done and produce collected for the State shall be paid for at current prices; that no white may acquire native communal land without permission from the State. There are many others, all tending to preclude the possibility of any unfair advantage being taken of the black population. Some of these must be referred to to make points in this report clear. The first is that regulating the employment of native labour. The contracts for all natives engaged for service by a white, whether for government purposes or by private individuals, must be viséed by a member of the judiciary, or in districts where the distance from the nearest judiciary establishment precludes this, they must be viséed by an administrative official with special powers given to him for the purpose. In either case the viséeing official must satisfy himself that the native understands the terms of the contract, is willing to accept them, and that the white man engaging him is able to fulfil his side of the undertaking. These contracts are all registered, and at the expiry of the term of service the native presents himself with his contract before a viséeing official, who must then satisfy himself that the native has been fairly dealt with, and that the white man has fulfilled his obligations under the contract. For this purpose every native worker is provided at the time he signs his contract with a pay book in which every payment made to him, every punishment inflicted on him, and every fine levied on him must be entered, and if he has any cause of complaint in respect either of

punishments or fines or of pay he has an opportunity of making them at the expiry of his term of service. If he has no such complaint to make, and the examining official is satisfied that he has been honourably and justly dealt with, the contract and pay book is handed over to the State, and is filed for future reference, in case of any dispute thereafter.

92. *Punishment of Natives.*— Another decree forbids any white man to inflict corporal punishment on a black, save and except in certain definite circumstances. First, no unofficial white man may lay hands on a black at all in any circumstances. If he desires to punish his house-boy for the most trivial offence, he must send the matter before the State official of the district. Again, no white, official or non-official, may lay hands on a free —non-contract—native in any circumstances. Any offence committed by the ordinary civil population of the country must be sent for trial before a judicial tribunal. Any breach of the first of these two provisions renders the offender liable to a charge of assault, whilst a disregard of the second entails the more serious count of "inhumanity towards natives." The only cases in which a white man—other than a regular court of law—may cause a black to be flogged are (*i.*) an administrative official can order the regularly-engaged personal servant of a white man to be thus chastised for trivial offences, after a proper inquiry into a complaint laid by the master; and (*ii.*) he can direct similar punishment for disciplinary offences by the contract workers of the State; and (*iii.*) an officer of the native army has the same power over his soldiery. But in all three cases the following restraints are in force:—(*a*) The punishment must be inflicted by a black. In no circumstances may a white raise his hand against a native. (*b*) The enquiry must be a formal one, at which the accused must be present and must have full opportunity to defend himself and to call witnesses. (*c*) A detailed record of the offence, the trial, and the punishment inflicted must be forwarded to headquarters. (*d*) The sentence must be carried out in the presence of the white official and of native witnesses. (*e*) Not more than twenty strokes may be inflicted in any case except for habitual thieving, when a maximum of fifty may be ordered, but in this case the punishment must be spread over a series of days, and not more than twenty

strokes given on any one day. (*f*) The punishment must be inflicted on no part of the body other than the buttocks, and the offender must be lying face down on the ground. (*g*) A record of the punishment must be entered in the livret of the offender, so as to be seen by the viséeing authority.

93. *Carrying Arms.*— The usual restrictions on the importation and the carrying of arms are in force. No arms of precision may be imported or carried except by special permit reciting the actual pieces to which the permit refers, and all arms for which permits are granted must be stamped with a number of identity. Under no conditions may a white sell or trade in arms of precision, and only by special license may cap guns be sold to the natives. No white may entrust arms of precision to a native except in the case of State officials, and certain traders' agents, who are allowed to have for their personal protection a stated number of rifles, which, however, must not be borne by natives, except when accompanied by a white man. The regulations on these subjects apply equally to the native army, and are, so far as could be judged, rigorously enforced. It is entirely illegal for anyone—army officer, company agent, or administrative official—to give a native, whether soldier or not, leave to carry any arms of precision unless accompanied by a white man, and even when so accompanied leave may only be given by a special permit reciting the number of rifles which may be carried by natives in each case. Two main checks are in force to ensure the observance of this regulation; (i) all arms for which permits of this kind are granted must be kept stored under lock and key in a prominent place, *e.g.*, on deck in the case of a steamer, and an entry must be made concerning every occasion on which the rack is opened, so that at any moment an inspecting official arriving unexpectedly can see at a glance whether or not all arms are accounted for; (ii) the number of cartridges for such arms is registered and checked, and any missing must be accounted for.

94. *Resort to Arms.*—On no subject appears so much labour to be expended as on this subject of the use of firearms. It is a punishable offence in an official to have resort to arms, and even in cases of self-protection the onus lies on any who have made use of force to prove that all other methods were unavailing. So

strictly is this view upheld that even in military operations officers are liable to be called on to account for their action if they cause natives to be fired on, and in the north of the State there is no doubt that it has resulted in a hesitancy and disinclination to take forceful measures which have had a bad effect on the natives.

95. *Liquor Laws.*—The laws prohibiting the import of alcoholic liquors into the Congo State are well known. Speaking in general terms of the whole State, except the coast strip, no alcohol may be sold to the natives, and whites may import for their personal use only a strictly limited and very meagre quantity. The importation or even use of absinthe is a punishable offence.

IV.—PROTESTANT MISSIONS.

96. *Missionary Societies.*—The three principal Protestant Missions working in the Congo Independent State are (1) the Baptist Missionary Society, British, (2) the Congo Balolo Mission, which also is British—a branch of the Regions Beyond Missionary Union—and (3) the American Baptist Union. There are other smaller Protestant Missions, Scandinavian and American, but the three named are the most important.

Baptist Missionary Society.

97. *Principal Stations.*—The headquarters of the first of these societies is at Bolobo (Mopolenge), on the Middle River. It has also many other stations in different parts of the Congo Independent State, the principal ones being at Wathen, on the Lower Congo; at Kinchassa, on Stanley Pool; on the Middle River at Lukolela; near Umangi on the Upper River; and at Yakusu near Stanley Falls, on the Upper River. There are also other stations in parts of the State which I did not visit. Of the stations mentioned, that at Kinchassa is largely a depôt where steamers of the mission are repaired and necessary works are carried on under the direction of Mr. Howell. At the same time there are schools, a chapel and good mission house, and a small tract of land belonging to the mission, on which necessary vegetables and other produce are raised. The buildings are well constructed and generally picturesque and prosperous. The headquarters at Bolobo are far larger and consist in quite a considerable territory, fenced in, adjoining the well kept Government station at Mopolenge. On the mission property are a very large number of excellent buildings, some of them of two storeys, and all well-constructed and well-maintained, standing in the midst of plantations and gardens which are very highly cultivated, and produce a large variety of useful vegetables and crops, in addition to all the usual fruits generally found or capable of being grown in a tropical country. There is a fairly large hospital divided into different wards and itself consisting of quite a group of buildings. There are also school buildings with a large hall, which is principally used in connection with educational work; various workshops; the houses of the different members of the missionary staff; a printing office; and brick and

timber yards. The whole is well stocked with goats and poultry, and has a general air of comfort and prosperity, which is very pleasing. There is a small landing quay where the different steamers of the mission can come alongside, and where small repairs can be executed. I was unable to visit the station at Wathen, and also that near Umangi, but I found Mr. Stapleton's mission near Stanley Falls, in a condition of activity and prosperity quite equal to that of Bolobo, whilst the buildings are handsome brick buildings of a construction more solid than is usually met with in Central Africa. The design of many of them was out of the common, and the great features of the mission were the large brick meeting hall and the tiles with which the majority of the buildings are roofed. There is no doubt that Mr. Stapleton has succeeded in raising the natives round him to a high pitch of excellence as builders and brick layers. The mission station at Lukolela is on a smaller and less ambitious scale, and is also, I should judge, much older than the other two, or at any rate, the buildings now existing there principally antedate those at either Bolobo or Yakusu.

98. *B.M.S. Schools.*—An admirable work carried on by this society is its system of schools in native villages, under control of mission pupils, to which reference has already been made. In the out-schools of this kind attached to Mr. Stapleton's mission station, there are over 2,000 pupils in attendance, and those attached to Dr. Bentley's station have an even larger number, I was told. Mr. Stapleton, in order to prevent de-naturalising his pupils or making them too dependent on the white man, makes it a rule to accept learners in his technical schools for six months only, so that there is a constant stream of pupils passing through his station, and carrying back with them to their own villages the technical knowledge they have gained. The whole energies of this society are indeed very wisely devoted rather to the general uplifting of the native than to mere proselytising or dogmatic metaphysics, for which the native is not yet fitted.

99. *Personel.*—The Baptist Missionary Society is undoubtedly the largest religious mission at present working in the Independent State, and its staff is a very numerous one. The mission generally in Africa is under the control of the Rev. George Grenfell, who is by much the longest resident in this part of Africa. He

has spent, I believe, some 35 years in tropical Africa; he is a distinguished explorer and traveller; has done magnificent work in the only accurate and complete survey of the Congo River and its principal tributaries; has visited every part of the Congo Independent State, and is an authority alike on its topography and on its ethnography. He was well acquainted with the Congo Basin before ever the Independent State was called into being, and took an active part in its earliest exploration and development. Besides Mr. Grenfell, other notable members of the staff of the Baptist Missionary Society are:—Mr. Stapleton at Yakusu; Dr. Bentley at Wathen, whom unfortunately I had not the pleasure of meeting; Mr. Scrivener at Bolobo; and Mr. Whiteside at Lukolela.

The Congo Balolo Mission.

100. *Stations.*—The work of this society is confined entirely to the basin of the Lopori or Lulonga River. Its two principal stations are the headquarter's depôt station at Leopoldville, and the general mission station at Lulonga, at the junction of the river of the same name with the Congo River. Throughout the whole of the basin of this river there are various stations of the society, at Baringa, Bongandanga, Ikau, Boiela, and elsewhere. None of these stations is on the same scale as the larger stations of the Baptist Missionary Society, nor are there the same extensive workshops and yards to afford facilities for the technical education of the natives. The station at Bongandanga, however, and also the headquarters at Lolonga are both of them of considerable size, well constructed and well adapted for carrying on all the work for which they are designed. At the former of these two, there is now established a considerable printing establishment, and there are also carpenter's shops, though not on a very large scale.

101. *Schools.*—Owing to the state of affairs existing in the district to which this society confines its operations, its sphere of usefulness as a civilising or improving agent is very circumscribed. Formerly, I was given to understand, its schools were largely attended. At one period, indeed, a system of compulsory education was in force in the vicinity of all the mission stations, and the Congo Balolo Mission was entrusted with the teaching of the population. But as a protest against the actions of the State, of which the

missionaries disapproved, they put an end to this arrangement in order not to be in any way formally connected with the administration. At the present time, as a consequence, their schools are all but deserted, and in some cases have, I believe, been closed. The members of the mission very wisely refrain from any undue haste in making converts, and whilst they carry on proselytising work in the form of preaching in the surrounding villages, they set their faces against any semblance of trying to record a large number of actual baptised Christians. The regrettable decline in their educational work has, therefore, robbed the mission of its greatest opportunity for doing good, and is by no means the least serious result of the strained relations existing between tne society and the State, especially implying as it does the abandonment of compulsory education in an important and remote district of the State.

102. *Personel.*—The principal members of the staff of the Congo Balolo Mission are:—Mr. Gilchrist, in charge at Lulonga; Mr. Hope Morgan at Leopoldville; Mr. Harris and Mr. Stannard at Baringa; Mr. Ruskin and Mr. Gammon at Bongandanga; Mr. Lower at Ikau; and Mr. Boudard and Mr. Padfield at Boiela. All of these, with the exception of Mr. Harris, I saw and interviewed on the subject of the alleged maladministration in the Abir territory.

The American Baptist Union.

103. *Stations.*—The third society has a number of small posts, principally on the main river, its headquarters being at Stanley Pool, in charge of Mr. Hope Morgan, of the Congo Balolo Mission, and the principal missionary of the society is Mr. Joseph Clarke, who is stationed at Ikoko, on Lac Tumba. He is the only one of the members of this society whom I met. I visited another mission station of the society near Coquilhatville, but the missionary was away on the occasion of my visit. I found the mission station at Ikoko very inferior to those of the other two Protestant Missions. Apart from the residence of the missionary, the buildings were little better than temporary shanties in a poor state of repair, and there was a general air of neglect and decay alike in the plantations and in the actual physical structure of the post. There

appears to be a large number of persons attached to the mission, and a considerable number of incomplete buildings seem to have been abandoned without ever having been finished.

The Attitude of Missionaries.

104. The champions of the Congo Independent State often imply that its missionary critics have been actuated by base and personal motives, and have been guilty of gross and deliberate exaggeration in the reports they have from time to time felt themselves under the painful necessity of furnishing concerning the condition of affairs as they think them prevailing in their districts. I am very strongly of opinion after meeting these missionaries, and being, in the case of some of them, in close personal contact with them, that the British Protestant Missionaries as a whole are the last people in the world deliberately to misrepresent facts or to be actuated by base motives. Some allowance must of course be made for the natural temptation of those who are cut off for long periods at a time from the society of their fellow white men in a savage country, to see things a little distorted by the discomfort and hardships of their position, and to paint the evils a little highly in their effort to impress the imagination of an audience at home. But bearing this qualification in mind, no one could fairly accuse those missionaries of the Baptist Missionary Society, or of the Congo Balolo Mission, whom I had the pleasure of meeting, of anything approaching intentional misrepresentation. There can be no question as to their personal honesty and integrity. With the exception of Mr. Harris (whom I was not fortunate enough to make the acquaintance of, although I made a lengthy and tedious journey on purpose to visit him at Baringa, on an urgent request from him that I should do so), of Mr. Jeffries and of Dr. Bentley, I met and had conversations with practically all the more important members of both the Baptist Missionary Society and the Congo Balolo Mission in Africa. They all struck me as zealous, honest-minded, and for the most part level-headed men. Whether one shared their views and opinions or not, one was bound to respect them as honestly given. I was indeed astonished to find men whose calling and isolation necessarily tend to make them take a somewhat extreme view of the subject, so essentially large in their ideas, and so free from any-

thing approaching bigotry. I did find, however, and I candidly expressed to most of them, that they are sometimes a little wanting in tact towards the representatives of the Government of the country in which they find themselves. This lack of tact leads very often to mutual misunderstandings and to the existence of an unpleasant enmity between the representatives of civil government and of religion, which is highly undesirable, and goes far to destroy the good that the latter might do in assisting the orderly government of the country. To give one or two instances: two missionaries of the Congo Balolo Mission both referred to the official language as recognised by the Government as "the State jargon," the one of them adding that "of course he would rather leave the country than have it taught in his schools." One of these same missionaries, and another also, gave vent to such expressions as "Of course we don't speak French," and "Of course we don't understand French"; as though it was the most natural thing in the world to live for years in a country, and be rather proud than otherwise of not speaking a word of the language of its rulers. I only found, I think, four missionaries in all who were capable of carrying on a conversation in French. How fruitful a source of misunderstanding this ignorance of the language of the Government of the country must be between the missionaries and the State officials, will be evident when it is added that the latter, Belgians, Italians, and Scandinavians principally, are often ignorant of English, and are forced to communicate with the missionaries in the most extraordinary polyglot makeshifts. I was struck with the fact that in every case where I found missionaries and State officials living in amity side by side, either the missionary was a good French scholar, or the State official a good English scholar. Another instance of the lack of tact of the missionaries is their habit of always referring to the Europeans in the State by their native nicknames, which in the Abir country are, nine times out of ten, insulting if not obscene. When I asked one missionary his reason for persisting in this habit, he stated that he really did not know the official's proper name, and yet for some years he had been living within stone's-throw of this man, seeing him almost daily, and depending on him for the only communication with the white man, other than those in the mission station, which he could possibly

hope for. All these may appear trivial matters, but to those living a monotonous life in a tropical climate, far removed from civilisation, amongst a trying, ignorant, and savage population, they go very far to breed discord and to lead to endless misapprehension on both sides, and above all is this the case with the apparent determination of a large number of the missionaries to ignore the formalities due to highly-placed officials, whom often they treat with scant courtesy. With the most tactful and punctilious, it would probably be difficult to avoid misunderstandings arising from time to time between peoples of different nationality and different religions, owing to the vast difference in their customs, their mode of life, and their views on morality, and on every phase of religion; and it is consequently quite impossible that anything like amicable terms can exist between the missionaries and the officials with whom they come in contact, unless the former are prepared to remember what is due from strangers in a foreign land to its rulers and their representatives. This failing to make an effort to be on amicable terms with the rulers of the country in which they find themselves is, however, the sole direction in which one can honestly criticise the majority of them, and even this criticism by no means applies universally to them all.

Missionary Views.

105. *Mr. Grenfell*, the head of the Baptist Missionary Union, of Bolobo, signed a statement to the following effect:—

"The people of Bolobo and immediately round here have nothing to complain of; if they do not thrive it is their own fault. If the system of government of the Lower Congo and of this district, or even that of the region round the Falls" (*i.e.*, Stanley Falls) "were introduced into the rubber zone, I believe a great benefit would result. The fault has been too great a desire to reap an early harvest. They have hasted to be rich. Another great fault is the want of sufficient judiciary machinery. In very important cases it may be necessary for the hearing to be at Boma, but it ought not to be necessary in every trivial little case to drag witnesses for perhaps months hundreds of miles from their homes. It prevents witnesses from coming forward to give evidence, the fear that they will thus be dragged away, and leads to a general

habit of letting things drift. The taxation system at present is bad; it is wrong to give so much power to solitary agents; evils are bound to result. There is no reason why the tax should not be in rubber, but it should be a tax justly assessed and justly collected." The memorandum here contains the words, "medal system for all taxes," which refers to a suggestion of Mr. Grenfell's explained later. "The taxes should be *per capita*. At present the people round here pay nothing; that cannot go on; it will lead to a financial crisis. All should be taxed alike. A definite sum in rubber, in wood, in food, or in produce of any kind should be demanded at regular and not too frequent intervals, and once paid the native should be clear for a twelvemonth, or whatever the period may be. Forty hours a month is perhaps too much (*i.e.*, as at present counted), but it would not be if it were for labour paid for at a fair rate. It is not too much to ask that the native shall work forty hours a month for payment. I believe that most beneficent results would follow from Free Trade in the sense of giving the native some choice in his commerce with the white man. I quite see that unfettered competition between all comers would be impossible, but the native ought not to be forced into selling at a fixed price one commodity. The white men in some of the posts have scarcely sufficient force for safety to protect themselves, if some powerful man arose in a neighbouring village and threatened. There has been a marked improvement in the last year. (Signed) GEORGE GRENFELL."

106. *Comment.*—In reference to the foregoing, it should be pointed out that it was merely a memorandum of several conversations that I had with Mr. Grenfell in order to express as succinctly as possible his views on the principal topics under discussion. Some of these views, during the course of conversations, he elaborated at considerable length. He is rightly indignant at the unauthorised and unjustifiable use that has been made of his name by Congo apologists, who unhesitatingly cite him as appoving of the whole system at present existing, and have based their action in so doing on the generous and fair-minded tributes which he has from time to time paid to the good that has been done in the State, without any reference to his very trenchant criticism of the evils and abuses that he emphatically maintains exist. The opinions of Mr.

Grenfell are particularly deserving of attention, as he is in a position to be able to form more accurately than any other person a just estimate of the change that has taken place since the establishment of the State. He is fully alive to the good that has been done, but he is so decidedly of opinion that this good has been accompanied by great and terrible evils, that as a protest he has declined any longer to wear the insignia of the Order with which the sovereign of the Independent State decorated him as a mark of the services he had rendered to the development of the country; and he publicly announced this protest at one of the sittings of the Royal Commission. Bearing this in mind, the following comments summarising conversations I had with him may be made on the above memorandum. First: His object in alluding to the condition of affairs at Bolobo and the absence of taxation existing there, was to emphasise what he considers the unfair inequality in the distribution of taxation. Some parts, he maintains, are too heavily taxed, whilst others are free from tax. This he condemns not merely on account of the hardship on those natives who have to provide an additional revenue owing to the immunity of their kinsfolk in other parts, but also as an instance of unsound finance. The speed at which the authorities of the Independent State have endeavoured to develop their domain is a very heavy drain on its financial resources. Were they to proceed more slowly, the taxation of the whole might be lighter. If they are to proceed as fast as they have been doing in the past, all must be taxed, or a financial crisis will be the result. Secondly, it will be noticed that Mr. Grenfell draws a very clear distinction between the rubber zone and the directly governed parts of the State. In instancing the Government of the Lower Congo, of Bolobo (on the Middle River), and of the Falls (on the Upper River) as satisfactory, he commends the three methods of administration in force in the directly governed parts of the State. Thirdly, he was very emphatic as to the break-down of the judicial machinery in many parts, and this is a common, and I believe, a justifiable complaint. It was no means in the sole interests of the black that he mentioned this matter. He cited many cases where the white man was robbed or unable to exert his authority owing to the impossibility of bringing the native

offender to justice. He believes that in many cases the white man has not sufficient force at his disposal, even for his personal protection, and that many evils may be traced to this want of proper control over the native population. The insecurity of the white man leads in some cases to a kind of panic-method of dealing with offences. I found that this complaint was quite a usual one amongst missionaries, one of whom frankly said that he believed great good would be done by far firmer handling of the native population; that the present method of continual inefficient suppression of isolated instances of insubordination led to a feeling of insecurity on the part of the natives as a whole, and to great hardships on the law abiders, which would not arise were a whole district brought into proper and complete control by the adoption of vigorous measures; and the particular missionary in question concluded his remarks with the phrase: "What we want is L—— back again," the force of this remark of course lying in the fact that M. L—— is generally regarded as a typical military martinet. I asked this missionary to allow me to attach his name to these particulars, but he preferred that I should not do so for obvious reasons. At the same time Mr. Grenfell, whilst I fancy not perhaps going so far as this, was quite willing that it should be given as his opinion that the insufficiency of protection afforded to the white man and to his property, was the cause of much evil. Fourthly, the medal system referred to above was a suggestion of Mr. Grenfell's that taxes should be practically in kind, although he had no objection to the exaction of work in payment of them, were it on a regular scale and paid for at a reasonable price under limited competition; that the amount of the taxes should be a definite one reckoned per annum, and that this amount should be the same for all similar districts; that it should be payable in definite instalments at lengthy periods instead of weekly or monthly as at present; that the shortest period for an instalment should be three months, and that during the period whatever its length, the native should be at liberty to pay the tax at his own convenience. In return for it, he should receive a medal which should be equivalent to a receipt for the payment of his tax; he should then be free from all further application until the next taxing period came round again, the mere possession of the medal to be sufficient

evidence of the payment of his tax. Mr. Grenfell further suggested that in order to simplify the collection of these taxes, these medals should be sold at a little less than their face value to traders, who would in this way become tax farmers. They would distribute the medals to the natives, and in return receive the produce represented by the medals. Encouragement, he felt, would be given to trade, and the method would be so simple that it should be easily understood by the native mind. The proviso with regard to the distribution of the medal to traders is, I think, a serious blot on the scheme, for the following reasons:—(*a*) The same number of persons would be required to supervise the collection of the taxes by the traders by this method, and to guard against exaction and extortion on their part, as would be necessary to collect the tax directly. (*b*) In the event of non-payment of the taxes by the natives, the traders would either be at a direct loss, or else would be obliged to resort to force to exact the tax. The evils of entrusting commercial agents with any power of this kind is too grimly emphasised in the Abir territory for an extension of this system to be contemplated with anything but horror; and (*c*) the collection by traders of the taxes would either check the completion of the excellent civil registry as at present being carried on, or necessitate a second staff to carry on this work. Excluding the suggestion with regard to the sale of medals to traders, Mr. Grenfell's medal system has much in its favour. Fifthly, Mr. Grenfell is of opinion that unlimited trade competition would be unfeasible in the Congo Independent State. He is also very strongly of opinion that anything in the nature of a monopoly or exclusive concession is productive of much evil. The only remaining system of trade, in his opinion, is one of limited competition by some such means as issue of permissive trading licences to a limited number of firms, possibly by open tender, to carry on business in certain districts. The outcome of this, however, would in all probability be exactly what it has been in the case of the Kassai, where a somewhat similar system was originally introduced, but quickly led to a pooling of interest amongst the various competitors, and the consequent development of a complete monopoly. Even in this form, however, there is something to be said for the system, as they would at anyrate act as competitors with the State and give a standard value to the price of labour.

107. *Mr. Scrivener.*—On the occasion of my first interview with Mr. Scrivener he was not aware who I was or my object in calling at the Mission. In the course of conversation with him on this occasion, he spoke in vague generalities of atrocities and inhumanities, but when in the course of a somewhat close examination of the matters he cited, I asked for dates and names, and whether he had personal experience of the matters to which he referred, he admitted that the cases to which he alluded were all long ago, and that in no case had he actually witnessed an atrocity or an act of inhumanity committed on a native by a State official. I subsequently received from Mr. Scrivener the following letter, which shows clearly that he was not then aware that I was the person who spoke to him on the occasion of my visit to the Mission:—

"My Lord,—Will you allow me to express my very sincere regret that I was unaware of your visit to our station until too late to show you any hospitality. That strangers should thus have patrolled the mission premises and not one of our *employés* should have apprised me is a thing unprecedented, and I can only sincerely apologise.

"Had circumstances been more favourable I should have taken the opportunity of laying before you certain information concerning the condition of the native population east of this place. We have abundant reason to believe that the enforcement of the rubber tax leads to very many cruelties and a lot of unnecessary hardship, leading to a great amount of emigration and unsettlement. Within the last few weeks I have seen members of a district not far from Lake who have just fled from their villages, being unable longer to endure the indignities and cruelties practised upon them by the sentries in connection with the rubber tax. They swear to seeing one man flogged to death (I have the names of the victim and of the murderer), and also to seeing others so severely flogged that they afterwards died in their villages. The immediate cause for their flight is said to be the flogging of a number of them because they did not hand over to the sentry a buffalo which they killed in his absence. I am writing of this matter to the Commissionaire of the Lake District, and also to the Governor-General.

"I have myself seen rubber purchased by white State officials, the so-called "payment" being a small milk tin full of salt for two kilos of very good rubber. A fathom of calico was also paid to a few headmen. But I know that in many cases the poor wretches are made to deliver up even this meagre pay to the sentries immediately on their return from the post. I have often enquired why redress was not sought at the hands of the white men, but have always been met with an exclamation of surprise that I should even suggest such a thing, and tales of what happened when they did in the past venture on such a course. They invariably suffered more.

"Lately, instead of taking the rubber in little pieces in small baskets, they are made to take it in six-feet strips, this entailing much more trouble and leading to a lot of waste, as the notion has got abroad that pieces under the length will not be taken as a part of the tax.

"To talk of a 'tax' is misleading. The collection of rubber and other works practically occupies all the time of the men, who no longer engage in the brassfounding and blacksmithing (or only to a very small extent) that was until within the last few years such a noticeable industry in the country. They realise their enslavement, and have lost heart.

"For the past few years I have seen much of these people, have had them carrying my loads when travelling, and some of them are in our school at Bolobo. Many of their statements I have verified. There is no doubt that between this place and the Lake Leopold (and probably all round the Lake) rubber is collected without much regard, if any, to the interests of the people or any care as to their extinction or otherwise.

"There is much else that I could write about, but I am not sure that even this will be of interest or use to you.

"Trusting you will have a pleasant stay in this country, I remain, my Lord, yours faithfully, (Signed) A. E. SCRIVENER."

108. *Questions Asked.*—I replied to that letter, asking him to answer certain specific questions which arose out of the substance of it. The questions were as follows:

(1). "Concerning the condition of the native population east of this place." (*a*) Are you able to judge of this condition personally? (*b*) For how long have you known the district referred to? (*c*) How would you describe the condition of the natives in it? (*d*) What change has taken place in that condition since you have known this district?

(2). "Abundant reason to believe." What is the reason?

(3). "Rubber tax." What exactly do you mean by this phrase? Later you say "To talk of a tax is misleading."

(4). "Very many cruelties." (*a*) What do you mean by "very many"? (*b*) What kind of cruelties? (*c*) Please give as many instances as possible, with particulars as to dates, names of persons, and places concerned, of cruelties which you yourself have seen practised by State functionaries on natives.

(5). "Unneccesary hardships." In what does the hardship consist? Can you vouch for this of your own personal knowledge?

(6). "A great amount of emigration." (*a*) How do you know that there is emigration? (*b*) And that it is the result of the "Rubber tax"? (*c*) At what do you calculate its extent since you have known the district? (*d*) How do you arrive at this calculation? (*e*) Where does the emigration take place *to?* (*f*) How do you know where it takes place to?

(7). "Within the last few weeks." When exactly?

(8). "A district not far from the Lake." What is the name of the village or villages?

(9). "Just fled." When exactly, or as near as possible.

(10). "Indignities and cruelties practised on them by the sentries." (*a*) Have you or any other white man now resident in or near Bolobo seen indignities or cruelties practised by sentries on natives? (*b*) If so, can you give full details as to nature of offence, dates and names of persons and places concerned, in every such case. (c) Have you any direct evidence which would be accepted in a court of law—*i.e.*, not hearsay, nor the uncorroborated statements of the complainant natives—that sentries practise cruelties and indignities on natives? (*d*) If so, please give in the

fullest detail possible such evidence, with all particulars as to dates, names of persons, and places. (*f*) In cases where you have been convinced of such cruelties or indignities having occurred, have you informed the authorities, and what has been the result *in each case.*

(11). "Cause of their flight is said to be"—Said by whom?

(12). "I am writing." What has been the result?

(13). "I myself have seen rubber purchased by white State officials." Can you give dates, names of the white State officials and of the places concerned, with the rank of *each* white official.

(14). "But I know that in many cases." (*a*) How do you know? (*b*) How many cases? (*c*) Please give details as to dates, names of persons and places concerned in each case. (*d*) Did you inform the authorities of the State in each case, and if so, what was the result in each case; please give full details.

(15). "Tales of what happened." (*a*) What did they say happened? (*b*) Did you in these cases complain to the white men, and if so, with what result? (*c*) What were the names of the complainants who told the tales of what happened? (*d*) On what dates? (*e*) Please cite as many cases as possible with full details of the original cause of complaint in each case. (*f*) Did you take any steps in any of these cases to verify "the tales," and if so, what steps and with what result?

(16). "They invariably suffered more." (*a*) How do you know? (*b*) Please give fullest particulars for each case, of names of complainants, dates, cause of complaint, name and standing of the white man complained to, and the nature of the subsequent treatment of the complainants. (*c*) Does "invariably mean that in no single case, of "the many cases" of which you "know," was a black who complained, with just cause, of illtreatment at the hands of sentries, able to obtain any redress, and that on the contrary in every one of these cases he suffered more for having complained?

(17). "Brass founding and blacksmithing.....that was until the last few years such a noticeable industry in the country." (*a*) How long have you known the country? (*b*) During this time what falling off approximately has occured in these industries in, say, ten representative villages when you first came and how many now, giving figures for each village separately by name.

109. *Mr. Scrivener's Replies.*—I received from him the following letter in reply:

"My Lord,—I have only just returned (four days ago) from a seven weeks' inland itineration, extending as far as Lake Leopold, hence my delay in answering your letter of the 26th August, which I found awaiting me. My long absence means, of course, a good deal in the way of arrears of work and correspondence; still, I will endeavour to answer your questions as fully as possible.

"I trust you will in the course of your enquiry visit at least one or more of the rubber districts, such as the country of the Baringa, for instance, where the *Abir* are working.

"During my recent journey I noticed a considerable improvement in the condition of the country. All the sentries have been removed, and the quantity of rubber demanded very much reduced and a better payment is made. These changes show that there was need for reform, or they would hardly have been made.

"As to my being able to produce 'unimpeachable witnesses,' that depends on what would be considered 'unimpeachable' amongst natives such as these Basengele folk. But I have never based any serious charge on any unsupported native evidence, and much that I have written about is what I have myself seen, as you will see by some of the answers to your questions.

"I trust you continue well; and beg to remain, yours sincerely,

(Signed) A. E. Scrivener."

"(1). I have been resident in this district since 1889, first at Lukolela for five and a half years, and then here at Bolobo. I have, more particularly at Bolobo, made many journeys into the country, two journeys extending as far as Lake Leopold II. I should describe the condition of the people as "unsettled" in the extreme, many of them being very wretched, living in temporary shelters in the forests to avoid the State authorities. As I first knew them they were living in much better houses than at present, and under even their own chiefs (often tyrannical) they had greater assurance for life and property than is at present the case.

"(2). The flight of many of the people from the Lake district to districts nearer the Congo, where for a long time, until their new gardens began to produce, they lived in a state of semi-starvation, confirmed the testimony they bore as to cruelty received.

It was difficult otherwise to account for their willingness to undergo the hardships they encountered on the road and during the first year of their residence in their new homes.

"(3). I mean that the people are compelled, under penalty of imprisonment for refusing, to bring in a certain quantity of rubber at a certain time (monthly, at the new moon). As to the word "tax" being misleading, I was comparing Congo rubber tax with taxes as levied in European countries, where generally there is some return for the tax in the shape of public works, &c.

"(4). I have never myself witnessed any act of cruelty by a State *employé* on a native in connection with rubber collection, but have heard many natives relate their experiences. I have tested their statement by inquiring of natives many miles distant from the first informants, and have but rarely found their several accounts to disagree excepting in the smallest details. The cruelties I refer to are the driving into the forest of the men unprepared either with food or the means of obtaining a fire; the interference of the tax with their own pursuits, such as the preparation of land for farming purposes, leading eventually to scarcity of food when there used to be abundance, to their being compelled to leave sick wives and other relatives to go for the rubber. The presence in the country immediately behind us at Bolobo of many hundreds (a low estimate would be 1,500) of Basengele and Batito (and Waboma) from the neighbourhood of the Lake, and their universal testimony that it was the treatment accorded them by the State authorities that drove them from their homes. My failing to obtain any other reason for their flight has led me to believe that the cruelties and hardships must have been very considerable, for they suffered much on the road and during the first year's residence here.

"(5). The rubber is often to be procured only in forests several days' journey from the homes of the people. They have then to take it sometimes another two days' journey to the State post Each "collection" entails the absence from the villages of hundreds of men for several days; the total weight of the rubber taken could easily be carried by a few men from each district instead of the present denuding of th villages of the male population. I have seen the men on their way to the forests and to the State posts.

"(6). See answers to questions 2 and 4. I have had occasion, when seeking for suitable places to establish evangelists, to count

the number of huts in certain groups of villages. The emigration has been from country within say, 50 miles west of Lake Leopold to the country within, say, 30 miles of the River Congo, between Yumbi and Chumbiri. I have myself visited many (roughly 50) villages of Basengele, Waboma, and Batito, in this Batende country.

"(7). On the 18th and 24th May last, and several days between.

"(8). Agomoelenge (State spelling 'Gomoerenge').

"(9). Say about beginning of May last.

"(10). The sentries are careful (or were when at the Posts) not to practise cruelties in the presence of a missionary, but I have seen and heard much in the attitude and bullying tone of the sentries when at State posts, to convince me that what people said concerning the cruelties of the sentries was true. I took four eyewitnesses to a Substitut at Leopoldville, and he saw some 12 or 14 more here recently, all able to bear personal testimony to cruelties and indignities practised by sentries on natives. (Please excuse my writing out all their names, etc., here). Among the 'indignities' might be mentioned the compulsory rolling on the ground as a sign of submission when coming to a sentry.

"(11). Said by the refugees.

"(12). Since writing, I have visited the Commandant at Ibali, and heard from him that the sentries concerned had been imprisoned for 15 days! The "flogging to death" I found related to matters of five years ago.

"(13). On the 3rd September, 1903, by M. Besson, Commissioner at Ibali, Lac Leopold, and on the 8th, at Bongo, by the late M. Auguste Dooms, then in charge of that post.

"(14), (15) and (16). By the very general complaint of natives when I asked what was the cause of their dissatisfaction. I did not take down particulars, but advised the people to appeal to the white official. They told me that they were driven away by the white men, and later on punished by flogging by the sentries of whom they had complained. I have not the particulars you ask for, never having made it my business to collect evidence in such detail.

"(17). Since 1889. I cannot give the exact dates you ask for. Formerly, the native forges were a common sight in the villages. Now, men skilled in blacksmithing, etc., travel from village to village, and to see them at work is a rare occurrence.

"The prospects in the past of any investigation being made seemed very remote, hence the absence of exact dates, the use for which was not apparent."

110. *Mr. Scrivener's Memorandum.*—On the occasion of my return to Bolobo, Mr. Scrivener signed the following statement:

"Mr. Scrivener gave many instances of depopulation. Indeed, the people round here are in some parts wholly drawn from the Lac Leopold II. district. The natives of some of them are in the habit of moving their villages from time to time, but always in the same region. This other movement, *i.e.*, from Lac Leopold II., is one of moving long distances or of dispersing altogether and hiding in the bush. He also gave instances of the many different examinations to which a witness is subjected in the most trivial cases. The result is a difficulty in getting witnesses." (N.B.—The memorandum contained the words "the treatment of witnesses, which is very bad," which is crossed out by his own hand and substituted above, the words "the many different examinations"). "The hardship in the labour tax is the disturbance its collection entails in each man having to bring it in individually. The amount is perhaps not too great now. (Signed) A. E. SCRIVENER."

111. *Comments.*—It will be noticed in the above correspondence that Mr. Scrivener's first letter is considerably modified by the answers which he gave to my questions directly arising out of it, and also in the memorandum of his views which he subsequently signed. Speaking generally, it may be said that the references in his first letter to very many atrocities, &c., resolved themselves, in the answers to my queries, apparently to a single act committed five years previously. He states in his first letter that he has verified many of their statements, and in the letter covering his replies to my questions, he says that he has never based any serious charge on any unsupported native evidence; yet when I asked for specific details of the cases referred to when he writes: "*Within the last few weeks* I have seen members of a district. . . . . They swear to seeing one man flogged to death; I have the names of the victim and of the murderer; and also to seeing others so severely flogged that they afterwards died in their villages," he replied that he found "the flogging to death related to matters five year ago." It appears, however, that he made to the authorities

some complaint in reference to the statements of these people, and that as a consequence a sentry was promptly punished by imprisonment. The general impression which the correspondence with Mr. Scrivener left on my mind was that he was apt to be carried away by native rumours, and that he was himself the first to admit any error in his accounts when his attention was drawn to the matter, or when native reports were gone into in detail. It will also be seen that his statements with regard to the taxation of natives in the neighbourhood of Bolobo are at direct variance with those of Mr. Grenfell, whose experience and acquaintance with the district extend, of course, over a very much longer period. It should be pointed out that Lac Leopold II. lies at quite a short distance from Bolobo towards the interior, and that there is for a great part of the way a state road. If, therefore, Mr. Scrivener's experience has been confined to an area, the greatest extent of which has been measured by two journeys from Bolobo to Lac Leopold II., he has naturally not had many opportunities of making comparisons with the conditions prevailing in other parts of Africa, either in the matter of administration, or in that of native habits and manners. Next, where he complains that the Congo system of "taxation" is not so favourable as the taxes levied in European countries because in the latter case there is some return for the tax in the shape of public works, etc., it may be remarked, in the first place that, as Mr. Grenfell, with complete accuracy, pointed out, the people in the neighbourhood of Bolobo are entirely free from taxation, and that this district is not in the rubber zone; and secondly, as referred to in another part of this report, that an enormous amount of public works has been and is being carried out for the benefit of the natives by the Independent State of the Congo; and thirdly, that in the case of the Independent State, the so-called taxation has this advantage over any system in force in Europe, that there is an immediate and personal return to the individual, in that the impost consists of a demand on the native to work for so many hours a month, for payment. In comparing my questions with Mr. Scrivener's answers, it will be noticed that in many cases he does not deal with the points I raised, and in no case does he give specific details to justify the assertions contained in his original letter. It will be seen that a great part

of Mr. Scrivener's complaints refer to rubber gathering and to the system of enforcing the rubber impost, which were entirely inapplicable to the Bolobo district for the reason already mentioned. They must, therefore, presumably refer to the Lac Leopold II. district. It appears, from independent evidence I received, to be beyond a doubt that in the past the administration of this region left much to be desired. As already mentioned, it is administered, not directly by the ordinary machinery of government of the Independent State, but as the private property of the sovereign to whom the territory was granted (by himself) as security for certain monies advanced. This district, which is known as the Domaine de la Courronne, is in fact a private estate, outside the ordinary laws and administration of the Independent State. Its accounts are kept entirely distinct, and are never published; and much of what is said later, in regard to the condition of affairs prevailing in the Abir territory, would appear to have been equally applicable in the past to this district. I understand, however, that there has been a great improvement in this respect since Mr. Consul Casement made his report.

112. *Mr. Harris, of the Congo Balolo Mission* at Baringa, wrote to me as follows:

"My Lord,—We have heard indirectly of your visit to the Congo, in order to make inquiries into the truth of the statements made in England with reference to the administration here.

"I respectfully submit to you, that no enquiry can be regarded as complete, unless the tributary rivers are visited.

"This side of Bassankusu is probably the most thickly-populated district of the Abir, and would number hundreds of thousands of people, working regularly for that society, paying to it their taxes; every fortnight or as the company wishes. We take it for granted that your one desire is to get at the truth, and, therefore, are desirous of supporting Consul Casement's report, and the statements made on behalf of our Government. I would, therefore, strongly urge you not to omit visiting this district. Should you be inclined to discredit Mr. Casement's statements a visit to Baringa would certainly change your attitude of mind. The amount of proof you would be able to receive here, of the truth of Consul's report, will only be determined by the amount of time you are prepared to give to investigating the true state of affairs in this district.

"Permit me, on behalf of the Mission, to offer you every facility and assistance; we shall moreover esteem it an honour if you will accept the hospitality of the Mission during your stay here, whether it be a short or long visit.—I am, your Lordship's obedient Servant,

(Signed) JOHN H. HARRIS."

113. *Mr. Edgar Stannard, of the Congo Balolo Mission* at Baringa, although unwilling to express any views in the absence of Mr. Harris, finally consented to sign the following memorandum of his views:—

"Mr. Stannard, C.B.M., Baringa, confirms all the evidence of himself and Mr. Harris (save where latter speaks of personal experience) given before the Commission, and gives many specific and uncontestable cases of acts of oppression and cruelty. He is himself not opposed to (i.) Taxation of the natives. (ii.) Exacting taxes in the form of produce and of work. (iii.) Punishing those who resist taxation by detention or corporal punishment. (iv.) Making natives work; so long as in each of these four cases the principle in question is operated by a properly constituted Government authority in accordance with ideas of justice, and of good Government as we understand them in Europe. It is the maladministration of these four principles, their malversation to purely commercial ends, that leads to much of the present evil. Nor does he object to the governing authority enforcing in the native a proper respect for law and order. It is its duty. At present there is no administration. The only object of the Company is to exact by every means at their disposal, whether legal or not, the largest possible quantity of rubber. The State must be held responsible. In the absence of Mr. Harris, he does not care to make suggestions. He is of opinion, however, that until the State entirely changes its whole policy and throws open its trade to everyone to the extent of giving up its claims to unowned lands and their produce, no good will result. He was very well satisfied with the Commission.

"In the above, the idea of 'making the native work,' must be understood to exclude forced or unpaid labour beyond a reasonable and clearly defined taxation.

(Signed) EDGAR STANNARD."

114. *Comments.*—From the foregoing it will be seen that Mr. Stannard takes a very reasonable view of the rights and duties of the State. Whether or not one agrees with him as to how far the State must be held responsible for the action of the Abir employées, it is obvious that Mr. Stannard is in no sense of the term narrow-minded in his ideas. His views, therefore, are entitled to every respect, and I am bound to admit that all I saw in the district surrounding Baringa went to confirm the statements as to the condition of affairs which are contained in the above.

115. *Mr. Lower, of Ikau, Abir Territory.*—In answer to my request for a formal statement of his views on the situation in his district, Mr. Lower handed me a copy of the letter which he had a few days previously addressed to the President of the Royal Commission. The letter runs as follows:—

"DEAR SIRS,—In response to the request of the Commission for suggestions as to reform of existing conditions prevailing in the Congo Free State, and especially in the district with which we are acquainted, we, the undersigned, beg respectfully to offer the following, desiring at the same time to make clear that we count them only as independent suggestions and not as in any way a plan of administration. In presenting them, we have thought well to arrange the same under the following divisions:—

"I. Abuses to be removed.

"II. Changes to be introduced.

"I. Abuses to be removed.

"(1). The holding of Concessions under terms which in any way infringe on the liberty of natives, or the right of holding such property as is requisite for them.

"(2). The use of force in obtaining native labour for other purposes than those found necessary by the State for the purposes of proper government. In this we specially refer to the force used at present in connection with the collection of rubber, food, etc.

"(3). The sentry system as now existing in connection with the various companies, and the employment of armed servants for the furtherance of commercial interests.

"(4). The utterly insufficient remuneration at present made to the natives in return for their labour or produce. Fair remuneration in such sort as meets their requirements is what we think ought to be.

"(5). The restriction at present placed upon the natives in regard to travelling from place to place by land or water in pursuance of their personal and legitimate affairs.

"(6). The receipt of taxes by other than the officers of the State or those in their immediate employ.

"(7). The restriction which is at present on the various missionary societies preventing them from obtaining sites for the extension of their work.

"II. Changes to be introduced.

"(1). The placing of all interests represented in the country on an equal standing, so that all shall have full opportunity to receive from the natives what they need. Special care should be taken to prevent monopoly of any kind in any department.

"(2). The regulation of the taxes imposed by the State according to a reasonable and definite standard, so that, in the first place, the natives shall not be unduly burdened, and in the second place, that they shall know what is required of them, and why.

"(3). We feel that an attempt should be made to exercise a more thorough interest in the welfare of the native with a view to his upraising, and that gradual reform should be instituted respecting certain of the prevailing customs. In explanation of this we would name, (*a*) The matter of wives, both as regards polygamy, carried on often to an enormous extent, and also the exorbitant price at present in demand for them—and on the increase—effectively preventing many, and of these, some who have a real affection, from obtaining a wife. (*b*) The slave trading which we have reason to believe is still carried on in many places in a greater or less degree. (*c*) The betterment of the conditions under which the natives live. This concerns the building of better houses, the maintaining of cleanly and sanitary conditions in the village, and the attention to their sick and diseased, specially in respect to infectious and contagious diseases. (*d*) The prevention of the practice of "lobesi" —the native form of gambling—which is attended with many and grave evils, and has spread considerably in recent years.

"(4). Believing that there have been punitive expeditions in connection with the State, either unaccompanied by State officers or imperfectly controlled by them, with resulting cruelties, we count it desirable that all such expeditions shall be accompanied by an European officer or officers, and those of sufficient number to exercise an efficient control.

"(5). The number of State posts at present in existence are considered by us to be too few for the proper oversight of the country. We therefore suggest that they be increased, and further that it shall be made, not merely nominally, but actually possible for the natives to get redress of their wrongs, and a general administration of justice at these places, a thing which we have reason to believe is not possible to them at present. We think it desirable that, as far as possible, the agents of the State should acquaint themselves with the language of the people, so as to be less open to deceit regarding the facts of the cases brought before them than they are at present through their interpreters, who are men often prejudiced or directly interested concerning the palavers. We are prepared to admit that an unwilling miscarriage of justice has accurred in this way. We would suggest that the State posts should not be more than a hundred miles distant from each other, following the course of the river.

"(6). We feel the advisability of establishing a Consulate which shall be available for foreigners resident on the Upper Congo. Places we would name as comparatively central and convenient are Coquilhatville or Irebo.

"(7). With a view to the opening up of the country, we would mention the advisability of making and maintaining roads between the various important centres. This we believe has been attempted in a small measure, but a more thorough and systematic enterprise is necessary. It occurs to us to suggest that the expense and magnitude of such an undertaking would be lessened by making this work part of the tax imposed by the State on the natives.

"Desiring only the true welfare of the natives, and the establishment of a just and righteous administration for the prevention of wrong and the upholding of right."

The above suggestions of Mr. Lower will be seen to be couched in an entirely reasonable frame of mind. Both in paragraph 2 of section I. and in paragraph 7 of section II. he goes so far as even to admit the right of the State to enforce labour for its own requirements; and all the reforms which he suggests, both abuses to be removed, and changes to be introduced, are thoroughly practical and urgently needed.

116. *Messrs. Ruskin and Gammon,* Bongandanga, members of the Congo Balolo Mission, approved the following memorandum of their opinions:

"The fault lies in the system which is wholly bad in principle and in operation. In this neighbourhood there has been some improvement since Mr. Casement's report, and a very great improvement recently since M. Delvin's appointment, but this is a personal matter. We had just the same improvement before, *e.g.*, in M. Morey's day, to be succeeded by a recurrence of all the evils again later. The evils complained of continue even now, though in a less degree, and, we believe, in spite of M. Delvin's instructions and wishes (and not by his connivance), instances have occurred within our own personal knowledge and experience up to really the last few days. It is the sentry system, more particularly, to which we object and to which most cases of evil may be traced individually. The natives, when placed in a position of this kind, are utterly unscrupulous and use it simply to take advantage of their fellows. The worst rogues and greatest bullies are generally chosen for such positions, and the rights of the chief and village community wholly ignored. We do not object to the principle of a work-tax. It is for the good of the native, but what exists here is slavery in its worst form."

117. *Comment.*—My own experience in the Abir territory led me to exactly the same conclusions as Messrs. Ruskin and Gammon have arrived at. The whole system is inherently rotten, and two of the greatest evils to which it gives rise are the sentry system and the ignoring of the native chiefs. Much of the terrible oppression, which attends the rubber collection, springs from these two details of the present régime.

118. *The Rev. T. H. Hope Morgan,* Leopoldville, of the American Baptist Union, gave me several interviews in which he discussed the whole system at length. The following is a summary of his opinions, which he has signed:—

"I am absolutely opposed to the system: it is the system which is at fault. I have no complaint to make of the officials at Leopoldville, and we are on perfectly good terms. So far as this region is concerned, there is no question of actual atrocities. My two

complaints here, are of the terrible hardship of the food tax, which oppresses the villages all round. If it were simply a matter of the value of the Chikwanga itself on the spot, the price paid for it would be reasonable and fair enough. But the villager, the women and children, have to carry it in sometimes as much as four days journey. They are practically never in their own villages: they have no time to call their own, no opportunity to attend to their homes and families, or to their own gardens. Their life is one long drudgery, and the pay ridiculously inadequate, sometimes not even enough to cover what they themselves have to give for the raw material, without reckoning the cost of labour of preparation and of transport. They look on nothing as their own: no sheep or goats or fowls are left to them. When I offer them, they refuse them on the ground that B.M. will seize them. You will hardly find a goat in all the district round. And the remedy is so simple—to make the wives of the soldiers and workers in the camp make their own plantations (details of the scheme). My second complaint is in reference to the sale of liquor to the natives. (Details). So far as other districts are concerned, the system (the rubber system?) is so bad that I really believe it would corrupt anyone. An Englishman would probably be just as bad under its influence as anyone else. (Signed) T. HOPE MORGAN."

119. *Comments.*—In the above "B.M." refers to Bulai Matadi, *i.e.*, the State. The words "details of the scheme" allude to a scheme of Mr. Morgan's by which all the wives of the soldiers and workers who are at present reckoned as on the strength and given an allowance and have not really sufficient to occupy their time, with the consequence that they degenerate largely, he says, into worthless loafers, should be obliged to maintain their own plantations and keep themselves. This would undoubtedly effect an enormous relief to the burden of the food tax, which is very heavy in the immediate neighbourhood of all large State posts. A food tax is obviously one which cannot be distributed over a wide area, and where the demand for food is heavy is also just the neighbourhood where the people to meet the demand are few, owing to the fact that the demand itself is created by the absorption of a large body of the population into the service of the State. At the present time the authorities at Leopoldville are endeavouring to establish State

plantations with modern machinery for the crushing and saturation of the manioca and the production of chikwanga. The second word "details" refers to Mr. Morgan's complaint in reference to the liquor traffic. The importation of alcohol is strictly forbidden in the Congo Independent State, but owing, it is said, to the existence of treaties, the provinces of Banana, Boma, and a part of The Cataracts in which Leopoldville is situated, are excluded from this embargo. In the case of the first two, spirits may be imported and a trade done in them with the natives. In the case of the third, only non-spirituous liquors, such as beer and light wine may be sold to the natives. Above Leopoldville, no alcohol may be taken even by a white man in any form without a special permit from the State, and nowhere may it be given or sold to the natives. Mr. Morgan would like to see this provision extended so as to include Leopoldville. There is no doubt that the Congo Independent State has done a very great work in keeping the native beyond the reach of temptation as far as strong liquor is concerned in almost all but an insignificant corner of its territories, and no doubt the extension of the area in which the Liquor Law is operative so as to include the coast of Leopoldville would be beneficial, but it should be pointed out on the other hand, that the English trading houses are said to be very strongly opposed to the action of the State in forbidding alcohol in its territories, as it is said to have led to a diminution in trade.

120. *Summary.*—Reviewing the opinions of those missionaries whose views are set out above, it will be noticed that generally speaking, they all concentrate on one point, and that point is the rubber system in force in the concession territories. Mr. Morgan specifically says that there are no questions of atrocities in his neighbourhood. He criticises many points of detailed administration, but deliberately repudiates any charge of inhumanity against the officials in the district in which he works. Similarly, on the Middle Congo, Mr. Grenfell, of his wide and vast experience, eulogises the administration on the Middle, Lower, and Upper Congo. Mr. Scrivener's criticisms are confined to the Domaine de la Couronne, in which the rubber impost is enforced, and all the remaining opinions deal with the Abir concession territory, while the criticisms in Mr. Grenfell's communication refer mainly also

to this district. Mr. Stapleton, whom I interviewed verbally, also drew the same distinction. He stated that he had no cause for complaint in his immediate district. The only occasion on which he had ever had to complain of the conduct of a white official, immediate satisfaction had been granted by the delinquent's superiors; but the administration, he said, was not quite so satisfactory on the Middle River. He could not do otherwise than suppose that the Abir country was in a thoroughly rotten state, in view of the reports which came to his notice; and he was fully convinced that, although he personally had not been brought in direct contact with the districts where atrocities occurred, the accounts sent home by C.B.M. missionaries were fully justified.

PANGA, UPPER ARUWIMI.

WHITE RULE ON THE CONGO.

Different Systems.

121. *Directly-governed Regions.*—In all that is said, alike in reference to the details of the general system of government in force in the territories of the Congo Independent State, and also in reference to the effects of that system on the country and on its inhabitants, it must always be borne in mind that there are large areas which are outside its operations, whilst in the rest—and by far greater part—of the State's dominions there are variations and differences in the application of the system. Thus, in the Coast region the Liquor Laws are not in force; trade with the natives is free to all; the system of land tenure and transfer is much the same as in the United States; there are few concessions, except in the Mayumbe district; a monetary currency is established; and a normal form of taxation and customs is in operation. In all the remainder of the directly-governed part of the country, the importation or sale of alcohol is prohibited; trade with the natives is restricted to a narrow strip along the banks of certain rivers, and no trade may be done even in these belts in any produce except that raised by the natives in their villages and plantations; land transfer from natives to white men is practically impossible, and tenure by natives is in the name of the village community: nearly the whole of the land constitutes what is known as the Domaine Privée, or State property; there is no regular nor universal form of currency; and the impost system already explained takes the place of taxation. Even in making this broad distinction between the small Coast region and the interior, it is necessary to qualify it by pointing out that the "Coast region" is not the same for all purposes: the boundary for the Liquor Laws is not the same as that for free commerce, for instance. But it is approximately correct to say that the Coast region for the above purposes is the little tongue of country seawards of Leopoldville. In the directly-governed areas, all lands not in the "effective occupation" of natives are Crown property; their produce is strictly reserved to the State; and even the right to enter them or to pursue game in them is technically granted to the inhabitants of the country as a special

and temporary act of grace on the part of the State. Under the operation of this system, practically the whole of the directly-governed districts, with the exception of native villages and their plantations, constitutes the Domaine Privée. One of the results is that, strictly speaking, natives cannot move their villages for the good reason that they have nowhere to which to move them.

122. *Concession Districts.*—In the past a large number of concessions to traders and syndicates were granted on various terms by the State, most of them in return for undertakings of a public character, as, for instance, the building of the Cataracts Railway. Several of these concessions are in a form which confers on the concessionaires a title to large tracts of lands, the right to farm their revenue, and an exclusive right to trade in the district embraced. So comprehensive are the powers granted that practically the administration of the regions affected is handed over to the concessionaires, and the supremacy of the State is a shadowy principle rarely or never put in practice. Besides these territorial concession, others of a non-territorial character have been granted in many parts. These latter merely confer exclusive trading rights or grant limited parcels of land for agricultural or lumbering purposes, or give other special privileges, without, however, any surrender on the part of the State of any of its governmental functions. When in general the concession system and the concession districts are referred to, in contradistinction to the directly governed regions, it is the territorial concessions and the part of the country affected by them that are intended. Of such concessions two alone are still in force—those of the Abir (A.B.I.R.: Anglo-Belgian India Rubber Company) and of the Lulonga Companies. in the territory of these two the sway of the State is practically in abeyance, and the country administered by the companies. Indeed, in general terms it may be said that the only restrictions on the absolute power of the companies are those imposed on the use of arms, and that the only part played by the State is the consequent maintenance of the native army in these regions for the purpose of keeping order and enforcing the companies' regulations. Technically, no doubt, this is not the position. But in practice it is. As a consequence it follows that what has been said in explanation of the system of government in the Independent State does not

apply to the concession districts, which, however, although extensive, do not form a very large proportion of the whole country.

123. *Le Domaine de la Couronne.*—There is yet another, but quite small, tract of country which is outside the direct action of the Government, and in this case the removal of control is complete and absolute. The district referred to is the valuable forest belt round Lac Leopold II., which is the personal property of the sovereign, known as the Domaine de la Couranne. No accounts are ever published concerning this region; its managers are neither appointed by nor answerable to the ordinary officers of the State, make no reports to Boma, and are not subject to the ordinary State forms of inspection. Their sole responsibility is direct to the owner of the property, and the estate constitutes, in fact, as well as in theory, a little extra-territorial district in which the State wields no authority whatever. For convenience sake, it is true, the persons appointed to posts in the Domaine de la Couronne are as a rule drawn from the ordinary personnel of the State, and the individuals through whom communications are held with the royal owner are those who act in a similar capacity in regard to the Independent State. But even this link is weaker than it might at first sight appear, as the persons managing the estate deal direct with Europe so that Boma may be, and actually often is, in complete ignorance of what passes.

124. *The Kassai and the Katanga.*—In two very large regions in the south of the State, where many non-territorial concessions have been granted, the Government, whilst it retains all its prerogatives and exercises supreme and upfettered control, yet operates in forms different from that found in other parts. The difference, however, is merely one of form. I did not visit these regions, and so do not discuss them. It is, therefore, unnecessary to explain the form of government in them. For all practical purposes, they constitute a part of the directly-governed area of the State.

The Directly-governed Region.

125. *Officials and the Native Population.*—So far as concerns those parts of the domains of the Independent State of the Congo which are under the direct control of the Central Government, I was no less struck in the regions which I visited with the pleasant

relations existing between the native population and their white rulers, and with the contentment and obvious prosperity of the indigenous people under European rule, than I was with the rapid pace at which the white man has in these parts pushed his way into the hitherto inaccessible interior. All along the Ubangi river the white man is received with a enthusiasm and a cordiality which prove conclusively that the black population has had no experience in connection with him which has given them cause either to hate him, or to doubt his honesty of purpose, or his fair dealing. Now, so far as the State territory in this region is concerned the only experience that the native has had with the white man is that which he has gleaned from the Government officials with whom he has been brought into contact; for the country which, until a few years ago, was unknown and untrodden by the European at all, had until the occasion of my journey never been traversed by any non-official white. I had every opportunity, owing to the way in which I travelled, and the secrecy with which as far as possible I guarded my movements, of assuring myself that there was nothing artificial in these demonstrations, and no one who experienced them could for one moment doubt that they were anything but absolutely genuine. They represent the feelings of the native towards the white man, and I took repeated opportunities whenever I was within a couple of days of a State post of cross-examining the natives as to the treatment they received from the white man. I was careful to explain that I had no connection with the State, and that I was there to satisfy myself that the natives were happy and contented. The form of words which I invariably used, and which I assured myself were accurately translated in those cases where I was unable to make myself understood personally, was as follows: "I don't belong to Bulai Matadi, or to Bulai Matadi's people. I come from a tribe which is a friend of Bulai Matadi's tribe in Europe, but my tribe have been told that you don't like Bulai Matadi, and if this is so, they want to know why, in order that they may persuade Bulai Matadi to remove any grievances that you have, and to make you happy and contented." And then I would ask whether the white man robbed them, punished them unjustly, ill-treated them, or forced them to work against their wish; whether he paid them for the rubber they brought him, and for the work they did for him, and whether they were content

with the form and the amount of the payment. These questions I asked in all cases, and in addition in many cases, where the native was a man of superior intelligence, and showed a disposition to discuss the matter, I would get any further supplementary information that I could. I assured myself by every means in my power that the native thoroughly understood that I wished to know of any complaint he might have against the State official, and that I was an independent person to whom it would be to his advantage to confide his troubles. Owing to my getting on exceedingly friendly terms during the course of my journey with two or three of the principal chiefs, more particularly Bayar, Gembele, Abira, Movounga, and especially the great tribal chief Banza, I was able in most cases to win the confidence of the lesser village chieftains, and consequently of the natives themselves. It was a noticeable thing that until I had met and made friends with Movounga, the first of these chiefs, on the way up the river, I found it difficult to obtain the individual opinions of the natives. They were enthusiastic as a body in giving one welcome, but exceedingly reticent and shy about giving one information. The fact of one's trying to glean it evidently aroused their natural suspicion. During the night that I stayed with Movounga the "telephone" gongs or long distance tomtoms were being used almost the whole night, and those from the distant villages were distinctly audible tapping out the replies. On the following day I learnt what the meaning of this signalling was, for the enthusiasm with which I was greeted at each village I came to was even greater than previously, whilst I learnt through my boys that all the villages were saying that they had heard that I was a "good white man," and that Movounga had signalled that I was a friend of his. It was through this that I was passed on from one chief to another, and that in the case of Bayar and Gembele I became on the most friendly terms possible between a white man and a black. Gembele assured me, and his people also assured my boys, on my leaving his territory, that he would await my return without sleeping, *i.e.*, with impatience, and that it would always be their happiness to work for me. From these indications I am sure that the opinions given me by the chiefs and their people were *bonâ-fidè* and honest. Almost without exception the chiefs whom I questioned eulogised the State officials in the highest terms, and seemed quite

indignant that I should ever have harboured a suspicion against them. Whilst all the State officials naturally have native nicknames, the majority of which refer to some personal peculiarity, they are none of them of an insulting or objectionable kind, and most of them are irresistibly apt, as for instance, "the white man who runs when he walks," is a name for an official with the peculiar short jerky pace. Now it will be seen where the Abir country is dealt with, that mention is made of the fact that the majority of the Company officials have names given them which are in some cases insulting, and in others obscene. There was nothing of this kind in any part of the directly-administered portion of the State which I visited. On the contrary the nicknames in these parts are many of them affectionate in character, and in almost every instance the native refers to a State official as often by the simple phrase "our own white man" as by his regular nickname. The natives from districts administered by different officials will carry on a most heated argument supporting the respective claims to excellence of their respective local rulers, and I was in one district repeatedly asked by the natives if I could persuade Bulai Matadi to let their own white man come back to them again, as he was then about to go down river on leave. In another part a similar desire in the past was so cogently urged by the natives that the official in question, rather than accept promotion in the ordinary course, returned "to his own people" for a second and afterwards for a third term. Confining for the moment my remarks to the Ubangi province, though not with any intention of implying that they are applicable only to that district, I am bound to admit that I was astonished at the pleasant and cordial relations existing between the white official and natives. In the stations the white is always accessible. This is a rule to which there is no exception. It matters not whether one be in bed or at table, or even in one's bath at the end of the day, one is always liable to have any native who wishes to speak to one walking in without ceremony. In many stations, in order to maintain discipline, the servants or boys of the Europeans are forbidden to appear in the European quarter between lights-out and *reveillé*, and this rule is rigorously enforced whatever individual instructions a particular boy has received from his master. But if an ordinary native inhabitant of the district desires to see the

white man day or night, the sentries have strict instructions to let him pass unhampered, and on more than one occasion I saw instances of natives arriving in the dead of night, and rousing up the presiding official for an utterly trivial matter. They have come to regard him as something belonging to themselves, and it has been found that they resent any interference with what they consider as the inalienable right to approach him at all times and to appeal to him on all subjects.

126. *The working of the Machine.*—In all these regions there was no more trace of the system of administration proving a hardship to the natives than there was of abuse of power on the part of individual State officials. Although, strictly speaking, crystallised by rigid regulations concerning its most minute details, the amount of initiative allowed to the officials gives the system an elasticity which renders it adaptable to the varying circumstances of different districts, and I found that—throughout the Ubangi province, more particularly—the most liberal interpretation is placed upon the degrees regarding the power of native chiefs. Virtually, with the exception of the small strip of territory on the Lower Ubangi where the natives have not yet attained to a sufficient degree of social and intellectual development to permit of their being entrusted with any very extensive authority, the government of this province is carried on through the medium of the native chiefs under the general supervision of the white officials; and since on the Upper Ubangi, as already pointed out, the indigenous population has reached a very considerable degree of natural civilisation, it is thus gradually being introduced to European methods and European ideas, through the medium of its own pristine rulers and ancient customs, which are being adapted little by little to the changed conditions of civilised life, without any rude breaking of their continuity. As Banzyville was my headquarters for a longer period than any other State station, I had there a better opportunity of examining in detail the working of the system, its effects on native life, and the reception accorded to it by the black population; and whilst these remarks refer more particularly to this district, it must be understood that so far as I could gather from a less exhaustive examination, they are equally applicable to other regions. So far as the effect of the imposts on the individual native is concerned there is no possible question in these regions of its being

a hardship. The price paid per kilogramme considerably exceeds that paid by the companies trading on the French shore; I enquired the price at nearly every station on both sides, whether commercial or governmental, and I found that roughly the average price paid on the French side by the trading companies was forty-five to forty-seven centimes per kilogramme, although where competition was most severe and in districts where any dearth prevails owing to under population or lack of rubber plants, it rose as high as sixty to sixty-five centimes a kilogramme, and had, I was assured by traders of the Dutch House, been known even to reach a franc a kilogramme, but this last price was quite an exceptional one, and as in many parts the price often falls as low as thirty to thirty-three centimes a kilogramme, the general average was that stated. The price paid by the Independent State along the Upper Ubangi varies in much the same way, but the average is far higher. Thus at Banzyville it reaches the limit which may be paid by the State officials, namely, sixty-five centimes a kilogramme. But a considerable quantity of ivory comes in. This, the natives, finding it often by hazard and without any particular exertion on their part, are quite willing to sell for practically a nominal price, and far below that for which provision is made by the State. The official in charge is thus enabled to offset the one against the other, with the consequence that the district commissioner at Banzyville is really paying the natives about seventy-two centimes a kilogramme. At Mokoangi and at Yakoma, the price varies between fifty-five centimes and the limit of sixty-five, and as Banzyville is by far the largest of the three districts into which, for administrative purposes, the Upper Ubangi is divided, the average price paid throughout this part of the province cannot be less than sixty to seventy-two centimes a kilogramme. At every point the price paid by the State is considerably in excess of that paid on the opposite side by the trading companies. As the result of this, the natives who have reached a degree of civilisation in which they can fully appreciate the benefits of commerce, come voluntarily, without the smallest compulsion, to sell rubber and ivory and copal to the State. The nominal quantity of the impost varies from one half a kilogramme for an adult male in places where rubber is scarce, to two kilogrammes where rubber is plentiful, but the quantity furnished by the natives of their own accord is far in

excess of these amounts. It must further be remembered that, as already pointed out, on the French side the payment is largely made in a useless currency which has practically no value to the natives, whereas the State makes its payment from large well-stocked stores of varied merchandise, from which the individual native is entitled to select, to the amount due to him, such goods as he desires.

127. *Alleged Atrocities.*—In all these regions of the directly governed parts of the State which I visited, I could hear no breath nor rumour of anything approaching what are known as atrocities or abuses of their power on the part of the officials. The native is as a rule only too ready to adopt any suggestion conveyed to him by a question, more particularly when the suggestion is to the effect that he is illtreated or suffering under any hardship. From the nature of the thing, I was continually obliged to cast my questions in such forms as would imply that I believed that abuses existed. Yet the only complaints that were ever made to me were of the most trivial description. One chief, after quite a lengthy cogitation, began a long story to which I eagerly attended, as I thought it must be going to lead up to some startling revelation; when at length he reached the climax of his grievances, it was that a flag which had been given to him by the white man some years ago was so badly torn by its constant use that the chief could no longer fly it, and he was much aggrieved that he had not received another. And this incident fairly represents the average gravity of the complaints that were made to me. The majority of them related to domestic affairs and had no bearing whatever on the rule of the white man, and it was evident that in those parts where the State official was the only white man they knew, the idea of his presence being a hardship or of his treating them with cruelty had never entered their heads.

128. *The Economic Aspect.*—By what is called the financial argument, it is supposed to be a self evident fact that the native is being wronged and robbed of his rights, because for the produce of the soil of his country, which is sold at from 3/- to 6/- a pound in Europe, he receives only some 3d. a pound himself (or in many cases, of course, less), and further that in a country from which the exports of produce amount to roughly two millions per annum, whilst the imports of goods in payment

for this produce amount to only a minute fraction of this sum, the native inhabitants of the country are being evidently despoiled of their lawful property. At first sight the argument might seem a valid one, but on a little closer examination its falsity becomes apparent. In the first place, until the white man came to the country the native made no use whatever of rubber except occasionally as a plaster for his wounds or as a ligament for attaching his fish hooks to his lines, or for binding the heads of the village drum sticks. By the vast majority of natives rubber was unknown, and the collection of it unheard of. At any rate, in those parts which I visited, the native is very glad indeed to obtain the payment he receives for the collection of rubber, and is quite content with the amount. Further, there is one flaw in the argument which renders it absolutely nugatory; the figures quoted by the writer in question are the prices in Europe. Now it is obvious that the prime cost of any raw material is perhaps the smallest item of all in its production, and therefore to compare the values of the exports with the imports it is not just to compare the price of the rubber after it has borne the enormously heavy cost entailed by the supervision of its collection, by the transport down country to the coast, and from the coast to Europe, with the prime price paid to the first producer and say that the difference is stolen. To say that because the native receives only 3d. a pound for that which in Europe is worth, let us for say, 4/9 a pound, he is being cheated out of 4/6 on every pound of his produce, is tantamount to saying that because at Mpoko, beer, for which the brewer gets only a penny three farthings a bottle in Europe, fetches twelve francs a bottle, the brewer is therefore being cheated out of 9/5½. The main fact that stands out in this price is that the native in Central Africa with, until the advent of the white man, no ambition and no wants to satisfy, is now receiving a payment for his time in excess of that received by probably the majority of natives in India; and not only this, but owing to the perfection and completeness of the transport system and other departmental arrangements affecting the cost of imported produce, he is receiving his payment directly in such commodities as he requires at a far cheaper rate than that for which they could be imported by private enterprise.

129. *Benefits of White Rule.*—Another argument frequently employed against the present administration of the State, is that the

revenue derived from the natives is wholly devoted to the personal profit of individuals in Europe, and that the native and the community generally within the borders of the Congo State derive no benefit whatever from it. Quite apart from the fact that a cursory glance at the published annual estimates of the State disproves immediately the truth of this, no one could possibly travel through the country without being struck by the enormous amount that has been done for the public good. Unlike the colonies in Africa of European powers, the Independent State of the Congo has had from its very outset to be wholly self supporting, as it has had no mother country to which to look for funds, and it has had from the first to bear the entire cost of its own administration and all improvements carried out. Loans, it is quite true, have been advanced to a very small extent for these purposes, but it is obvious that where such loans have been private, the interest on them and the repayment of them must equally be made. Handicapped by this necessity of starting practically without any capital and without any mother country to which to look for assistance, the benefits which have been conferred upon the Independent State of the Congo have nevertheless far exceeded those which have been conferred on the country in the case of the majority of the European colonies in Africa. On all the principal rivers, fleets of steamers have been established which have relieved the native of that hated and real hardship, personal porterage. Peace and security have taken the place of the constant inter-tribal and inter-village warfare, and the utter insecurity of life and property which previously existed. The slave trade, which proved so terrible a curse to the inhabitants of the Congo State, has entirely disappeared. Cannibalism is almost unknown at the present day, except in the most remote and least accessible parts, where it may still on occasions be secretly practised. The villages of the natives are undergoing a very marked and very rapid change for the better in their general appearance and in their sanitation. The nearer one approaches to a State post the cleaner, more orderly, better built, and better kept the villages become, and the more extensive and more carefully tended are the plantations. The whole method of life of those natives who have been brought into contact with the white man have been wholly transformed and his whole character improved. In many parts

large and well-made roads are maintained by the State in an excellent state of preservation in circumstances of the utmost difficulty, owing to the frequency of tornadoes in a country lying directly under the equator; and the instances of the benefits that have accrued to the population and to the country from the presence of the white man might be multiplied indefinitely. The opening up and general improvement of the country is of necessity of benefit to its population and to its inhabitants, and seeing that almost the entire revenue derivable from the State is devoted to this work of opening up and developing the country, to administering it and governing it, it is incomprehensible how any persons can seriously maintain that the native is being exploited for the personal profit of individual Europeans.

The Concessions Region.

130. *The Abir Concession.*—The principal district of the Independent State from which complaints of maladministration have emanated, is the territory conceded to the Abir, in the Equator Province. The property of this company consists of the basin of the Lopori and its tributaries, this river being itself a tributary of the Lulonga, which in turn is a tributary of the Congo river. The concession, although a large area, roughly 25,000 square miles—not 35,000 as frequently stated—is in proportion to the 800,000 square miles composing the area of the whole state, a small one. On the other hand, the Abir territory bears traces of having, in quite recent times, been densely populated, and therefore its administration affects a considerable portion of the inhabitants of the Independent State. Abutting on the Abir domain is that of another, but much smaller concessionaire company—the Lulonga—which owns a comparatively small estate on the banks of the river of that name, between its junction with the Lopori and its outfall into the Congo.

131. *Condition of Affairs in the Abir.*—So far as the country embraced in the concession of the Abir is concerned, everything I saw went to confirm the reports which have been received from this district. The contrast between it, and the area immediately abutting on it to the east, is startling, and the difference in the reception accorded to the white man, to which reference has already been made, before and after crossing the ill-defined

frontier limiting the Abir territory, is so marked, that it is with difficulty that one can believe after crossing it that one is still amongst the same people as on the previous day, and still within only a few miles of the prosperous and thriving villages, from a native standpoint, in which one had been sojourning previously.

132. *Explanation offered—degeneracy.*—It is quite impossible to accept as wholly sufficient, the explanation that the difference is due to the fact that east of the Lopori basin the natives have reached a higher level owing to their contact with the Arabised tribes on the Lomami. This may account in some measure for a part of their superiority over their own tribesmen in the further west, but it utterly fails to explain the fact that the difference between the two, instead of being a gradual transition as one gets further removed from the Arab influence, is sudden and sharply defined with a definiteness so clearly marked, that at the point where I crossed into the Abir country, it occurred between two villages not more than ten or twelve miles apart, one of which was under the direct administration of the Central Government, and the other of which was under the control of the Abir Company.

133. *Sleeping Sickness.*—Again, the ravages of the sleeping sickness may form one of the causes which have led to the lethargy and fatalistic indolence of the scanty population found in the Abir country. The enormous mortality that has undoubtedly occurred as the result of this terrible scourge, must have resulted in a very considerable depopulation, and may possibly have done much to break the spirit of the survivors, and to produce a hopeless feeling of insecurity. But it is utterly inadequate to explain the intolerable dread of the white man which is evinced individually by almost every native one meets, and by the collective timidity of the population as a whole, as shown by the way in which they hide their habitations in the densest bush, and conceal by every means in their power the access to them; and further, by the desertion of these villages, miserable and ill-kept as they are, on the approach of any white man.

134. *Difficulty of the situation.*—The inhabitants are undoubtedly backward and primitive, with few needs, easily satis-

fied by the bounty of nature in the locality in which they live. They have, therefore, no natural inducement to work, and having for generations been habituated to live a life of idleness, are a people of necessity, exceedingly difficult to develop, they having neither ambition nor demands beyond the primitive wants of the immediate moment, which can be met without the smallest intervention on their part. Races a little more highly developed can be encouraged to work, and be turned into useful members of society, by an appeal to their covetousness, their greed, and those desires which cannot be satisfied without exertion. But there appears in the case of the most primitive type of savages to be no emotion and no appetite to which one can appeal, which is sufficiently strong to induce them to work voluntarily. They must be raised by the slowest and most tedious of all means of development, the gradual influence of contact with members of a superior race, who will take the trouble to encourage them, and help them to improve themselves. Now, it is obvious, that to have granted a concession to a trading company to administer, and carry on a commercial undertaking in the midst of, such a backward people, in a country where it must wholly depend for its profits on the exertions and work of the people, was, in the first instance, a deplorable blunder. Force, and force alone, was the only means of obtaining from such a population, the work that was absolutely necessary for the prosperity of the company. They could not be encouraged to work by the desire for riches, ambition not yet having stirred in their breasts, or in order to have means of supplying their primary wants, since nature already supplied these with a lavish hand. They had, therefore, to be goaded and driven to work, and fear had to take the place of ambition or covetousness, as the motive sentiment inducing them to labour. This was the inevitable consequence which was bound to follow from the granting of the concession, and it is all too apparent to anyone travelling through the Abir territory, that the application of the principle that men who will not work must be made to work, has been thorough and drastic on the part of the Company.

135. *An ill-drafted concession.*—Again, another blunder would appear to have been committed in the drafting of the decree under which the Abir Company operates. To place a large territory under the control of a purely commercial concern, without reserving

any rights as to the appointment or supervision of its officials, without insisting on their being possessed of any compulsory qualification, would in itself appear to be a direct invitation on the part of a Government, to that Company to do as it pleases without fear of any questions being asked. When, in addition to this, however, the Company is nominally entrusted with the policing of the district, and by the law of the State, nominally deprived of all powers of enforcing its policing authority, it is only natural that one of two things—or both—must occur; either the policing will be wholly neglected, or the officials of the Company will have recourse to illegal means of enforcing their authority and maintaining their prestige. In the case of the Abir, it is obvious that both results have followed. There is no proper policing of their territory in the ordinary sense of the word, and their agents occupy themselves solely with their commercial functions, so that even during the short time that I was in the territory, I was brought into direct contact with no less than three outbreaks on the part of the natives, with the only instance of open cannibalism that I came across during my whole voyage through the State, and with more lawlessness and unrest among the native population than in any other part* In addition to these cases which came under my personal

* To specify these cases; (1) On arriving at one station of the Company, Baringa, I found that certain villages, lying at some distance in the interior behind the station, had attacked the villages immediately adjoining the station, and during my stay there, a state of open warfare existed between the two: the women from the near villages had either fled in hiding into the bush, or had taken refuge in the station and in the mission adjoining; whilst I myself saw the wounded on their way to be treated at the mission. On enquiry as to the cause of this outbreak I learned that the more distant villages, the attackers, were those charged with the duty of collecting the rubber in the forests, and that those in the nearest villages, the attacked, were those who supplied the meat and vegetable food-stuffs for the station and its employees: that the rubber-villages had practically revolted against the authority of the Company, and had issued an ultimatum to the food-villages to the effect that if these latter continued to supply the white men, the rubber villages would come down upon them and annihilate them; and this attack was in fulfilment of the threat. To my knowledge, the food villages appealed for assistance to the white men in the station; these, however, had no legal power to assist them or to take any militant steps to suppress the outbreak; all they were empowered to do was to appeal for assistance to the State authorities which meant probably many weeks delay. Formal communications would have to pass between the station and the headquarters of the Company lower down the river; the latter would then pass on the communication to the nearest state post, and this last would make a formal report to the administrative centre of the province, at Coquilhatville, a couple of days journey by steamer down river, and four days journey up stream, with the probability that many days would elapse both in sending down the report and in receiving a reply, owing to there not being a steamer about to start at the moment required. The provincial governor on receipt of the report from his subordinate would have to communicate with the Commandante of the local detachment of the native army, who would have to make his arrangements for transporting men to the disturbed region. It can easily be understood that long before this would be effected some definite termination would have been arrived at, at the cost, no doubt, of much bloodshed, ill-feeling, and hardship to the disturbers. As it was, the food villages, when they found their appeal to the white men produced no result, sent in a message to say that, rather than be annihilated, they would leave their villages and cross the river and flee into the bush. On learning of this decision, the rubber villages sent in an insolent message to say that as soon as they had driven out the inhabitants of the food villages (who acted as a buffer between them and the Company's station) they would come on and finish all the white men.

At another station, Boiela, the whole of the natives, both the employés of the Company and the inhabitants of the surrounding villages were in a state of open insubordination, and a few days before my arrival, in a fight between two factions as to the chieftaincy of one of the villages, one man at least had been killed, and others wounded, and the disturbance which, in this case did not amount to actual warfare, but partook rather of the nature of general rioting, was still in progress when I got there.

In the third case I met an official of the Company who had just left a station which was practically in a state of siege by the surrounding natives, and on the previous day had been attacked by them.

experience, I heard on all sides of various other outbreaks and uprising, and in two instances, I was informed that the State soldiery had already been called in, and were then operating to restore order in disturbed districts. Now, any fair minded person visiting the Abir country would be bound to admit that the Mongo, especially in this part, are the very last race which could, by any possible distortion of terms, be described as warlike or offensive. They are a poor, miserable, oppressed lot, without heart and without courage, and one can only conclude that these uprisings and this general state of disturbance, and of intertribal quarrelling, is, in the first place, the outcome of almost a frenzy of desperation, and in the second, of a want of efficient policing. This same want of efficient policing is shown by such cases as the open act of cannibalism referred to (in this case, which occured close to L————, I myself received a full description of the occurrence from native eye witnesses, on the day after it happened); and the general lawlessness and want of discipline, which is shown by the continual desertion of employées, by the thieving and pilfering, of which the white man in this district is a continual victim, and by the heartless brutality and oppression practised by physically stronger natives on the weaker, of which latter I saw many instances.

136. *Lawlessness of Company Agents.*—It cannot, then, be said that the Company or its officials make any serious attempt at fulfilling their obligations as the police authorities of this area; whilst were they even desirous of doing so, it would be impossible for them, in the terms of their concession, to carry out their work in this respect within the four corners of the law. The stringent regulations with regard to the possession and carrying of arms, makes practically any resort to force on the part of the Company officials an illegal act; but this by no means implies that such acts are not frequently committed by the officials. It is needless to reiterate the almost innumerable instances of such cases, which have been reported up to within the last few weeks, by missionaries working in this district. Into many of these cases I personally enquired on the spot, and satisfied myself of the general truth of the accounts sent home, whilst I found no disposition on the part of the officials to traverse the statements of missionaries in this respect. Their argument was, briefly, that it was impossible for them to main-

tain their prestige, ensure their own security, and make their authority respected, without infringing the law, and that, therefore, they felt compelled to infringe it.

137. *State-interference.*—The State, it is only fair to point out, has been, at any rate recently, most energetic in the insistance on the observations of its laws, and in the punishment of all offenders. I cannot with certainty, give the exact number of officials of the Company who were either convicted and sentenced during my stay in the Congo Independent State, or were awaiting their trial when I left the country, but it must be exceedingly large. No less than four were placed at the "disposition of justice" during the time I traversed the Company's concession. It is also only right to point out that the sentence usually passed upon delinquents is of a terrible severity, as they are imprisoned in the common prison at Boma, which many of the critics of the State maintain, is an act of cruelty when practised on a native, and which, in the case of a white man, practically amounts to a death sentence, as, of those who survive it, the majority are men who have been released before the expiry of their time, with their health shattered, and return to Europe only to die.

138. *The qualifications of an Agent.*—If the Company and its officials are negligent in the discharge of their political or administrative duties, they are the double energetic in their commercial functions. There may be, indeed I had personal evidence that there are, good, humane, just, and honourable men, amongst the employées of the Abir, but most of them can only be described as thoroughly dangerous characters. They are selected, as far as I can learn, without the smallest reference to their moral character, social standing, or intelligence. The one thing that appears to be required of them is, that they are willing to work on commission, and can bring evidence that they are either capable, or likely to be capable, of exacting the maximum possible amount of labour out of a given number of natives. Nominally, they receive a fixed salary, but, as the amount of this is, comparatively speaking, only a few shillings a year, they are wholly dependent on their commission for their livelihood, and as those who, in the past, have returned from Africa have often come back with

large sums to their credit, it is obvious that they must have been to the highest degree, exacting in obtaining rubber from the natives.

139. *Character of Agents.*—I had good opportunities of judging of the class of men who accept employment on these terms. As might have been expected, they are largely made up of those who, for reasons very often to their discredit, are forced to accept service out of Europe at any cost. Admissions of domestic quarrels, of infringement of the social and even the code laws of their country, were given me in more than one instance, as reasons for accepting service under the Company. I know of my own personal knowledge that one functionary of the Company had been discharged from a French company, one of whose present officials informed that they thought he must be a criminal lunatic, owing to the atrocities of which he had been guilty and his general misconduct during the time he was employed by the company; I believe in the interval between his dismissal from the French company and his appointment by the Abir Company he was employed by the discredited Mongola company, which was deprived of its concession owing to the abominable actions of its agents. What his record in this company was I am unable to say. In another case an official in another company, in which he had previously borne a thoroughly bad reputation for his immorality and inhumanity in the district in which he was stationed, was appointed to one of the most important positions in the Abir Company, and when I expressed my astonishment to another official at the appointment, for his reputation was a matter of public comment almost all over the State, the reply which I received was that is was quite intelligible, as there was no man who could increase the rubber yield of a station quicker than he. This, in fact, is naturally in the circumstances, the sole and only point of view from which the agents of the Company regard their duties; they are there to make as much money as possible as rapidly as possible, and many of them, being men of undesirable character, do not hesitate to use any means, however illegal or inhumane, to effect their purpose.

140. *Illegality of Company's actions.*—By the terms of the concession of the Company, it is empowered to collect and exact the same "imposts," under the same conditions, as does the State in other parts. This concession, in fact, is analagous to a tax-farming

license. The reference to the past results obtained by the Company, however, convict it at a glance of having grossly exceeded its rights in this direction. In the Abir country, where the population has decreased to a most alarming extent since its occupation by the Company, almost the whole of the readily accessible rubber has been worked out. The tale of rubber which could legally be exacted from a village would be a very small one, seeing that the maximum number of hours per month which an adult male can be called upon to work must not exceed forty, and that in the circumstances described, a great part of this time would be necessary to travel considerable distances from the village to find, in the heart of the thickest forest, an untouched rubber vine, to return to the village with the latex, and from the village to carry the rubber to the station. Probably, in the majority of cases, only an hour or two would be left out of the forty for the actual cutting of the vine, collection of the latex, and the coagulation at home. So that with the scanty population of the whole district, the actual yield of rubber, were the legal limits of the impost regarded, would be very small. The quantity of rubber which, until recently, it exported to Europe annually, far exceeds that which could have been required of the natives had the area been under direct State control. And the fact, which none of the officials were at any pains to conceal, is that each one of them collects the maximum quantity which the utmost compulsion can produce from the natives. When a new official is appointed, he goes to a small district, and his success in the future will depend upon the extent by which he can surpass the record of his predecessor in rubber collecting, the extent, in other words, by which he can surpass his predecessor's record in native oppression. For the two things are, in the circumstances, practically convertible terms.

141. *Impossible situation.*—The only legal means which the Company has of exacting its rubber requirements from the natives, is what is known as the system of hostage. If a village does not produce a comparatively small legal quantity of rubber, a certain number of its inhabitants, whom the village chief shall indicate as delinquents, may be imprisoned in the white man's station, and made to work there until they have done an amount of work equivalent to the quantity of rubber by which they were short. The men,

however, who are entrusted with charge of the Company's posts, being forced to depend for their means of livelihood upon the commission which they receive on every kilogramme of rubber they collect, have had recourse to all manner of illegal practices for the exaction of an illegal and oppressive quantity. Details of many such acts, most of which have already been brought to the attention of the public in this country, were brought before my notice by the missionaries. Into several of them I enquired, and I found that in the main, the missionary accounts were fully substantiated; indeed, I discovered that the readiest way of testing the accuracy of most of these reports, was often to tax the Company employée concerned, for in the majority of cases, they were quite unblushing in their admissions of the commission of acts, not only of mere cruelty, but, to the ordinary mind, of utterly useless and purposeless cruelty. In other cases, I was able to question the natives concerned, or eye witnesses of the occurrence; and I believe that the Royal Commission appointed by the Sovereign of the Independent State, which was making an enquiry into the district concerned about the same time, also satisfied itself as to the justification of almost every one of the hundreds of complaints laid against the Company by the missionaries.

142. *The Sentry System.*—The whole system in this district is an atrocious one, and utterly incapable of being put into force without leading to the abuses complained of. Throughout the whole district it is the custom to put in the native villages as residents a certain number of native *employés* of the company, who are chosen, as far as one could judge, solely on account of their physical superiority over their fellows. These men are entrusted with cap guns, and, it was alleged by some of the missionaries, also with Albini rifles, though of this, despite my wandering over a very large part of the whole concession, I never saw a single instance. They are clothed in a kind of uniform, and are referred to as sentries, and in every way they are raised above their compatriots, more particularly by its being understood that they are under the direct patronage and protection of the white man For these reasons, and on account of their physical qualities, they are in the best possible position to impose on their fellow natives, a position of which, as is only natural with a low type of savage, they are

not slow to avail themselves. These "sentries" are always billeted in villages other than their own; they come as strangers, armed, representing white authority; they establish themselves in the best house in the village, and soon become petty tyrants of the most cruel description. All authority and all dignity are lost to the native chieftain, who sinks to the mere level of a delegate of his people in their dealings with these Company-paid bullies, and a ready scape-goat upon whom the latter may vent their cruelty and their spite. The object of these men being placed in the villages is to keep the villagers constantly at work collecting rubber, to prevent any of them leaving their homes for any other purpose, and to convoy the rubber when made to the Company post; they are, in fact, slave-drivers in one of the cruellest and most oppressive forms of slavery that can be imagined, for it is one in which not the smallest regard is paid for the life, the health, or the comfort of the slave, who is placed completely at the mercy of these black overseers, and is, so far as the white man is concerned, nothing more than a rubber-collecting tool. These sentries, as I myself saw with my own eyes repeatedly, batten on the villages, and live a parasitic life of comfort, and silly aping of European manners. They exact wives and food to an inordinate extent from the villagers, and look upon the whole community as their serfs, who must be ready at a moment's notice and under the pain of death for refusal, to be at their beck and call, and to perform any service which may be required of them.

143. *The Company's responsibility.*—It is often alleged by the advocates of the Abir, that the abuses committed by its agents are isolated and individual cases of wrong doing which receive no support or sanction from the Company, and which are almost wholly things of the past. Not one of these assertions can honestly be maintained. The system of bullies is recognised, sanctioned, and regulated by the Company itself; the exaction and acceptance of an illegal quantity of rubber far in excess to the proper impost for the district, is accepted from almost every post; the method of payment by commission is a direct incitement to excess in this respect; whilst the Company's regulations as printed, and as contained in their written instructions from the superior officials, are largely such as of necessity lead to transgressions of the law.

There can be no doubt, for instance, that the convoying of peaceable and law-abiding natives long distances from their homes, under an armed escort, to collect rubber in the forest under the eyes of these armed sentries, and the escorting them again under arms, back to their homes, and thence to the Company post, constitute an absolutely illegal interference with the liberty of the subject; and instances of almost every detail of the operations of the Company's agents being recognised or justified by instructions from headquarters, may be found in the same way. Then, again, the abuses complained of were matters of daily occurence, under my very eyes, during my journey through the district. The prime fault, no doubt, lay in the past, in the inexperience which led to the granting of a concession in this district, but the present responsibility must rest with the Company in the first instance, although the majority of its agents cannot be absolved for their callous brutality by any attempt to make the Company bear their personal and individual culpability.

144. *The Lulonga Company.*—Almost everything that has been said with regard to the Abir country would apply, though, of course, on a much smaller scale, to the Lulonga Company, whose territory adjoins that of the Abir, from the point where the name of the Lopori is changed to the Lulonga, down to its junction with the Congo. It was impossible for me to judge with anything like the same exactitude as in the Abir, of the condition prevailing in the Lulonga; for, in the first place, I was obliged to keep to the river during this part of my journey, and, therefore, saw nothing but the river side stations; in the second place, I was travelling somewhat rapidly on my return journey to catch a steamer at Coquilhatville; and, in the third place, only some three or four agents of the Company were left at their posts, as all the rest had been swept into the net of justice by the Royal Commission to answer to various charges laid against them.

CONCLUSION.

145. *General Opinion.*—As a result of my observations in the Congo Independent State, I am very strongly of opinion that, so far as the greater part of that portion of the State which I visited is concerned, the system of administration, although somewhat complex and cumbersome, is well devised and, on the whole, excellently carried out; but that so far as the territories of the Abir and of the Lulonga Companies are concerned, no criticism which has yet been levelled at those responsible for the present state of affairs there prevailing is too strong. One of the richest, and apparently at one time most populous, districts of the tropics is being laid waste by the greed and cruelty of an unscrupulous and disreputable gang, whose atrocious actions may, if not speedily and effectually stopped, lead to a condition of affairs which will constitute a grave menace to the white man's security in Central Africa. At present, so complete is the tyranny of their oppression, that the natives under their sway are too broken and helpless to show their resentment. It must, however, be borne in mind that the fair territories thus given over to this reign of terror are mercifully only a small fraction of the Independent State of the Congo, covering an area of about 25,000 square miles out of a total of 800,000. The directly-governed parts which I traversed, I found to be well and humanely governed, the natives for the most part contented, and everywhere fairly treated, and the advance of civilisation proceeding at a speed and with an energy without a parallel in other parts of tropical Africa. The extraordinary development of the whole country in a few short years has been already referred to. When one takes into consideration the unique difficulties that had to be contended with from the outset in opening up this great equatorial forest, locked away from the coast and the outside world by natural barriers, and peopled by untamed cannibals, one is bound to admit that even the astounding development of French West Africa must rank second to what has been achieved by the devoted band of pioneers who, sprung from a race with no colonial experience, have built up a great self-supporting state in the heart of tropical Africa. To

realise what has been achieved in the short space of less than a quarter of a century, it is only necessary to compare the conditions prevailing on the Ubangi—1,500 to 2,000 miles inland—with the best that has been achieved in centuries in the British colonies on the West Coast; to recall the fact that to-day the white man is safe, is welcome in the far-off interior of this vast dominion, whilst after 200 years and more of white occupancy along the West Coast, he is still often liable to native ferocity a few hundred miles from the sea in British Colonies; and, finally, to remember that the military force necessary to ensure this state of affairs is only one man per fifty square miles, lower than in the British Colonies. Of course it must, on the other hand, not be forgotten that this result has been achieved by a system entirely at variance with British Colonial principles, that the whole Independent State is practically the private property of its sovereign, and that instead of its being the centre of a great free commerce, it is itself in essence an individual commercial venture. But this fact should not blind one to the great results that have been achieved—results for which the Independent State deserves credit—whatever may have been the object it had in view in developing its territories. Those who by this system are shut out from a participation in the wealth of these splendid territories, although they may have good gounds for complaining at their exclusion, are not justified in maintaining that the organisation which has the monopoly of this wealth, has been guilty of inhumanity or neglect of the interests of the natives in developing its resources. Whether the system itself is or is not in conformity with the intentions of the signatories to the Berlin Treaty, is not for me to discuss, but that under that system—whether it be in conformity, or at variance, with those intentions—I can from my own experience state definitely that the administration in those parts which I visited is well and humanely carried out.

146. *Confirmation.*—In these views, I am supported by almost everyone who has visited the Independent State of the Congo. On the one hand, the atrocious condition of affairs prevailing in the areas under the control of the Concession Companies has been ably and amply testified to by the missionary witnesses, resident in the district, as well as by Mr. Consul Casement in his able report. On the other hand, many travellers who have visited other parts of the

Independent State, have unhesitatingly and emphatically repudiated the suggestion that the state of affairs existing in the Abir and Lulonga territories is to be found throughout the remainder of the State. The deduction so frequently drawn from the vivid and unquestionably true accounts, sent home by missionaries working in the Concession districts, of the condition of affairs around them, that their remarks apply to the whole State, is an entirely unsound one; and it will be seen that missionary evidence from other parts of the State bears me out in this contention. Mr. Stapleton, Mr. Grenfell, Mr. Morgan, and others whom I questioned, whilst all of them naturally criticised various points of detail, emphasised the fact that the question of atrocities did not arise in their neighbourhoods, which cover practically the whole length of the Congo River itself, and in Mr. Consul Casement's report, the fact is frankly mentioned that at one point where he touched outside the Abir territories in his journey along the main river, he found the natives flocking back from the French shore to the Belgian shore.

147. *Remedy.*—The remedy is obvious, and the State itself has already pointed it out. Not long before my visit, the Charter of another Concession Company—The Mongala—was annulled and its territories confiscated, owing to the misconducted and abuse of power of its agents. What was done in that case, should be done in the case of the Abir and the Lulonga Companies, and so long as the State fails to take this step, so long, it may confidently be asserted, will the present evil continue.

APPENDIX.

THE FRENCH COLONIES.

The French Congo.

1. *The Capital.*—Allusion having been made to The French Central African Colonies, a word must be said as to the condition of affairs which I found prevailing there. The Capital of the principal of these Colonies, The French Congo, had just been removed, when I arrived in Africa, from Libreville, on the West Coast, in the extreme north-west corner of the Colony, to Brazzaville, on Stanley Pool. The change was not wholly complete when I arrived. At that time, Brazzaville might roughly be divided into two sections—(i.) The administrative town, well placed on a considerable elevation and lying back from the waterway, and (ii.) the commercial town, down on the river bank to the south-east of the plateau which has been chosen as the site of the administrative town.

2. *The Administrative Town.* — In the official section of Brazzaville are some well planted boulevards and groups of handsome brick houses, so placed as to produce an imposing effect. Government House, the residence of the Commissary General, is a particularly fine building for Africa, and stands at the end of a long avenue, skirted by administrative offices, and intersected by boulevards along which are erected the houses of the principal officials. Owing to the extensive alterations necessitated by the adoption of the site as the seat of the Central Government, which were still in progress, the place presented a somewhat dishevelled and untidy appearance, but the general scheme was plainly apparent and promised to produce an attractive effect.

3. *The Commercial Town* is an extensive, straggling and untidy group of ill-assorted buildings, jumbled together in the utmost confusion along the water's edge. It consists principally of the headquarters of the various trading Companies operating in the Colonies of the Congo, the Oubanghi, and the Sharie. There is an air of neglect and incompletion about the place which is accentuated by the large number of broken down and abandoned steamers all along the front. In the neighbourhood of the Custom House—a not inconsiderable building—and of the large station of the "Dutch House," there are, however, signs of much activity and energy.

4. *The White Population* at Brazzaville must be very large. Its exact extent I did not learn, but the impression I received was that the various administrative departments in proportion to the work to be done in them, were far more generously staffed than the corresponding offices in the Congo Independent State.

5. *Conduct of Business.*—Affairs are conducted with little ceremony or external formality at Brazzaville. I had, in being directly concerned in a judicial enquiry, a good opportunity of forming an opinion on this matter. There is far less of "red-tape" routine in the administration than in the Independent State, and in the actual discharge of his duties, each official is far more of a law unto himself. The general result is to facilitate the dispatch of business to the utmost extent. In the case to which I refer, at a minute's notice, a judicial court was convened on a Sunday, an enquiry held into the conduct of a white man in a matter involving the death of a native, the seizure of goods, and an attempted outrage of a woman, and the whole concluded by a little after four o'clock. The same would probably have occupied on the other side, as many months as it took hours in French territory. In the same way I found that in all such matters as the granting of permits to shoot and to carry arms and other facilities, the lengthy and tedious routine necessitated by the complexity of the administrative machine in the Independent State, was in the French Congo wholly absent. In place of innumerable forms having to pass from department to department and from functionary to functionary to be signed and examined and countersigned, of declarations to be made, checked and attested, of ordinances to be drawn up, passed and promulgated, of instructions to be issued and covenants to be entered into, which despite the activity and unselfish trouble of officials, whose one object seemed to be to help one, yet wasted days of one's time at Boma, here a single open letter from the Commissary General settled everything in the mere time it took to dictate it. At the same time these very great advantages are only secured at a real loss to the dignity and circumstance of white rule, and at considerable hardship to the officials, whose lives, despite the fact that the Government House at Brazzaville is structurally superior to the Palace at Boma, are lived amongst surroundings almost sordid in comparison with the comfortable and orderly conditions prevailing across the water. How much of this difference may have been due to the newness of the establishment, it is difficult to say.

6. *Communications.*—I had little opportunity of making a close study of more than external appearances on the French side. Two facts are worthy of note, one that Brazzaville is in direct telegraphic communication with Paris, the other, the excellence of the French River Steamers, which in cleanliness and in speed surpass those of the Independent State. One of the French steamers can go up to Bangui, the Capital of the Oubanghi Colony and back to Brazzaville in the same time as the largest of the Leopoldville boats can get up to Coquihatville—not so far as to Bangui.

7. *Other Stations.* — Brazzaville was the only Government station I visited in the French Congo. Judging from appearances from the river, the station opposite Lukolela is not nearly so handsome or well kept up as even the older posts in the Independent State.

The Oubanghi and the Sharie.

8. *The Capital* of the Oubanghi is at Bangui, just below the Zongo cataracts, on the Ubangi river. Nothing could have been more striking than the contrast between the posts of the Independent State, and this, the most important station of the French colony. There are, I should think, sixteen or eighteen white men altogether in the station, which lies straggling down the face of a rocky cliff, forcibly reminding one of Roquebrune in the Riviera. Along the water's edge is a dirty, dishevelled, unkempt conglomeration of native huts, abutting on the only attempt at a roadway. Between them and the foot of the cliff lies a swamp which, apparently, it has never occurred to the authorities to try and reclaim, and which must be a fruitful source of ill-health. A steep pathway up the rocks brings one to the official residences, one alone, the Delegué's, being of brick, the others all of mud. They are placed at almost inaccessible points, perched on crags, with no attempt at method or arrangement. The station looks picturesque enough from the water or seen from the other side, but the air of desolation and ruinous decay which broods over the whole place when one reaches it, is depressing in the extreme. One of the official residences had a great gaping hole in the wall; another was only to be reached by a plank put across from the pathway to the window, a ravine having been washed between the house and the path by the recent rains, while the Delegué's house itself had a verandah on the first floor in ruins, and the rooms on this storey were in such a tumbledown state that the highest official in a colony about as big as England was obliged to put his bed in the only sound corner of the verandah, where also was the native table on which he took his meals, surrounded by all the litter of a native household. The office, in fact, a small room in the front, was the only one in even a weatherproof state of repair, and, so far as I know, was the only one in the official part of Bangui which could be considered in any sense habitable. It was also comparatively well furnished, but the rest of officialdom in Bangui had to be content with makeshifts of packing cases and native stools.

9. *Condition of Officials.*—The appearance of the Government officials is in keeping with the appearance of their station. They are suposed to be rationed from Europe, but seemed to be much neglected by the Home Government. I found this to be true of all the other posts of the French Government along the river. At one, an important transport depôt for the Sharie Colony, the presiding official told me in the most matter-of-fact manner that for months past he had received no rations, and was entirely dependent for even the necessaries of life on the hospitality of a neighbouring trading house. The natives are hostile and little disposed to furnish officials with anything which is not exacted by physical force. As a consequence each administrator is engaged in a perpetual and

unending struggle to keep the natives in order with an absolutely inadequate handful of troops, and has no time for attending to his creature comforts or improving the condition of his station.

10. *Public Business.*—I found it no uncommon thing to arrive suddenly at a Government post in the French colonies and discover the official in charge still in bed at eight o'clock in the morning. When he got up he would content himself with adding to his night attire a pair of slippers and a helmet, or at most pulling a blouse or a pair of loose overalls over his pyjamas. As a consequence, all the morning duties of the station were neglected and a general air of slipshod untidiness prevailed. Indeed, in every respect the French Central African Colonies are so completely lacking in the energetic enterprise, in the methodical order, in the startlingly rapid progress which have made French West Africa the model colonies of the Dark Continent, that it is difficult to realise the two so vastly different sets of conditions have been called into being by the same nation.

11. *Native Affairs.*—There can be no question as to the evil disposition of the natives in the French Central African Colonies towards white rule. To a great extent they fear the white man, but at the same time they hate him and do not lose an opportunity of venting their feelings on him when one arises of their doing it with impunity. It is quite unsafe in many parts for the white man to go without an escort of some kind, a precaution which at first my experience of the State side led me to think was quite unnecessary, but which I afterwards found to be very needful. Almost the only occasion during the whole of my journey on which I experienced any overt act of hostility was at the end of the first day on the Upper Ubangi, when I made for a village on the French side in order to camp for the night. I found all along, both on the river banks and in the interior as far as I was able in passing to penetrate into it, that the natives in the French Colonies regarded the white man with distrust, when not with actual dislike.

12. *Trading Houses.*—It has been mentioned that there are numerous trading houses established all along the river bank in both the Oubanghi and Sharie Colonies, in addition to two large missions and several Government posts. The missions are scarcely known beyond the borders of their extensive and well stocked farms, and have practically no influence on the natives as a whole. Their catechists consist almost wholly of their own *employés*, who are well treated and who live on the mission premises. The French trading houses belong principally to several small French companies, and also to that large organisation which was formerly known as the "Dutch House," but which, I understand, has recently, in the French Colonies, been obliged by the restrictions placed on foreigners trading there to change its name and its nationality. The majority of them do practically no business worth speaking of. They are all concessionaire companies, and there is much

quarrelling among the various agents as to their rights to particular villages of natives. In addition, they receive practically no protection to life or property from their Government. On the Lower Ubangi, whilst I was within a few miles of the scene, four traders were killed and eaten by the natives.* In the immediate vicinity of where this catastrophe occurred, there were similar occurrences in the course of a few months, and I was assured, though I was unable to verify the figures, that in all six white men were thus killed and eaten. So far as the incident of which I was so nearly an eye-witness is concerned, the lethargy of the authorities was reprehensible in the extreme. Instead of any energetic, drastic steps being taken to avenge the death of these white men, the local administration for some time made no move in the matter. The Commissionary-General of the French Congo, who acts somewhat in the position of a High Commissioner or Governor-General for the sister French colonies, paid a special visit to the Oubanghi to inquire into the case. I believe that a small force of soldiery was sent, after his visit, in the charge of a non-commissioned officer, to make a display in the district; but, although I made it my business to inquire as fully as possible into the steps that were being taken, I could hear of no firm attempt being made to capture or punish the principal offenders, or to assert the authority of the white man. Apparently the traders, who, it must be remembered, are concessionaires, and are encouraged by the Government to come into the country, after paying large prices for their concessions, are expected to protect themselves and their property as best they may, and in the event of trouble arising between them and the natives, they must subdue it as best they can, always bearing in mind that the strictest limitations are imposed upon the employment of force or the use of arms. There is no regular policing of the country on the part of the Government, which leaves both its development and the maintenance of order in it, entirely to individuals who have no power whatever granted to them to enforce their authority. The whole country into which these traders are invited to go is utterly unorganised; and from every point of view their lot is an unhappy one, for they are sadly neglected and parsimoniously treated by their employers, and I was told that the mortality amongst them is enormous. The extraordinary contrast which this part of Africa presents to France's colonies on the West Coast forces one to the conclusion that the concession system is a thoroughly bad one.

*In some of the Paris papers it was stated that "four Belgians in the French Congo had been killed and eaten, and that it was supposed that the natives had risen owing to the cruelty of the white men." It is only fair to point out that in the case to which I refer—that only one so far as I know where four men where sacrificed at one time—the traders were all Frenchmen, and I heard nothing to justify any charge of cruelty against them.