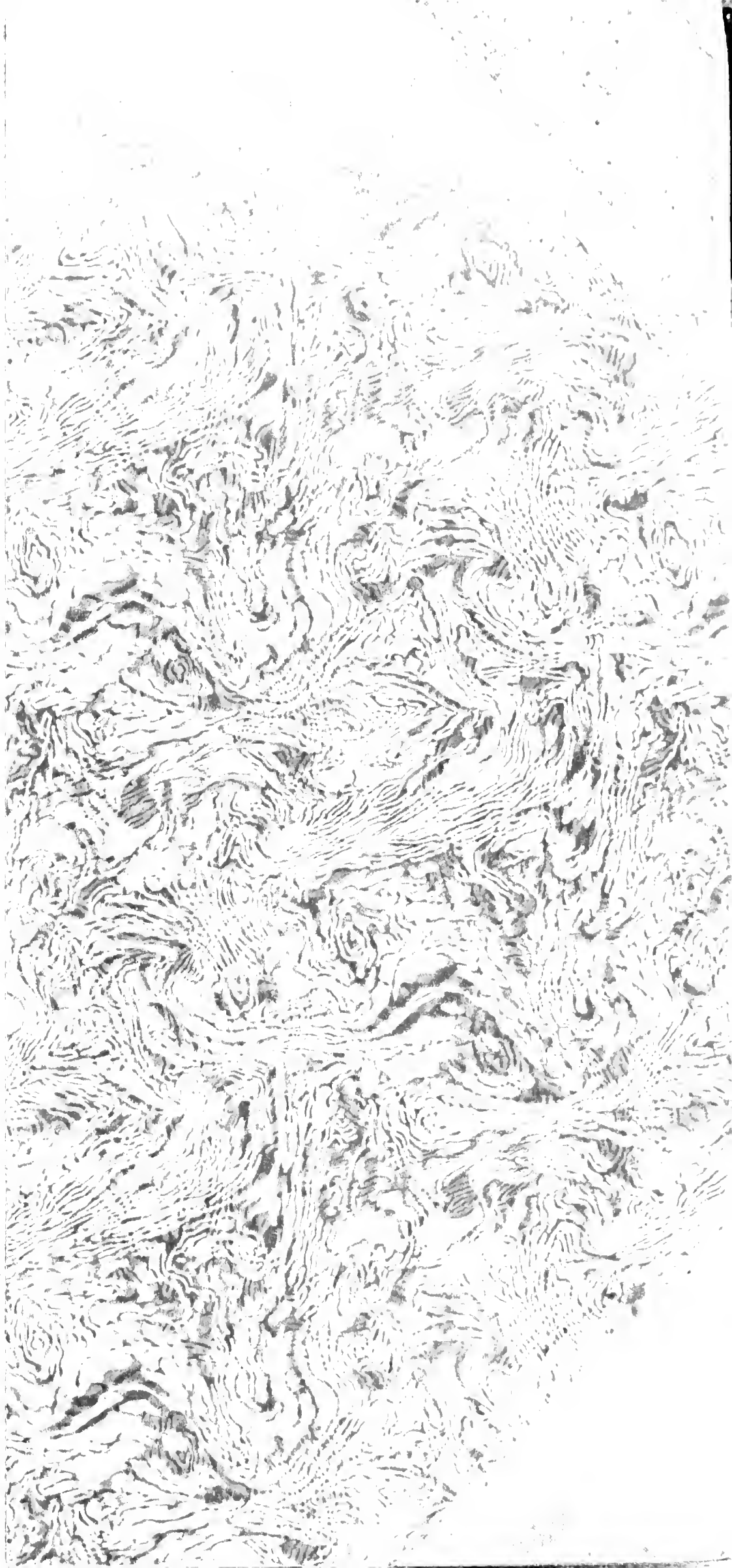


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FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING THE

INDEPENDENT STATE OF
THE CONGO.

[In continuation of "Africa No. 1 (1907)."]

*Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty.
February 1908.*

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Further Correspondence respecting the Independent State of the Congo.

[In continuation of "Africa No. 1 (1907)."]

No. 1.

Consul-General Cromie to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 21.)

Sir,

Boma, April 15, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith the copy of a Report on the district of the Lomami Company which I have received from Mr. Vice-Consul Michell.

Apparently the condition of affairs in that region is better than in that of most of the concessionaire Companies, but I notice that, whereas in one place Mr. Michell states that the Company claims all the ivory, rubber, minerals, and other riches in its territory, he further on says that M. le Marinel has introduced a system of absolutely free trade.

These statements are hardly compatible, but I presume that what Mr. Michell desired to convey was that the natives are treated fairly in matters of trade as between the Company and themselves.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. F. CROMIE, *Captain.*

Inclosure in No. 1.

Vice-Consul Michell to Consul-General Cromie.

Sir,

Ilambi, Lomami District, March 1, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that I left Stanley Falls on the 10th January, 1907, to visit the field of operations of the Lomami Company. On the occasion of my visit to Ilambi at the beginning of November last, M. Paul le Marinel, the Director of this Company, had kindly invited me to accompany him on a part of his tour of inspection in January. Unfortunately, owing to indisposition, I was unable to take advantage of this offer early in that month, and when I arrived at Ilambi on the 14th I found that the Director had already left for Bena Mabote. M. Mauroy, however, the Acting Director, was good enough to give me a passage up the Lomami on the Company's small steamer "Auguste Bernaert." I was thus enabled to meet the Director on his way back at the police post of Opala on the 22nd January.

My first intention had been to continue up the Lomami as far as Bena Kamba at about 2° 20' south latitude, and thence cross overland to Lokandu, and so, descending the Lualaba, return to Stanleyville. But I had already seen the Lualaba, so when M. le Marinel invited me to visit with him the Company's factories in the interior to the west of the Lomami, I abandoned my plan and gladly accepted his suggestion. I was thus able to judge for myself of the conditions of a large and important tract of country extending nearly to the frontier of the State district of the Equator on about 23° 30' east longitude. I should have been quite unable under any other circumstances to penetrate this region, and as, under a former régime, the political conditions were unsatisfactory and the natives in a dangerous state of mind, I felt it my duty not to lose this opportunity of witnessing the effects of the new reforms introduced by M. le Marinel.

I therefore returned with him on the "Président Desprets" to Yanga (about 50' south latitude). Leaving Yanga on the 26th January, we travelled south-westward to Yemaka-Lombo, where we arrived the following evening. M. le Marinel continued after two days to Likaka, whence he returned on the 10th February. I was not

able to accompany him on account of sickness, but when he left again for Lombo-Likolo on the 13th February I went with him, arriving there the following day. All the paths in this district are very difficult, leading through continuous swamps and many small rivers. The whole country is thickly wooded, and though generally flat, is traversed by so many deep ravines that travelling is fatiguing. The villages are few and at five or six hours' distance apart.

The inhabitants of the whole region belong to two main classes. Those to the north are of the Lokele race—Topoke, Turumbu, and Lokele—and are heavily tattooed. They are fierce and independent, and wage war on their southern neighbours, the Bambole. The latter are not tattooed, and are thus easily recognizable. They are mild and timid, being armed only with bows and arrows. Yet they were able to turn back the Arab invasions, which tried the Lokeles severely in former days.

At Lombo-Likolo (longitude $23^{\circ} 43'$ east, latitude $50'$ south) the two populations meet, and seem to live in harmony, the factory separating the two villages. But I was shown there a box full of skulls which had been brought, about three months before, from a Lokele village a few miles to the north-east, where there were great quantities stuck on poles. They were the skulls of Bamboles who had been killed, and probably eaten, the Lokeles having a song to the effect that "the Bambole are our antelopes, when we want food we hunt the Bambole."

These Lokele, or rather the Topoke, section of them which inhabits the country behind Isangi and west of the Lomami have always given much trouble. It was they who murdered Messrs. Lor and Ruwila, agents of the Lomami Company, at Yabohila in September 1905.

The territory exploited by the Lomami Company—a subsidiary undertaking of the "Comité Spécial du Katanga," and one of a group of Companies, including, I understand, the Kasai Trust and the "Société Anonyme Belge," financed by a Syndicate of Belgian banks—differs from the Concessions granted to other Societies in being a freehold property. The Company holds, therefore, a unique position in the Congo State, being free to deal with its products as it thinks fit. As the State claims all the ivory, rubber, minerals, and other riches as products of the soil, so the Company claims the same in its territory. The State, therefore, cannot demand the ivory and rubber of the Lomami in payment of taxes, but exacts the labour of the natives. Up to the end of the year 1905 the Company was authorized by the State to collect this tribute, with the result that the same abuses were liable to occur as in the A.B.I.R. and other Concessions, especially with the turbulent Lokele. After the affair at Yabohila, the Company renounced the right to impose taxation. It has taken some time to reform the system to which the agents had become accustomed, and more than one agent has been expelled for not obeying the new order. But it is now the strict rule throughout the territory that nothing can be demanded from the natives without their consent and without such payment as they agree to take. Doubtless the impression of the old régime still remains on the minds of the people, and to some extent they still feel compelled to satisfy the white man; but I can testify that I saw no signs of any pressure by the agents.

On M. le Marinel's arrival as Director in July 1906, he introduced a system of absolutely free trade, and initiated a basis of currency. Preparatory to the use of silver he has cut down the usual brass rods to lengths, representing 10 centimes and 5 centimes. Every service rendered and all rubber, ivory, fresh food, and other things bought from the natives is paid for on the spot in these brass rods. In each factory there is a shop where European goods are set out on a counter with the number of rods laid against them which represent their price. These counters are open day and night. It is absolutely forbidden to pay the people in goods. They must receive cash, and they are then free to buy the goods they desire, or to take their money away with them. The barter goods are sold at cost price, with nothing but transport, customs, &c., added. The natives have already a shrewd grasp of the cash system, and silver is to be introduced immediately.

Since July also the price of rubber has been raised, so that now 1 fr. per kilog. is being paid to the producers, and 20 centimes per kilog. in addition is paid to the Chief. M. le Marinel is contemplating raising it shortly to 1 fr. 50 c. per kilog. At present the State is not levying taxation on the natives of the Lomami district, with the exception of the immediate neighbourhood of the police post of Opala and the two or three small posts in the interior. The State pays about 55 centimes per kilog. for rubber, of which about 25 centimes goes to the actual maker. The Lomami tribes now understand that if they make rubber for the Company they can easily earn very much more than the 2 fr. per month that the State may ask of them; whereas, if

they refuse to work freely for the Company, they are liable to be compelled by the State to make rubber at 25 centimes per kilog., with the alternative of the chain-gang.

This experiment is the more interesting as it is the only example of genuine free trade in this country. Many say it will fail as the novelty wears off and as the natives' simple wants and fancies for European goods become satisfied. It remains to be seen whether the Company can keep up their interest and stimulate new wants. At present they present themselves readily for portorage and other work in any number asked for.

The production of rubber is also increasing rapidly. One post has risen to 2 tons (metric) during the month of February, and expects to make more this month. Most of the factories are sending down urgent requests for more goods on account of the increase of business.

I regard the success of this new experiment as of the utmost importance to the Congo, both as demonstrating the possibility and the advantages of free trade, and as showing the falseness of the arguments hitherto urged by the State in favour of forced labour.

We left Lombo-Likolo on our return on the 18th February viâ Yemaka-Lombo and Yanga, and arrived at Ilambi on the 27th.

Disturbances are reported from Opala, where the people have gone down to attack the Yanga villages, on account of an old quarrel about a woman from two or three villages at a little distance from Yemaka, and an attack by the Topoke behind Isangi on the village of Lieki about an hour north of this. All these are old feuds. The police from Opala are making marches to the places mentioned, but do not seem to be accomplishing much good.

These police posts, though supplied by the State, are paid for and fed by the Lomami Company. M. le Marinel intends to decline to support them any longer.

The "Substitut" from Basoko, M. Andrieux, is now endeavouring to capture the other Topoke Chief who was condemned to death for the Yabohila massacre, but who escaped. He is known to be near Yabohila, and M. Andrieux has gone there with Commandant Myre, of Opala, and fifty men. But I hear that the party lost their way in the bush, and have had to return to Yankwamu without having seen anything of the fugitive.

Stanleyville, March 7, 1907.

I returned here to-day by the Baptist Mission steamer "Endeavour," which I met at Isangi on the 2nd instant, and by which I was kindly offered a passage.

I have, &c.

(Signed) GEO. B. MICHELL.

No. 2.

Consul-General Cromie to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 21.)

Sir,

Boma, April 18, 1907.

WITH reference to Mr. Consul Nightingale's despatch of the 31st December, 1906,* transmitting a Memorandum by Mr. Vice-Consul Michell on the results to be expected from the new Decrees, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the copy of a despatch from that officer commenting on the orders and circulars which have been issued for the interpretation and application of the said Decrees.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. F. CROMIE, *Captain.*

Inclosure in No. 2.

Vice-Consul Michell to Consul Nightingale.

Sir,

Stanleyville, March 23, 1907.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 30th November, 1906, I have the honour to inform you that some of the orders and circulars to which I alluded, interpreting and applying the Decrees of the 3rd June, 1906, have been published in the "Bulletin Officiel" of July to October 1906 (Nos. 7 to 10).

* "Africa, No. 1 (1907)," No. 30.

The Memorandum on the results to be expected from the new Decrees, which I had the honour to transmit to you with my said despatch, contemplated the proper application of these laws, as directed by His Majesty's Secretary of State in his despatch of the 30th June, 1906.*

As I anticipated, however, in my Memorandum, the new orders and circulars considerably modify the apparent sense of the Reform Decrees, and that, in several particulars, to the disadvantage of the natives.

In view of the proposed annexation of the Congo State to Belgium, and of the question whether these plausible measures may not be retained under the Colonial Administration, I think it is useful to note the phraseology, the means of application, and the possible results of these Decrees and circulars.

Money.—The Decree on the Coinage of Money (p. 266) is followed by another, dated the 27th August, 1906 (p. 426), authorizing the issue of nickel 10-centime and 5-centime pieces to the value of 240*l.* This issue is for use in Katanga where “the payment in kind of the workmen is attended with many disadvantages. The natives who perform regular labour in the mines, during a fairly long lapse of time, have rapidly acquired more European goods than their needs demand, and, above all, more than they can carry away home with them on the expiry of their labour contract” (p. 424).

Although this state of things is not peculiar to the Katanga district, but is precisely similar throughout the State, M. le Vice-Gouverneur-Général Lantonnais, in his Instructions of the 8th September, 1906 (p. 364), contrary to the recommendations of the “Commission d'Enquête” (p. 262, foot), does not propose to introduce the use of coin either in Katanga or anywhere else, except the Lower Congo, and around the centres of white population in the Middle Congo. “Even there the taxes will be demanded, as a general rule, in the form of labour or of produce, and not exacted in money”; but the lists are to be drawn up in money, that is to say, only money values are to be shown. These are to be made out from “Tables of Equivalents” made by the “Commissaires de District. As there are no free labour or produce markets, and the native has no money, and never will have at the present rate, there can be no real local cash values, and these “Tables of Equivalents” must be entirely arbitrary. It is also instructive to note M. Lantonnais' instructions on this subject (p. 373):—

“L'indigène qui remet à l'État des produits domaniaux ne fournit, en effet, à celui-ci que la valeur de sa main-d'œuvre, puisque le produit appartient à l'État. Vous devrez donc évaluer d'abord le nombre d'heures de travail nécessaires pour récolter une certaine quantité de produits, un kilogramme, par exemple, puis la rémunération due pour ce travail d'après les salaires locaux. Cette rémunération se calculera de la même manière que sous le régime antérieur et en tenant compte du même taux de salaires, mais elle devra désormais être exprimée en numéraire sur ces tableaux d'équivalences.”

The publication, therefore, of taxation lists in money is a mere blind intended to make the amounts look moderate. The native has no money, not because he does not desire nor appreciate it—the example of the Lomami Company's operations, on which I reported in my despatch of the 1st instant, is evidence to the contrary—but because in the State territory he is not paid in money, and outside trade is practically impossible. It pays the State better to get its rubber collected for next door to nothing (it does not offer any “remuneration” for true, *i.e.*, cash, taxation, see p. 367), than to have to hire labour in a competitive market.

Factories are impracticable, in fact, legislation is all against the establishment of free trade. Commerce carried on by hawkers, small native traders, or by the system of “Mokhalitin,” which is so successful in Morocco is rendered impossible by a prohibitive tariff of fees, licences, &c. As for the sale of the products of the native lands, guaranteed by Article 4 of the Decree of the 3rd June, 1907 (p. 228):—

1. The quantity of these products is settled beforehand by the “Commissaire de District”;
2. This amount must not be exceeded;
3. It is controlled by the “Commissaire de District” who must see that the natives “do not cheat, and do not exhaust their plants” (Vice-Governor's Circular of the 8th September, 1906, p. 389); and
4. They must not be sold without a Certificate of Origin given by the “Chef de Poste.”

* “Africa, No. 1 (1907),” No. 3.

Is it likely that the native will retain for sale to traders much of the produce which lies so much in the hands of the State officials, whose "allocations de retraite" depend upon the amount of rubber they collect?

Taxation.—The new Decrees and the circulars applying them do not, therefore, in any way modify the "corvée" system hitherto in force. To call it "impôt" or "taxation" is a misnomer, to describe it in terms of currency is disingenuous and misleading. Give the native the opportunity of freely earning money and he will be only too glad to get quit of his obligations to the State by the payment of 2 fr. per month.

Labour.—The question of the supply of labour is, of course, a difficult one, and the systematization of the supply is worth aiming at. But it should be honest.

The fact is, the natives must do all the labour and supply all the fresh food, building materials, &c., that the white man needs, however large the agglomeration of white men and their servants may be, as at Stanleyville and other large centres. Lisala and other camps, the rubber plantations, railway works, &c., regardless of the numbers of the local native populations. This is caused by the State Government's policy of making the local administration "live on the country." To talk of payment is nonsense, the labour practically is obligatory, and the payment is quite insignificant.

An illuminating phrase occurs in Vice-Governor-General Lantonnois' Circular of Instructions on "Impositions directes et personnelles" of the 5th September, 1906, (B.O. No. 7-10, p. 365), "en vous pénétrant essentiellement du principe que le rendement de l'impôt doit, au moins, couvrir les frais nécessaires à sa perception." It is evident that this includes the food, if not the payment and other expenses, of the agents, white and black, who collect it. These do not depend on the richness of the district nor the fair proportion of taxation due from the inhabitants.

Let the work be called, therefore, frankly "corvée," and the people "fellahin."

Recruiting.—The Decree on the recruiting of labourers for public works is another example of ambiguity. The legalization of conscription for labour on "works of public utility," as well as for the militia, adopted on the recommendation of the "Commission d'Enquête," (p. 259), reopens the door to the abuses pointed out in pp. 251, 252, and 258. The term "travaux d'utilité publique" may be given a very wide interpretation. M. Lantonnois lays down, (p. 400) that "until further orders" the "corvée" is applicable only to the construction and upkeep of high-roads, (rest-houses, bridges, &c.). But, as the number of paid workmen is strictly limited, ("Recueil Administratif," p. 88), it may easily be found to apply it to portage, river transport, &c., now nominally to be done by paid workmen.

The argument put forward of teaching the black man and ennobling him by the dignity of labour is not justified by the State methods. No attempt is made to teach him anything. The white men have rather imitated him. He does all the State work as best he can in his native way, with his own primitive tools, and he goes home as big a savage as ever. It is true that the impressed workman, after seven years' service, does return in a sense, civilized, but "dépaycé." What he has learnt he has picked up by seeing others, and at best his "civilization" is a poor imitation of Arab ("Bangwana"), not European, methods. He returns also demoralized. He and his wife are only one degree less immoral than the Mahommedans, and much less moral than the savage native.

Female Labour.—With regard to women, the making of "kwanga," &c., has always been in force, and many kinds of work have long been performed by women. But it has not been publicly understood that both husband and wife have to "pay taxes." This is frankly declared by M. Lantonnois (p. 366), "Ainsi que vous l'aurez remarqué, l'Article 2 du nouveau Décret pose le principe de l'impôt en général, sans faire de distinction entre les sexes."

This is not necessarily bad, as the women are accustomed to work. But the position of women, already very low, in the Congo has received no attention in the legislation of the country, and the action of the State has been to lower it vastly more. Only about a dozen of the officers of the State have their wives with them, and those are at the top of the tree. Every white man has his "ménagère." This example is followed by the black personnel of the post, and the consequence is there is now a large class of idle roving females in every station. It is pitiful to see the strings of poor naked women coming in from the villages with great loads of wood, bananas, thatching-leaves, &c., while these gaily dressed persons strut about doing nothing. At many stations the sweeping, planting, and other routine work is done by country women, ostensibly paid; but they get no good by their contract with "Bula Matadi."

The imposition of taxation on both men and women is not only a hardship but an unmitigated evil. In one case, that I know of, the whole population was constantly at work. At Liboko, on the Lindi, there are three large villages all the men of which are employed for about twenty-two days in every month making rubber, making baskets, and then carrying it to Bengamisa. The women accompany their husbands for a part of the time, the rest of the month is taken up by carrying loads for the State transport between Kaparata and Bengamisa. All the portorage between the mouth of the Lindi and Banalya on the Aruwimi is, to my knowledge, done by the women. The children are not compelled to accompany their parents, but they generally do so because if they stay in the village the sentry, or, as he is now called, the "messenger indigène," finds work for them to do, carrying sticks, leaves, and other building materials. The consequence is that a school which was started in the triple village, with 100 names on the book, by a native teacher at the urgent request of the Chiefs, dwindled away to nothing in a few days. The people made a great feast on the opening of the school, but the "messengers" (there were four of them) reported that it would interfere with the collection of rubber, and it was suppressed by the agent at Bengamisa. On my reporting the case to the "Chef de Province" the agent was removed, and the school was allowed to reopen. But this is only one village of which I happened to hear. The abuse is likely to occur, and doubtless exists, all along the Lindi, and probably in many other places.

It is difficult to see what advantages such a system secures to these "tax-payers."

Native Lands.—The doubt I expressed in my Memorandum of the 30th November, 1906, as to a wide interpretation being given to the "occupation" of native lands, as to which a seemingly generous measure was granted by the Decrees of the 3rd June, 1906, has been confirmed by the Vice-Governor-General's Circular of the 8th September, 1906. The "crying abuses" which the "Commission d'Enquête" pointed out as sure to follow from "too restrictive interpretations and too rigorous applications" of the State theory of "Domaine" lands, and which would oppose all evolution of native life (pp. 151-153, B. O. August 1905), are not only likely to occur, but others also to which I shall refer when speaking of Concessions and private property.

The term "occupation," as the Commissioners of Inquiry remarked (p. 151), has never been defined by the State or by the Tribunals. M. Lantonnois says (p. 385): "L'enquête à laquelle vous vous livrez . . . devra fixer les caractères propres de ces droits originaires indigènes. Ce n'est évidemment pas une propriété, même collective. Ce n'est pas davantage un usufruit ou une servitude. C'est plutôt un droit réel, *sui generis*, grevant la propriété au profit d'une ou plusieurs collectivités." The Vice-Governor-General is here alluding to certain regions in the Lower Congo, with a view to their ultimate sale or lease to third parties. "The rights established will be entered in a special register deposited with the 'Conservateur des Titres Fonciers.'" But the conditions there are precisely the same as in the "Domaine National," and his definition of the natives' rights must apply to the latter equally. Further, he lays down, p. 381, that, "by 'rights of occupation' must be understood the rights conferred on the natives by an occupation exercised in a permanent manner before the promulgation of the Order of the 1st July, 1885." It must be difficult to find lands still occupied by the same people for the last twenty-two years, considering the raids of the Arabs, rebellions and wars, not to mention the constant shifting of villages on the exhaustion of their plantations, or on account of quarrels, or even mere restlessness.

While on this subject I would point out that these lands may be seized for non-payment of taxes.

Article 54 of the Decree of the 3rd June, 1906, p. 233, runs: "En cas de refus de payer les prestations, les indigènes, à défaut de biens mobiliers ou immobiliers, peuvent être contraints à les acquitter." No provision is made anywhere for the continuance of the possession of his lands by the native. The Vice-Governor-General interprets this Article (p. 368) thus: "Comme sous le régime de l'ancien Règlement, ce mode d'exécution est subsidiaire et ne peut être appliqué qu'à défaut de biens saisissables; il n'est pas sans utilité de le proclamer en présence des mesures prises d'autre part par le Gouvernement pour favoriser le développement de la propriété indigène." This looks like giving with the one hand in order to take away with the other!

These measures are to be applied exclusively by the "Commissaires de District," "Chefs de Zone" or "de Secteur," on the report of the agent appointed to recover the taxes. "The procedure laid down by these Articles renders objectless the recourse to the

“Commissaires de District” formerly accorded to tax-payers under arrest. Constraint being adjudged without appeal, the Government, &c.” (p. 368). As it is these same functionaries and agents who delimit the native lands (p. 378), it will be seen that the tenure of the lands so generously granted, even when the owner has successfully proved his continuous effective occupation of them for the last twenty-two years, is but a precarious one, and is entirely at the mercy of the local administrative agent without process of law or appeal.

Concessions and Private Lands.—This brings me to the subject of Concessions and private property. A very large area of the Congo State is, or was, included in Concessions. By the new Decree the villages and lands occupied by natives within these Concessions or private properties are also to be confirmed to the occupiers, together with an area of three times their amount in addition. The State even assumes the right to acquire, either by hire or expropriation, the private property which may be necessary to make up this area (Article 3, p. 227). M. Lantonnais says, commenting on this (p. 370): “Il se pourrait que la délimitation . . . portât cependant atteinte à un état de fait dont ces concessionnaires profiteraient actuellement. Ces derniers n’ont aucun recours contre la délimitation en tant que celle-ci constitue un acte administratif.”

The Administration has only to make these grants large enough and then seize them from defaulting tax-payers to become possessed of considerable “enclaves” in the properties of Companies and private persons.

The Vice-Governor-General does not use gentle terms in speaking of Concessionary Companies. In ordering the immediate withdrawal of the Commission to collect taxation, formerly given to the agents of commercial societies, he says (p. 368): “The Commissions in question must be transmitted to me by the first mail. The Government’s wish to see the former practice, which has been the cause of abuses, abolished must be realized immediately [*sic*], and I pray you to be so good as to take it in hand.” One would suppose that the perception of the produce of taxation by the “Chefs de Poste” and State Agents, who, he says (p. 367), are now solely authorized to do so, is not liable to give rise to abuses.

Justice.—In spite of the very grave evils, explained in detail by the Commissioners of Inquiry (pp. 269 to 279), the Decrees of the 3rd June, 1906, refuse to make the Judicature independent of the Administration and do little to remedy the other abuses.

“Many ‘Substituts’” are still “young and inexperienced” (I believe the reason is that the salary, position, and prospects offered are no attraction to older men), and the consequence is that they have standing orders not to prosecute Europeans or foreign subjects without special authorization from the “Procureur-Général” at Boma, and in every case, whatever the result, to appeal to Boma. The advantage of a local Court is thus nullified.

I happened to be present at the trial of a European at Stanleyville on the 9th instant. He was accused of having caused the death, by accident and involuntarily, of a white friend while out shooting together last July. No evidence was offered that he was in any way to blame. The “Substitut” asked for his acquittal. He was judged by the “Adjoint Supérieur,” a military officer, and he was acquitted. In spite of that the “Substitut” appealed to Boma. The prisoner proved that the emotion of the accident and the anticipation of the trial had brought on a severe hæmaturic fever. Yet, after nine months’ suspense, and a clear acquittal, he still has to go to Boma to be tried again on an utterly unjustifiable appeal.

Criminal trials are still judged by administrative officers, though there is a Magistrate, “Docteur en Droit,” at Stanleyville. The latter, however, states that, the Territorial Tribunals being still maintained, his competence is only in civil matters. It will easily be understood that he is not overworked.

The new itinerant character of the “Tribunal de Première Instance” results in its being scattered all over the province. The Judge, M. Aubert, has only spent a few days, on one occasion, at Stanleyville since December 1905. He has now gone home to Norway. The “Procureur d’Etat,” M. Grenade, went to Uvira, on Lake Tanganyika, last October and is not back yet. The “Substitut,” M. Eggen, is constantly away at villages on the river, inquiring and collecting evidence. As a matter of fact, the Tribunal is less complete than ever it was. It is presided over by the administrative officer, a soldier, with the help of the young “Substitut,” and the Court sits when these two gentlemen can both manage to be present.

I will quote another case showing the deficiencies of this system. On the 16th August, 1906, I informed the "Chef de Province" that I had heard complaints from the natives that an European agent of a Company was ill-treating the men who brought rubber to the factory, and that, by his orders, his black clerk had pushed a quantity of white paint down the throats of five of the men, making them all very ill and causing the death of two of them.

An inquiry was instituted. The agent was allowed to leave for Europe, without trial, and the clerk, a Gold Coast man, was kept to be tried. The case would be lingering yet had not some English missionaries voluntarily undertaken to produce the witnesses, although the affair in no way concerned them. It was finally heard by the "Adjoint Supérieur" on the 16th instant, and judgment was reserved till the following week. The Court did not sit, however, owing to the absence of the "Substitut," and the clerk does not yet know his fate. I was asked to name some one to plead for him, but I declined, and a young sub-lieutenant, just arrived from Europe, was nominated. The accused man asserts that his defender never presented his true defence, an alibi, and a different cause of the death of the two men, nor called his principal witnesses, though the prosecution used their evidence, taken by the "Substitut" at Yaminga, four days by steamer down the river, against him, and when he spoke in his own defence no examination was made of his statements. His term of service with the Company expired more than two months ago, but he is not allowed to leave. The contrast between the treatment of this coloured man and that accorded to his white chief is striking. He will, of course, have to go on appeal to Boma whatever the judgment may be.

The Inquiry Commissioners state (p. 278) that they "had noted that, very often, prosecutions initiated by substitutes against white men accused of having ill-treated natives had not been followed up on account of a decision of the Administration."

The "Commission d'Examen," however, distinctly refused to alter this state of things, and left the Director of Public Prosecutions under the orders of the Governor-General, not only in cases concerning the public safety, but in every case, including those in which prosecutions "would be inopportune on account of the troubled political situation of a region, or would compromise the working of a public service, or in which an international question might be involved." They also justify it by "the consequences, which would be more harmful on the Congo than elsewhere, of the closing or the giving up of a factory, or the stoppage of its commercial affairs" (p. 216). (N.B.—The Government has a large share in most of the Concessionary Companies.)

This decision will not lessen the "suspicions to which the abandonment, by superior orders, of prosecutions always gives rise" (p. 278).

A note at the foot of p. 275 quotes the Report of the "Secrétaires-Généraux" of the 15th July, 1900, and states that "on chercherait en vain un cas de violence commis par un blanc sur un indigène pour lequel les Magistrats auraient fait preuve d'une complaisance coupable." This is probably true, so far as the Magistrates are concerned. But how many white murderers, condemned to death by the Magistrates, have been executed? When their sentences have been commuted to penal servitude, how many of them have served a title of their term? Not one.

An agent of the A.B.I.R., named Van Ess, was condemned to death by Judge Aubert, at Coquilhatville, on the 11th December, 1905, for several atrocious murders. He was back in Belgium free in November 1906.

The reason given is the severity of the climate. But imprisonment in Congo is no worse than in New Caledonia or in Cayenne.

A British subject, James Koffie, of Elmina, was condemned on the 15th July, 1905, at Lusambo by a court-martial, although he was not a soldier, to two and a-half years penal servitude for "coups suivis de mort" while in a state of intoxication. He denied, and still indignantly denies, the accusation. He says that he asked to be allowed to communicate with his Consul, or to appeal to Boma, but he was not permitted to do either. He is still in prison here at Stanleyville, and has not even been granted a ticket of leave, although his conduct is so good that he is allowed to be practically at liberty. Here again the contrast is striking.

I have explained already how the liberty and property of the natives are entirely in the hands of the local white agent without appeal and without process of law. Soldiers, sailors, labourers, household servants, and all other contract workmen may be flogged by order of the white man in command without trial or defence.

All these cases, which concern the natives more closely than anything else, have nothing to do with elaborate Law Courts.

The Congo natives are serfs and dare assert no rights.

I have, &c.
(Signed) GEO. B. MICHELL.

P.S. *March 27*.—I hear to-day that the coloured clerk whose case I have described above, has been acquitted on the grounds that the bodies were not identified, nor the cause of death established.

G. B. M.

No. 3.

Consul-General Cromie to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 2.)

Sir,

Boma, June 1, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith a Report on the trade of the Stanley Falls district which I have received from Mr. Vice-Consul Michell.

It is apparent that there, as in other districts of the Congo Free State, the competition and restrictions of the State are gradually killing all legitimate trade.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. F. CROMIE, *Captain.*

Inclosure in No. 3.

Report by Vice-Consul Michell respecting the Trade of the Stanley Falls District during the year 1906.

I REGRET that I am again unable to obtain any reliable statistics as to the trade of this district during the past year, either from the State authorities or from private traders.

I can only state in general that the depression which was already felt in 1905 has grown more acute during the succeeding year.

Imports have declined to the supply of the small local demand for wines, beer, and tobacco for white consumption, and cheap cottons, slop-clothing, enamelled ironware, salt, and accordions for the use of natives.

The exports of rubber and ivory have fallen off heavily. The State exports in all the zones, except that of Basoko, where, I am told, the amount rose from 6 tons (metric) in 1905 to 25 tons (metric) in 1906, chiefly on account of the extraordinary activity of Commissaire-General Van Wert, are said to be less than ever.

In the "Free Zone," where alone the five commercial houses established at Stanleyville are allowed to buy rubber, the traders say that they have the utmost difficulty in buying a few kilogrammes. As the State has, since the beginning of 1907, imposed taxation on the natives of the "Free Zone," the people are refusing to make any rubber at all for the traders.

Late in the year a British (Lagos) firm established a small factory at Stanley Falls, and are doing a little exportation of rice to the Lower Congo. This industry is, I believe, likely to develop, on account of the need of food lower down the Congo.

I am unable to judge of the State export of ivory. The private exporters, both those, mostly Indians, Arabs from Oman, and Zanzibaris, trading with Uganda and the east coast, and those who send their stock down the Congo, are complaining of the great difficulty they have in obtaining ivory. They attribute this—

1. To the restrictions as to hunting, and especially in the "Zone de Chasse réservée," where all dealing in ivory is prohibited.

2. To the State claim of one tusk of every two brought in. This is not ceded to the holder for payment, but is taken away altogether.

3. To the Regulations as to marking, all ivory having to be taken to certain centres to be marked and taxed.

The only district where any hopes are expressed of improvement is in the territory of the Lomami Company. This being a freehold property, the Company is free to adopt measures which promise well for the future.

The principal causes of the general depression are—

1. The competition of the State in trade.
2. The lack of currency.
3. The heavy impositions on the natives, keeping them constantly at work for the Government, for which they are paid in goods.
4. The heavy charges for transport, due to the State monopoly.
5. The prohibition of trade except in the small "Free Zone," and of the establishment of factories elsewhere.
6. The onerous fees for licences, &c.

With regard to (1) the competition of the State, it is linked with (2) the absence of currency, and (3) taxation in kind. The State pays for everything to the natives in barter goods, principally cotton prints, brass wire, and salt. The consequence is that the people, being overstocked in these wares, buy none from the traders, and will not accept them in payment of native produce, but, on the contrary, offer them at greatly reduced prices in exchange for such other European articles as they may desire. As the State taxes the natives in labour, rubber, and produce, they will not accept cash from the traders.

Until the State introduces the use of money no amelioration can be expected. This it is not likely to do, as it makes an enormous profit on taxation in kind.

Though the blacks are accused of laziness, it is well to bear in mind that the climate makes manual labour very severe, even for the natives, who are naked, ill-fed, and worse housed than any other people. These tax their poor stamina to the utmost, and their struggle for life is hard. The infant mortality is frightful. The native has little heart for sustained labour, and the hunting, fishing, and the long distances he has to go for food leave him little energy for work that he considers quite unnecessary.

Another obstacle to trade is the State monopoly of transport. On the river private persons are not allowed to carry their own goods even in their own steamers. If they do so, they are compelled to pay to the State the same amount as if they had been carried by the State.

Such a condition seems incredible, but it is the fact not only in the case of goods but even for passengers. The commercial Companies cannot carry even their own agents. Not only so, but if a trader travels in a State steamer and pays his fare, he is not given a cabin unless all the State Agents are accommodated. If a Director is on board and one of the least of State employés requires a passage, he has to give up his cabin to the State Agent and lie on the deck.

The "Free Zone" is a strip of land 20 kilom. broad on both sides of the Congo from Stanley Falls to Isangi. In no other place is a trader allowed to stay more than twenty-four hours for any purpose, or to buy rubber.

I have frequently suggested the employment of numbers of small native pedlars to go to the villages in the interior, selling cheap European wares and buying small quantities of rubber in exchange, but besides the prohibitions mentioned above, the high charges for licences and the vexatious regulations make this expedient almost impossible.

I have received a few letters from British manufacturers of clothing, ironware, provisions, electric installations, &c., asking about openings for business in this district. To all these I can only reply that there are no other means of introducing their goods in the Congo than by inducing the State to adopt them.

So far as I can judge from the early part of the present year of 1907, the position of commerce will be worse still. The traders are not likely to obtain any india-rubber at all, and extremely little ivory.

(Signed) GEO. B. MICHELL.

Stanleyville, May 4, 1907.

No. 4.

Consul-General Cromie to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 23.)

Sir, *Boma, September 2, 1907.*
I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith a despatch which I have received from Acting Vice-Consul Beak, containing a report of his journey from Stanleyville to Kasongo.

Mr. Beak informs me that he has sent a copy direct to the Foreign Office by way of British territory, as he was not able to send it until he arrived at Lokousolwa on Lake Moero, where he was close to the British frontier.

My last news of him are from the latter place, dated the 21st June.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. F. CROMIE, *Captain*.

Inclosure in No. 1.

Acting Vice-Consul Beak to Consul Nightingale.

Sir,

Kasongo, May 8, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to report that I left Stanleyville on the 15th April and reached Kasongo on the 6th May.

2. *Itinerary*.—The railway from Stanleyville is 127 kilom. in length. At Ponthierville I was delayed for four days, waiting for one of the steamers belonging to the "Chemin de Fer des Grands Lacs." I left Ponthierville on the 20th April, and I reached Kindu and Lombolombo on the afternoon of the 24th April. On the 25th I visited the railway, travelling the whole length on a trolley. From Nsendwe onwards my journey was completed in canoe. Immediately south of Kibombo a great change in the landscape takes place, the dense forest, the distinctive feature of the Lower and Middle Congo, being here replaced by undulating, grassy, park-like country, precisely similar to Northern Nigeria.

3. *Railways*.—The district through which I have recently travelled may be roughly described as the railway zone, for the main if not the sole interest is at present centred in the construction of the railway. This is being pushed forward as fast as possible. There are four steamers and one barge running between Ponthierville and Kindu, and these are to be supplemented shortly by a barge and another steamer which is being pieced together at Ponthierville. Kindu is the head of the line to the south, but at present the steamers discharge at Nsendwe, or, as it is more usually called, Lombolombo. Between Kindu and Lombolombo is a bridge 117 metres long and from 13 to 14 metres high. The masonry foundations have a depth of $4\frac{1}{2}$ metres below the surface. Pending the completion of this bridge, the ironwork for which has not yet arrived, a branch line of some 100 yards has been constructed to the river at Lombolombo, and here all railway material is for the present offloaded. The line has been definitely mapped up to 60 kilom. from Kindu; the earthworks are built to kilometre 35; the rails are laid to kilometre 7,400, where another bridge of some 50 metres broad is about to be commenced. The forest lasts up to kilometre 60, where another bridge of nearly 200 metres will be required, but for these 36 miles the country is flat, and there are no other rivers of any importance. After Kasongo the line will run through a level open plain to kilometre 200, where a series of extremely difficult ravines will have to be negotiated in approaching La Porte d'Enter, near which point the river again becomes navigable. Rapid progress is anticipated, and two years is commonly given for the completion of this portion of the railway in question.

The Railway Company employs about 60 whites and some 2,500 natives. The latter are paid from 1 to 3 dotis (*i.e.*, 4 to 12 yards of cloth, nominal value 3s. to 15s.) per mensem, and are rationed. The monthly ration consists of 1 kilog. of meat, 4 kilog. of rice, 1 choko (nominal value 50 centimes), and 1 mitako (nominal value 1 fr. 50 c.). This ration is sufficient. The native employés as a rule receive 1 doti a month for the first year of their engagement, 2 dotis a month for the second, and 3 dotis a month for the third year. The value of a doti is difficult to estimate; it is certainly very little in the railway zone. Up to 16 dotis is frequently paid for a goat on the Middle Congo; at Stanleyville the price of a goat varies from 13 to 20 dotis. I have frequently had to pay a doti for two small chickens, or for fifteen eggs or for 6 kilog. of rice. On the other hand, an "Arabisée" costs, on marriage, from 24 to 32 dotis, and a native woman from 12 to 16 dotis. The wages quoted above are the average maximum paid, but very often, although the food supplied is sufficient, the wages given are purely nominal. In many cases certainly, and only too frequently according to native accounts, workmen receive much less. In any case, a three years' contract, except in the case of educated natives—and there are practically no educated Congolese—is purely a farce. If the native is to receive fair treatment, no contract should in the first instance be for a longer period than six months. Nominally the Railway Company is permitted to draw its quota from all parts of the Congo, but this privilege has not, I understand, been made use of, because

it is too difficult to apply. I need hardly, perhaps, point out that a considerable amount of moral, if not physical, pressure has to be brought to bear on the native population to induce them to work for the wages quoted. A native seeking work will accept any other employment sooner than sign on for the railway. The completion of the line, however, is of such paramount importance, and it will undoubtedly prove eventually so great a boon to native as well as to white, that I am disinclined to be too critical of the means by which that completion is brought about.

4. *Transport*.—Concurrently with the building of the railway, the ordinary work of the “État” has to be continued. Officials and material for the Manyema and other districts have to be transported, and the route from Ponthierville to Kasongo is one of the main transport routes of the Congo. Along this route villages have been established and rest-houses built at intervals of from five to nine hours’ travelling up-stream. The sole tax imposed upon the inhabitants of these villages is a labour tax; each village is made to furnish forty paddlers. These paddlers are paid 2 dotis a month each and must ration themselves. This pay is admittedly insufficient. Theoretically these paddlers are supposed to work fifteen days a month only. Practically the exigencies of the service demand that their work must be continuous. I will quote one or two typical instances:—

Village of Weinlanga.—Formed five years ago under orders of Bula Matadi. Population: men, 46; women, 40. Furnish 37 paddlers; 3 have run away. Work continuous. Pay: Chief, 8 dotis; paddlers, 2 dotis each. Cultivation and fishing impossible because whole time taken up with paddling.

Village of Lungambi.—Population: men, 60; women, 50. Furnish always 40 paddlers, and usually more. Work absolutely continuous, 6 hours up and 2 hours down. Complain that cloth is useless as medium of exchange.

Village of Kagamba.—Population: men, 40; women, 30. Village formed three years ago by State. These people state that they have worked absolutely every day, Sundays included, for past three years. Taxation, 40 paddlers. Pay, 1½ dotis a month. Complain that they cannot cultivate because whole time taken up with paddling, and that the cloth they are paid is useless as medium of exchange. Women of this village burn roots for salt, and therewith buy food from villages in the interior.

Although it is purely nominal, it is to be feared that paddlers do not invariably receive their pay regularly. My paddlers from Kibombo to Lungambi informed me that they had received no wages for six months.

In each village is stationed a sentry with an Albini, who to all appearances takes precedence of the Chief. His official title is not sentry, for the sentry system has, I understand, been discontinued, but the name unfortunately still sticks, and I cannot find a more exact appellation than that of the villagers. He is not a soldier, but a “milicien”; not a sentry, but the “gardien du gîte d’étape.” He would seem to possess all the vices of a volunteer without the virtues which a strict military training is commonly held to inculcate; he must be more than human if he fails to have a good time.

At the wood posts between Ponthierville and Kindu the wood is carried to the steamers almost entirely by women. I understand that this work is done voluntarily, and I do not gather that these women receive any remuneration. According to the Regulations steamer captains should not employ women as wood-bearers. Again, the loading and discharging of canoes between Nsendwe and Kasongo is largely done by the wives of the absent paddlers under the superintendence of the sentry. From the instances quoted above it will be observed that practically every adult in each of these villages is requisitioned. Some of the men are frequently (in fact, always, as far as my actual experience goes) replaced by boys, and some of the women by young girls. I would venture to protest most strongly against this employment of women. It is in direct opposition to the spirit of all modern Colonial policy, one of the chief aims of which has been and is to better the status of the native woman. In the ordinary native economy the woman is commonly called upon by native custom to do more work than the man. The mere presence of the white in other parts of Africa has usually proved an immediate check on this evil custom.

The scarcity and consequent dearness of food is one of the first results of the system which I have endeavoured briefly to describe. The riverine villages along the route in question are of the poorest and filthiest description. Their appearance indicates a retrogression since the Arab occupation. In the natural course of things the inhabitants of these villages would catch fish which they would barter against other food with natives inland. They complain that State work leaves them no time for fishing. With

the exception of a few banana and plantain plantations, which demand no care, and now and again small patches of rice and cassava, there is a total absence of cultivation of any kind. The population is weak and obviously overworked and underfed. I anticipate that these villages will prove an excellent field for sleeping sickness, which is advancing rapidly, and for which practically no provision has yet been made.

For the supply of its employés on the "chemin de fer" the State depends upon two main sources. There is, firstly, a large rice plantation at Lokanda. Secondly, the State purveyors are the "Arabisés," who are taxed in food-stuffs. These "Arabisés" draw their supplies mainly from the interior, where hitherto the white has hardly penetrated. Their prices are frequently exorbitant and their profits excessive. To give an example: In the interior near Kasongo a goat can be purchased for 1 or 2 dotis. This same goat drifted down-stream is worth, say, 10 dotis at Kindu, and 15 dotis at Stanleyville. The "Arabisés" are for the most part fine examples of African blackguards of the worst description. While overcharging the Railway Company, they usually steal, rather than purchase, what they sell. They naturally do not fail to avail themselves to the full of the opportunities which their position affords of misrepresenting the white. Buyers for the railway are already to be found as far south as Lac Kisale and Pweto. In fact, the railway may roughly be said to be devastating the country in its advance. Presumably this course will be continued until it is found to be cheaper to import provisions from Europe. But by that time the native will have been deprived of what little live stock he now possesses, which is acclimatized, and which it will be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to replace. The native is primarily an agriculturist, and to deprive him, whether at good prices or not, of acclimatized stock which cannot be replaced by importation is merely another instance of that short-sighted, callous, destructive policy the pursuance of which has already resulted in the practical ruin of other portions of the Congo.

5. *Rubber*.—I am unable to quote figures, but, as in the case of the Lower Congo, every station between Ponthierville and Kabombo, where the rubber zone may be said practically to end, reports a decrease in the yield. The reports of Forest Inspectors, the most reliable informants, are most disheartening. They tell of the wholesale and wanton destruction of valuable vines by the native in order to comply with the Government's demands. These reports are confirmed in general by those received from native sources. The natives declare that "rubber is no longer like the waters of the Congo, nor like the stones at Matadi," and that they must "go far" to find it.

6. *Sleeping Sickness*.—This disease will, I fear, form the subject of many of my subsequent reports, for in comparison all other difficulties appear insignificant. I should simply like to state at once that sleeping sickness is increasing rapidly, and that no adequate provision has been or is being made to cope with it.

7. *Unrest*.—A large portion of the country to the east of Ponthierville is comparatively unknown or at least unmapped. It is commonly, I understand, in a state of disturbance, of which Walikele is for the moment the centre. This disturbance is being dealt with.

The country to the north-east of Kasongo has not yet been brought thoroughly under control, although that post was formed as long as seventeen years ago and is now the "chef-lieu" of a province. On the 3rd May two officers, one of whom was on patrol and the other attempting to make a census, with fifty men were attacked by one of the tribes on the Lulindi, three days' march from Kasongo. The losses were two killed and six wounded, one of whom has since died. There was, unfortunately, no doctor to dress the wounded on their return here, and I attended the funeral of one of them on the morning after my arrival. The tribes in question are armed with muzzle-loaders, of which they are said to have many hundreds. I have seen several of these confiscated; they are of the most varied description and usually from 50 to 100 years old. The source of the powder for these weapons is unknown. One of the guns, however, taken in the attack on the 3rd May was found to contain some of the particular gunpowder used by the State, which is superior in quality to that commonly found among the natives. This find has led to the discovery of a theft from the powder magazine at Kasongo to which the sentry was undoubtedly privy, but the amount stolen has not yet been ascertained. The Commandant of the District is away on tour and his authorization is awaited before the Lulindi can be placed under martial law, from which it was only relieved in March last. Although the country to be dealt with is naturally difficult, no serious trouble is anticipated.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. B. BEAK.

Vice-Consul Michell to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 16.)

Sir,

Boma, October 15, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that I left Stanleyville on the 6th September for a journey in the Ubanghi district.

Arriving at Bumba on the 9th, I learnt that the "Délivrance," a small steamer running between Bumba and Go on the River Itimbiri, had already left, but was expected back, and would be leaving again for Ibembo and Go in about five days. As there was little to be seen at Bumba, and I considered that by proceeding slowly up the Itimbiri by canoe I should see more of the country and the villages *en route*, I borrowed two canoes and left Bumba on the 10th for Moenge. As I could not obtain a third canoe nor carry all my camp equipment and stores with me, I left the latter at Bumba to be sent after me by the "Délivrance" five days later. At Moenge I met the latter steamer going down to Bumba, and gave the captain full directions as to my goods. He expected to overtake me at Lulu, two days farther up the Itimbiri.

At Moenge I was kindly received by M. Redard, a Swiss, in sole charge of the post. Here a very interesting condition prevails. M. Redard told me that he had never been to any of the villages of his district with a single armed man, nor had he made any effort to compel the natives to bring in rubber. He explains to the Chiefs the necessity of paying the tax, and the advisability of doing so voluntarily, in order to avoid punitive expeditions, which would be conducted by military officers and not by himself. The consequence is that, without leaving his post, the monthly tale of rubber brought in has risen from 300 kilog. to 1,000 and 1,200 kilog. This, considering the poverty in rubber of the forests of the Itimbiri, he considers extremely satisfactory, and he informed me that he intended to quote his own experience to the authorities at Brussels as a proof that the natives are amenable to mild and reasonable treatment. In other posts on the Itimbiri M. Redard's success was acknowledged, but it was attributed to the influx of tribes from other districts into his own, the population having thus largely increased.

Doubtless M. Redard would reply that this also was due to the attraction of his treatment of them.

From Moenge I proceeded to Mandungu, where a different method is in force. At several villages on the way I received complaints of the pressure put on the natives to bring in rubber, which, they said, was now nearly exhausted, while their natural employment was fishing and paddling. There is a sharp line of division in this country between river populations and bush folk, the two classes being usually on bad terms. Even between themselves the fishermen of one season do not combine with those of another season, and cultivators of fields are distinct from those who live by hunting, so that river people object to being taxed in rubber, and their presence in the forests is resented by the bushmen. The consequence is that M. Dell'orge, the "Chef de Poste" at Mandungu, and M. Johansen, who is in charge of the detachment of "Force Publique," spend alternately most of their time in the district visiting villages with an armed escort in order to induce the people to bring in their rubber. I heard no complaints of ill-treatment, but at several villages the people were weary and depressed, affirming that the men and children had to work "every day" for "Bula Matadi," while the women were constantly at work cutting wood for the steamer.

On the Itimbiri, as far as Mandungu, there are many settlements of time-expired soldiers and State workmen, some having come as far as from Lake Albert Edward, and I was able to make myself understood without difficulty in Kiswahili, though the language of the district is Bangala. These ex-soldiers are taxed in the same way, and made the same complaints.

I stopped at Mandungu for three days, and there met a trader coming down from the Welle. He told me that the journey so far as Djabir would not be difficult, but he knew of no direct road from Djabir to Yakoma, nor did he think I could get there *via* Gufuru without great trouble.

The mails, transport, and other convoys were sent from Djabir to Yakoma down the Itimbiri and Congo to Irebu, and thence up the Ubanghi. This gentleman also informed me that muzzle-loading guns are a common article of trade in the Welle district. I understood him to say that he traded in them himself. But I could obtain no corroboration of his statement, or of the State itself engaging in this trade.

The "Délivrance" not arriving, I went on to Ibembo, three days by canoe. At the latter place, which is the first within the Welle district, a doctor is stationed for the

examination of all passengers for symptoms of sleeping sickness. On hearing this I had great difficulty in inducing my men to leave the preceding village. They all became much excited, declaring that the medical examination was the cause of the sickness, and that the doctor with his syringe was sent by the State for the purpose of inoculating them. This belief is very prevalent.

Eventually, on my threatening to leave them altogether, they followed me sullenly. Dr. Heiberg examined them all and myself, and when they heard that he had found no symptoms of the disease, and they were now free to move where they would, they were proportionately elated.

In consequence of the delay in the arrival of the steamer I had now been twelve days travelling by canoe, most of the days being twelve and thirteen hours long. This fatigued me considerably, and brought on a repetition of the disorder I had suffered from before. I should, however, have continued my journey to Djabir, but when at last the "Délivrance" arrived my luggage was not on board, the "Chef de Poste" at Bumba having declared to the captain that he had nothing for me. I cannot understand how this occurred, as I found on my return my things at Bumba just as I had left them.

As I could not proceed without my camp equipment, and after the delay already experienced I could not spare the time to wait till the steamer could go to Bumba again and return, I reluctantly gave up the idea of going on to Djabir, but determined to return to Bumba and to try to get to Banzyville either overland from Upoto or up the Ubanghi from Irebu.

Meanwhile, as the steamer was going on to Go, the rapids which impede the further navigation of the Itimbiri, I went with her to that place. At Go there is a small tram-line to above the rapids. Hence a small steam-launch takes the goods and passengers on to Buta. Four hours above Go the Likati falls into the river, which now bears the name of Rubi, and the launch also serves the transport as far as Likati. The former post of Enguetra has been removed, and is replaced by Likati.

I should have been glad to see Buta and the motor-car road. But as the steamer was returning immediately, and my provisions were running short, I was obliged to yield to the severe indisposition I was suffering and return to Bumba, arriving there on the 29th September.

At the village of Bungungu, on the Itimbiri, I met a Museat ivory trader who was in great distress at the treatment he had received at Basoko, a large quantity of his ivory having been confiscated. He insisted that this ivory had not been purchased anywhere within the valley of the Aruwimi, and said that he had receipts proving it. He had taken it to Basoko to be officially stamped. I am making inquiries about this case. There are many Indian, Baluchi, Zanzibari, and Uganda traders in the Welle district who complain of the injustices of the State and the difficulties placed in the way of their trade in ivory.

With regard to the motor-car road now being constructed from Buta to the Bomokandi and the Nile, I was sorry not to see it for myself. But I met several engineers and others connected with the project, and from inquiries I made at Ibembo and Go I gathered that the road is not looked upon as a serious factor in the communications with the north-east. It seems to be felt that, if the Government insists on completing it, it will be eventually constructed. But at the present rate of progress, and with the materials now supplied, questions as to its completion are received with a smile.

The two heavy Thornycroft cars placed on the Nile section are lying abandoned in the bush, and most of the copper and iron-work has been torn off and stolen by the natives. Of the five smaller cars landed at Buta last year, two are entirely useless, and the principal working parts have been removed to replace damaged parts of the other three.

There seems to be no difficulty in obtaining the labour required locally. I was told that the inducement offered is engagement afterwards in the "Force Publique." Military service seems to be popular among the Abobwas, who form the principal population of the Welle district. Men offering themselves are told there are no immediate vacancies, but that if they engage themselves on the road they will have a prior claim to entry into the army when openings occur.

On my return to Bumba I took passage by the mail-steamer "Flandre" to Lisala, intending, if possible, to penetrate from Upoto northward to Banzyville on the Ubanghi. I had heard of serious irregularities in the country behind Upoto, and should have been glad to investigate them. Unfortunately, on my arrival at Lisala I was suffering from continuous high fever, and though the Rev. William Forfeitt met me there and kindly offered to do everything he could for me, I did not feel fit to undertake the

fatiguing overland journey without the opportunity of proper medical attendance if necessary. I therefore continued down the Congo by the same steamer, with the intention of consulting the doctor at Nouvelle Anvers and, if he advised it, taking the steamer up the Ubanghi from Irebu. This I thought I might do, even if my health was not quite re-established, as the whole journey to Yokoma might be done in sections by steamer.

On my arrival at Coquilhatville, however, on the 5th instant I received telegrams from the officer in command of His Majesty's ship "Dwarf" and from Mr. Underwood informing me of the death of His Majesty's Consul-General, Captain Cromie, and I thereupon abandoned the attempt to go up the Ubanghi.

I arrived here on the 13th instant, and am now awaiting instructions.

I deeply regret having been unable to accomplish the tour in the Ubanghi. I was particularly anxious to accomplish it, and had I been able to start from Stanleyville some two or three months earlier I believe I could have done so successfully.

I have, &c.
(Signed) GEO. B. MICHELL.

No. 6.

Acting Vice-Consul Beak to Foreign Office.—(Received January 2, 1908.)

Sir, *Baudouinville, Lake Tanganyika, September 6, 1907.*

IN accordance with your instructions, I have the honour to forward the following Report on my recent tour of the Katanga portion of the Congo Free State.

In a previous despatch (dated Kasongo, the 8th May last), I dealt with the country traversed from Stanleyville to Kasongo. The inclosed Report, therefore, applies particularly to the territory controlled by the Comité Spécial du Katanga and the Union Minière du Haut Katanga, which has recently superseded the Tanganyika Concessions (Limited) in the region under consideration.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. B. BEAK.

Inclosure in No. 6.

Report by Acting Vice-Consul Beak on his recent Tour of the Katanga portion of the Congo Free State.

DIVISIONS OF REPORT.

<p>I.—Itinerary. II.—Kasongo to Ankoro. III.—Taxation. IV.—Land Question. V.—The Katanga Mines.</p>	<p>VI.—"Les Révoltés." VII.—Tanganyika Slave Trade. VIII.—Sleeping Sickness. IX.—Conclusions.</p>
<p>Annex (A)— 1. Boma to Mombasa. 2. Katanga Tour.</p>	<p>Annex (D)— Hardey Correspondence.</p>
<p>Annex (B)— Case of Katoro.</p>	<p>Annex (E)— 1. Garrison of Lulua. 2. Military Operations. 3. Martial Law.</p>
<p>Annex (C)— Provinces and Posts in Katanga.</p>	<p>Annex (F)— Correspondence between the C.S.K. and the T.C.L.</p>

REPORT.

I.—Itinerary.

FULL details of my journey from the west to the east coast, and of my Katanga tour are attached. I left Boma on the 6th March, and, travelling by railway and steamer, reached Stanleyville on the 1st April. At Stanleyville I spent nearly a fortnight making preparations and gaining information for the Katanga tour. On the 15th April I travelled

by rail from Stanleyville to Pouthierville, where I was delayed until the 19th waiting for a steamer. On the 25th April I visited the railway works at Lomlombo and left on the 26th by canoe for Kasongo, which I reached on the 6th May. At Kasongo I left the river and struck across country for Buli. From May until September I was journeying in Katanga territory, which I left at Baudouinville on the 6th September. From Baudouinville I crossed Lake Tanganyika to Karema, and thence proceeded through German East Africa via Tabora to Mwanza, on Lake Victoria Nyanza. At Mwanza I had to wait six days for a steamer for Kisumu, whence I travelled by rail via Nairobi to Mombasa.

II.—Kasongo to Ankoro.

I left Kasongo on the 13th May by path, and on the 24th May reached Buli, whence I proceeded in canoe to Ankoro, where I arrived on the 29th May. The country traversed is partly under the State and partly under the Comité Spécial du Katanga, whose territory begins at the 5th parallel. The route from Kasongo to Buli which I selected to follow is an unfrequented one where the white man is seldom seen. This was evident from the anxious welcome extended to me by the older and the curiosity with which I was regarded by the younger generation. I could not obtain the stages of the route in question because it had long been discontinued. The map of the Katanga compiled by M. Droogmans in 1903, sufficiently inexact, apparently, at the time of its compilation, is now quite out of date, owing to the ravages of sleeping sickness. I followed bush paths frequently through grass 9 feet high and water 5 feet deep. In spite of travelling on an average seven hours a day, I only accomplished in twelve days a journey which I had expected to do in ten. The actual distance covered by this circuitous route was some 180 miles.

The villages visited may conveniently be divided into four groups—(A), (B), (C), and (D), under the posts of Kasongo, Tshofa, Buli, and Ankoro respectively:—

(A.) The villages to the south of Kasongo as far as the 5th parallel, the northern border of the Katanga, are directly under the Independent State. These villages are taxed in portorage for the Kasongo-Kabambare-Kivu route, and for this purpose they are grouped under two or three local Chiefs. Practically every male is requisitioned.

Ordinarily they make one journey a month from Kasongo to Kabambare, which is fourteen days. For this they are paid $1\frac{1}{2}$ dotis (3s. 9d.) and the Chiefs receive a "matabiche."

The general complaint of the natives in this group is, firstly, that their pay is insufficient, and, secondly, that it is irregular. Moreover, they state that the wages due to carriers who die *en route* are not given to their relations. These natives think that they ought to get 2 dotis instead of $1\frac{1}{2}$ dotis, or 5s. instead of 3s. 9d.

(B.) The villages immediately to the south of the 5th parallel are taxed in rubber, which in this vicinity is, or rather has been, fairly plentiful, and for this purpose they again are grouped under local Chiefs. They take rubber to the post of Tshofa, on the Lomami. In this section I found dissatisfaction very general and complaints numerous. Although the information given is from purely native sources, I have adequate reasons in this particular case for believing it to be correct.

Four instances will, I think, suffice:—

1. Village of Manene Lubangi. Rubber tax, 240 kilog. every two months to be delivered at Tshofa, on the Lomami. Receipts for month of January 1907, 130 kilog. Rubber to be found four days' distant from village, thence to Tshofa a journey of ten days. Rubber scarce. Collection takes up whole time of all inhabitants. This village pays neighbouring Chief three goats a month for permission to cut rubber in his territory.

2. Village of Bena Hamba. Tribe Balubas. Tax, 12 kilog. of rubber every two months, for which natives paid 2 dotis (6s. 8d.). Rubber plentiful close to village, but few people to collect it, because sleeping sickness has reduced population from 200 to 40.

3. Village of Katangi, Chief Wwana Kasongo. Tribe, Bena Kumbi. Under Poste of Tshofa, on Lomami. Population of Bena Kumbi group of villages, 302 men. Rubber tax, 351 kilog. every two months. Amount paid already: 15th January, 98 kilog.; 10th April, 70 kilog. In 1905 these villages furnished 2,797 kilog. of rubber to the Poste de Muebe. Among them is one refractory village, Bena Missi, which refused to collect rubber. A month ago the Chief sent thither his brother, whom the inhabitants killed. This fact not yet reported to Chef de Poste at Tshofa. Rubber used to be plentiful, but now scarce on account of white demand. Vine cut indiscriminately in

spite of orders to the contrary. For this rubber collection whole village migrates temporarily to bush, where grass shelters are built. Women and children accompany men to assist and to prepare food.

4. Village of Kassongo Kiboko. Headquarters of Moina, Chief of Bena Kumb who is overlord of nine villages. Appointed or confirmed on the 8th June, 1902. Pays rubber monthly to Tshofa. Formerly paid six bags per mensem, but now only two, because sleeping sickness has killed more than half his people (this particular village fourteen deaths out of population of forty). Rubber four days distant from village, three days thence to Tshofa. Forty men working whole month can collect one bag, for which they receive 2 dotis (6s. 8*d.*). Grass huts in bush; whole village migrates, &c.

So much has already been both said and written on the evils of the rubber tax that I refrain from making any comment on the instances quoted above.

(C.) Villages in the neighbourhood of Buli are taxed mainly in portorage for the new transport route Buli-Tshofa. They have also to keep that route in repair, and are engaged to make bricks for the erection of the new station of Buli, which has recently been transferred from the east to the west bank of the river.

The Buli-Tshofa road is 255 kilom., or 153 miles, in length. For a native road this road is a good one. A carrier loaded takes twelve, and a runner six, days to go from Buli to Tshofa. A carrier's pay is as follows:—

One way loaded, 1 doti and 200 grammes of beads.

Both ways loaded, 1½ dotis and 200 grammes of beads.

Approximately this means 3s. 6*d.* for eighteen days and 4s. 9*d.* for twenty-four days respectively.

At the time of my visit to Buli, the natives had definitely refused to clear the road, which was much overgrown, and the Chef de Poste, without even a single soldier or policeman, had no means of enforcing his demands. Soldiers, however, from the Lower Congo were due to pass through this district a fortnight after my departure.

(D.) In the district of Ankoro, one of the few in which women are taxed, I found dissatisfaction very rife. The natives, however, were extremely reticent, and perhaps with good reason. At Poho, a village close to Ankoro, the inhabitants stated that they had been warned of my coming by the Chef de Poste at Ankoro, who told them that if they complained to me he would sjambok them. It appears, according to the account of the inhabitants of Goenganga, that when a rest-house was required to be built at Kabomka Kikola the people refused to work. The Chef de Poste at Ankoro consequently sent his Capita, Kaiembi, to arrest the Chief of Goenganga. They allege that Kaiembi flogged the Chief with a chicotte, and struck him repeatedly across the head with his rifle. This happened two months ago, and the Chief still lay sick in his hut. In the majority of cases, the natives further stated, when the bush people in the neighbourhood refused to work for the white man no action was taken.

I have thought fit to deal firstly with this northern portion of the Katanga, because it struck me as totally unlike the remainder of the territory of the Comité Spécial. It is the only portion in which I came across actual cruelty and general discontent. In other portions cruelty may be practised, but it is inflicted by askari or Capitas, and is due to laxity of discipline and want of control. Complaints of the doings of the askari were frequent everywhere, and the state of discipline may be judged from the fact that I have been repeatedly assured by Belgian officers that they cannot obtain silence in the ranks. The chatter on parade would drive an English sergeant off his head. But elsewhere misdeeds when discovered are severely punished, and I have been unable to trace any connivance on the part of white officials. The instance quoted in Annex (B) is typical of a Capita's mode of action, but it goes far to show that, in the Haut Luapula Secteur at least, the Basenji have no hesitation in reporting misdemeanours to the Commandant at Lukafu. The relations existing between the white and black races are far healthier in the Katanga than in the Congo. Numerous abuses exist, which I shall attempt to indicate later, but they are to be attributed not so much to the individual official as to the system of which he is the victim.

This healthier condition may be due to various causes, of which I believe the comparative absence of rubber to be the chief.

III.—*Taxation.*

The Katanga is divided into three provinces as follows:—

The Lomami, or western secteur, chef-lieu, Kabinda; the Tanganyika-Moero, or eastern secteur, chef-lieu, Kiambi; the Haut Luapula, or southern secteur, chef-lieu, Lukafu.

The residence of the Représentant, as the Managing Director of the Comité Spécial is styled, and the head-quarter staff is at Lukonzolwa, on Lake Moero.

The total white staff, supposed to administer the Katanga territory, numbers 49, made up as follows:—

1. Head-quarter staff: the Director, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Commandant du Corps.
2. Chefs de Secteur, 3.
3. Doctors, 3.
4. Officers and non-commissioned officers, 15.
5. Chefs de Poste, 22.
6. Steamer captains, 2.

The native army consists of 1,010 black non-commissioned officers and men, distributed approximately as follows:—

	No.
Head-quarters, Lukonzolwa	150
120 at each of the chefs-lieux de secteur, Kabinda, Kiambi, and Lukafu ..	360
From 15 to 25 at each poste	500
Total	1,010

White stations either have been or are about to be established at the following places:—

Lubefu, Tshofa, Kabinda, Buli, Ankoro, Towa, Mukulu, Kabongo, Kiambi, Kikondja, Pweto, Moliro. Kinda, Bukama, Kilwa, Kayoyo, Lulua, Lukafu, Kasenga, Nosofi, Kalonga, Kavalo.

There is one small steamer plying on Lake Moero between Pweto, Lukonzolwa, and Kilwa, and another along the western shore of Lake Tanganyika between Moliro and Towa.

At the time of my visit justice was not represented in the territory of the Comité Spécial, but a “substitut” was, I understood, *en route* from Europe to either Kiambi or Lukafu.

There is no clerical staff attached to either head-quarters or any of the stations.

A glance at the map will possibly be sufficient to indicate that administration in the ordinary acceptation of the term does not exist in the Katanga. The white stations are from five to fifteen days apart; the average distance separating these stations works out actually to eight days, or, say, 150 miles. Were its whole time and attention directed to administration it would obviously be impossible for the small staff enumerated to exercise any adequate control over the huge extent of territory under consideration. The time of this staff, however, is wholly occupied in pursuits of a commercial character and mainly in the collection of revenue, in furnishing the innumerable reports and returns inseparable from a bureaucratic system, and in superintending the transport of imported provisions and merchandize, and export rubber and ivory. In spite of Article II of the Berlin Act, no attempt is made either to govern the natives or to assist them in their internal administration.

As in the Congo, no native Courts or native Councils exist in the Katanga. The amount of taxation which the natives pay depends mainly upon their proximity to white stations.

The Decree of the 3rd June, 1906 (“Impositions directes et personnelles”), declared that all valid adults should be taxed either individually or collectively, but left the amount of this tax to be determined by the Governor-General, stipulating, however, that it should not be less than 6 fr. or greater than 24 fr. per head per annum. The inhabitants of the Katanga are called upon to pay, so far as the Comité can make its call obeyed, an annual tax of 19 fr. 20 c. per head. This tax is admittedly a heavy one, both in comparison with that enforced in English, French, and German African Protectorates and in respect of the resources not so much of the territory as of the natives affected. In no other African dependency is the assessment of his contribution so wholly disproportionate to the native's means. Nowhere else does he get so little

return. There is no pretence at administration, not even the preservation of peace and the maintenance of law and order, let alone the prevention of disease, the advancement of education, the construction of public works, and the improvement of communications. The tax may assume various forms, professedly to suit the convenience of the native, more really, I think, to answer the requirements of the Company. The local official decides what form the taxation of his district shall take, and if he has any regard for his own advancement he will exact rubber wherever it exists. The collection of rubber involves hardships in comparison with which those of the *corvée* and transport are insignificant. The long list of taxation in kind serves in some degree to conceal the rubber tax, which the native loathes more than anything else. The evils of this rubber tax have been too fully dealt with elsewhere to need recapitulation.

There are no less than twenty-four different kinds in which the tax may be paid, and these are divided into three main groups: "Produits indigènes," "produits domaniaux," "travaux ordinaires." A few instances may be given in each group. Under the first cassava and maize are accepted at 8 fr. per 100 kilog. and dried fish at 20 centimes per kilog. Under the second, rubber at 1 fr. 20 c. and ivory from 2 to 5 fr. per kilog. according to quality and condition. It is not clear that produce is accepted at its local market value. At Lukafu, for instance, salt is accepted at 20 centimes per kilog. until a native has paid his tax, after which the Company gives 40 centimes per kilog.

The Congo Administration has delegated its authority to levy taxes to the Comité Spécial du Katanga, and the Comité Spécial, again, has delegated this authority to the Union Minière.

The majority of villages in the mining district and along the Lualaba pay their tax to the Mining Company. At Chilungo, for instance, the Union Minière accepts at 6*d.* per 20 lbs. flour, which it retails at 1½*l.* per lb. Where valuable products do not exist, taxation is allowed more or less to slide. The taxable capacity of the Haut Luapula Secteur, for instance, is estimated at 4,800*l.*, but in 1906 only 1,360*l.* was imposed. In the Bukama district, if even half the inhabitants were taxed, the flour tax would amount to over 1,000,000 kilog., but only 50,000 kilog. are required. In all this taxation in kind, which involves for the native much carrying and long journeys, the time to come and go is not counted; the legal tax of forty hours per month, or its equivalent, oppressive in the first instance, is invariably exceeded. The Article of the 3rd June answers the purpose for which it was framed excellently in rubber districts; elsewhere it is found to be wholly impracticable, except as a continual source of worry and anxiety to the taxed and the collectors.

By far the larger portion of taxation, however, for reasons which I shall endeavour to explain later, falls in the Katanga into the third group, and in this transport may be said to predominate.

The whole of the material and supplies for the Katanga, excepting the Union Minière, is conveyed in State steamers up the Kasai and Sankuru to Lusambo, where it is transhipped to a smaller steamer, which continues to Pania Mutumbo. Pania has recently replaced Lusambo as the main centre of distribution, because the country between Lusambo and Pania Mutumbo is of a mountainous and exceptionally difficult nature. From Pania Mutumbo there are two main routes:—

1. The first route is via Lubefu, Tshofa, and Buli along a good road some 240 miles in length, and thence up the Lualaba in canoe to Ankoro.
2. The second runs from Pania Mutumbo to Kabinda over a mountainous, difficult path, and thence via Kisengwa and Katombe to Ankoro.

I have been unable to discover the actual number of loads which arrive annually for distribution at Pania Mutumbo; perhaps 10,000 is a reasonable estimate. Hence over 800 carriers a month are required in this locality alone, or probably some 1,200 per mensem during eight months in the year, for transport during the height of the rainy season is difficult, if not impracticable, both on account of the state of the country and the fact that the natives are engaged in planting their lands. Scarcity of both carriers and provisions compelled the adoption of two routes from Pania Mutumbo. It will be seen that these two routes unite at Ankoro. At Ankoro a redistribution takes place:—

1. On the east Lubile and Towa, and on the west Kikondja, are supplied direct from Ankoro.
2. The remaining supplies for the Tanganyika-Moero Secteur are sent up the Luvua to Kiambi, whence they are conveyed overland to Pweto and Moliro.

Formerly the supplies and material for the Haut Luapula Secteur were divided at Ankoro and forwarded as follows :—

- (a.) By water direct to Bukama, who distributed to Lulua, Kayoyo, and Lukafu.
- (b.) By water to Kiambi, by land to Pweto, by steamer to Kilwa and Kasenga, and thence overland to Lukafu, Kalonga, and Kavalo.

Sleeping sickness is raging all along the Lualaba, and has rendered it necessary to close the first of these routes. All supplies, therefore, for the Luapula Secteur are now sent via Kiambi.

There is no doubt that the Lusambo-Pania Mutumbo route was responsible for many deaths in the past. The present route from Pania Mutumbo to Kabinda is recognized to be so difficult that one ordinary load is given to two men, who are paid accordingly.

The great Chief Lapungu, a parvenu, himself the son of a slave, revolting in appearance, which does not from all accounts belie his reputation, pitted with small-pox, and blind in one eye, is responsible for the supply of carriers in the Kabinda district, and receives a "matabiche" for every 100 furnished. He has a large number of domestic slaves, and it is probable that they do more than their share of this portage. In any case it is a fact beyond dispute that the same men are repeatedly requisitioned. Distinct instructions are issued that each carrier is to receive his pay from the hands of the white man, and I have no reason to believe that these instructions are not strictly adhered to. But Lapungu is hardly a suitable man for the post he holds, or at least for the duties with which he is intrusted. He is the only Chief, however, with any real authority, and in the present state of non-effective occupation his services cannot easily be dispensed with.

The unsatisfactory state of the present transport system is to some extent recognized locally, and there are three projected remedies :—

(a.) To introduce automobiles on the Tshofa-Buli route, which is now possible for vehicles, except for lack of bridges. The Lomani might be crossed by ferry.

(b.) To place steamers on the Lualaba, which is known to be navigable from La Porte d'Enfer to Bukama.

(c.) To import material and supplies for the Tanganyika-Moero Secteur via Mombasa. A large portion of the supplies for the Luapula Secteur, which will eventually come via the Cape or Lobito Bay, would also for the present follow this route. Should this scheme be carried out, it is felt in official quarters that it would be possible to requisition transport from a numerous and comparatively virgin population.

With regard to (a) and (b), I cannot but point out how very misleading is the impression conveyed on the subject of transport contained in the "Bulletin Officiel" for 1906, pp. 190-191. The Report of the Commissioners, dated more than a year ago, is inapplicable even to-day. Like most other Congo official reports—at least, those which emanate from Brussels—the Commissioners' Report in question and the reply thereto are merely a series, so far as I have been able to test them by actual experience on the spot, of carefully fabricated falsehoods. In a previous Report (dated the 8th May, 1907) I had occasion to point out that, although four steamers and two barges were running on the Upper Congo between Ponthierville and Lombolombo, the conveyance of State Agents and supplies was still continued by a canoe service, which differs only in degree from the burden imposed by the carrier system. There is a good road between Tshofa and Buli, but bridges and automobiles are still wanting; the Lualaba is known to be navigable, but no steamer is available.

The total abolition of carrier transport is unlikely for many years to come within the scope of practical administration. Instead of expressing a pious wish on paper, a more practical measure would be to pay the carrier a decent wage. The only way to insure the reform of the transport system is to prohibit forced labour and to fix a minimum wage for voluntary carriers.

In connection with (c), it may be pointed out that the Mombasa route has existed for some years, and its non-adoption previously must be attributed simply to a desire to bolster up a monopoly. But even here there is a danger of a recurrence of the evil which it is sought to cure, namely, that Moliro may become a second Kabinda, which literally stinks in the nostrils of the native.

In order to pay his tax in work, the native must labour eight hours a-day for five days a-month, or sixty days a-year, for an hour's work is accepted at 4 centimes, which means a fraction over 3*d.* per diem.

The following are typical instances of the rate of pay granted to carriers :—

(a.) Route, Buli to Tshofa, distance 153 miles. Twelve days loaded. Pay: One way loaded and empty return, 1 doti and 200 grammes of beads; both ways loaded, $1\frac{1}{2}$ dotis and 200 grammes of beads.

Approximately this means 3s. 6d. for eighteen days and 4s. 9d. for twenty-four days respectively, *i.e.*, $2\frac{1}{2}d.$ per diem in the one case and $2\frac{3}{8}d.$ in the other.

(b.) Route, Kiambi to Pweto, distance 120 miles. Time, nine days. Pay for one way loaded and return empty, 3 yards of cloth and 300 grammes of beads.

This works out approximately to 3s. 3d. for fourteen days, or $2\frac{3}{4}d.$ per diem.

In estimating the above, the following official weights and values have been regarded as correct :—

Regulation load is 23 kilog., or 50 lbs.

Ordinary load of cloth is 25 kilog., or 55 lbs.

Loads fluctuate between 25 and 30 kilog. (55 and 66 lbs.).

Cloth varies in value. In the Katanga a doti (4 yards) of good cloth is reckoned at 3 fr. 50 c.

The official value placed on beads is 5 fr. 60 c. per kilog., and 100 grammes may therefore be considered equivalent to $5\frac{1}{2}d.$

A money currency has not yet been introduced, although I cannot but emphasize in this particular the Report of the Commission d'Enquête, that “cette mesure est réclamée par les Agents de l'État, les factoriens, les missionnaires, et même par les noirs qui ont appris à connaître l'argent.” Owing to the absence of money and the absence of factories the native does not really get what he is alleged to receive. But before dealing with this question I must attempt to state the official view of taxation obtaining in the Katanga to-day, which is briefly the following, and which is based, apparently, upon Article 33, “Bulletin Officiel, 1906,” p. 232 :—

“At present there are really no *impôts* whatsoever in the Katanga, but there will be when money is introduced. The nominal tax per head is 19 fr. 20 c. per annum, but this amount, instead of being paid to the Company by the native, is paid to the native by the Company. In order to inculcate the dignity of labour, the native is permitted to work forty hours a-month, or sixty days a-year, for the magnificent wage of 4 centimes an hour, or 3d. per diem. Very frequently, in fact generally, this privilege is extended, but there must be a limit to philanthropy, and in the event of extension this high rate of wages cannot be indefinitely maintained. On the main transport routes the natives are allowed to act as carriers for ten, twenty, even thirty, days a-month. In this case, however, the pay is reduced from approximately 3d. to $2\frac{1}{2}d.$ per diem.”

The native is somewhat confused in mind as to where taxation ends and remuneration begins, and, if I do not share his confusion, I can at least sympathize with it.

If the above rates be doubled, which I take to be roughly the gist of the official view of taxation, if it be granted that a carrier receives from 5d. to 6d. per diem, these latter amounts will be found to be less than half the wages paid to carriers in Sierra Leone and the Niger territories, and to compare unfavourably with the 8s. to 11d. per diem earned by carriers in neighbouring German territory, where the cost of living is certainly 50 per cent. less than in the Katanga.

But the term “wages” applied to the remuneration carriers receive in the Katanga is a misnomer, and contrary to local usage. The term employed locally, by both whites and blacks, is “matabiche,” a word which might with advantage be expunged from the vocabulary of any respectable Administration.

This “matabiche” usually takes the form of cloth and beads, for I did not in the whole course of my journey come across one of the “magasins d'État approvisionnés d'objets répondant aux goûts et aux besoins des indigènes” contemplated in one of the June Decrees (“Bulletin Officiel, 1906,” p. 244). It is not clear that the native desires either cloth or beads. From a climatic point of view cloth is not required, and from an æsthetic stand-point beads might well be discontinued. The carrier frequently refuses what does not strike his fancy, and the askari and regular *travailleurs* have to accept what he rejects. Native fashion is no less fickle than European; bush ladies are as whimsical as their sisters in Europe. A store-keeper in Basutoland who chances to prognosticate exactly next season's colour in blankets makes a small fortune. An order for new stuff from the Katanga takes at least a year to execute in Belgium, and frequently longer, for it may upset existing commissions in Brussels. The Comité Spécial

complains of the practical impossibility of suiting native taste, and of the losses occasioned thereby. It may be pointed out that the lot of the native is infinitely harder. His earnings cannot assume the particular form which he most desires. The dignity of labour is naturally somewhat difficult to inculcate where absolutely no inducements are offered.

The actual value of the "matabiche" is somewhat difficult to determine. It is certainly, however, considerably below the official value. The latter is supposed to be based upon the actual cost of cloth and beads delivered in the Katanga. The cost of transport from Europe on a load weighing 25 kilog. is said to be 70 fr. delivered in the Lomami Secteur, 80 fr. in the Tanganyika-Moero, and 85 fr. in the Haut Luapula Secteur. It is not clear that the Comité Spécial has chosen the cheapest, though it is certainly the slowest, and possibly the longest, route of importation. I have no means of verifying the figures given above, but at Lukonzolwa I discovered a considerable difference in local prices. A particular kind of bead, very commonly used for the payment of carriers thereabouts, is priced by the Comité Spécial at 5 fr. 60 c. the kilog., or 2s. per lb. The same identical bead is sold by a trading Company on the opposite side of Lake Moero, four hours distant, at 9*d.* a lb. In the absence of all competition, the values at which native products and native work are accepted, and for which payment in European merchandize is made, are naturally purely arbitrary. It must be pointed out that these values are regulated precisely by those whose advantage it is to minimize the former and enhance the latter.

The absence of money and of factories renders the task of transport a peculiarly heavy one for the Government of the Katanga. In addition to the merchandize imported for currency, all its agents are victualled by the Company. The tax in food-stuffs and the conveyance of salt from the Tanganyika-Moero and Haut Luapula Secteurs to the Lomami Secteur, where it is exchanged for rubber, render what I may call the internal transport more than considerable. To these must be added the supply of food-stuffs for the white stations and the transport of flour for the mines.

Page 195 of the "Bulletin Officiel" is very misleading on the subject of transport. The recruiting of carriers should not be left entirely to native Chiefs, because as a result of Congo policy the authority of native Chiefs, if it ever existed, has been destroyed. The native Chief in the Katanga is given a petty medal and made a slave-of-all-work. In the matter of taxation, of which he receives no portion, he acts as a commission agent. He is expected to provide carriers, although he is unable to control his village—with this result, that old men and boys are invariably forced to act as carriers, while the really strong and able-bodied refuse. By an official of some experience the population of the Katanga has been divided into three classes: those who make "pombe" (native wine), those who drink it, and those who do transport work for the Comité Spécial. During my tour I had continual trouble with my carriers, having to divide even light loads because the men were weak and soon became footsore. I had usually to replace one-half of the carriers provided as opportunity offered. I managed to get through, however, without any great difficulties or delays. I was not delayed like Monseigneur Roelens at Kasongo for fifty days owing to the ill-will of an official; I had not, like Major Wangermée, the Représentant, at Ruwe to place my carriers under a soldier-guard to keep them from deserting; I was never reduced to carrying a load myself and summoning a Chef de Poste with his askari to my assistance like the Substitut *en route* for Lukafu. But I am presumptuous enough to attribute the absence of difficulties rather to my own tact and foresight than to the excellence of the Katanga transport system. It is the selection of weaklings to start with that makes the carrier system so oppressive. The carrier's is a profession as much as any other. To take casual men for a long journey is like doing a series of forced marches with troops who have not been outside the barrack-yard for a twelvemonth.

Carriers are underpaid, and, as another result of the Congo system, food is scarce and proportionately dear. Hence the carriers, like the askari, are unable to pay the price which the basenji demand. Sickened by theft and pillage, the latter have naturally withdrawn their villages from the transport routes, which are now generally deserted. I have marched as much as five days (100 miles) at a time without coming across a village. In other parts of Africa, as, for instance, in neighbouring German territory from Karema to Mwanza, the caravan routes are rather overcrowded, and at frequent stages will be found native markets. The only inducement needed to "favoriser l'établissement sur ces routes de villages" and to "encourager la pratique des cultures vivrières" is to pay a reasonable price for native produce.

I have not found the transport routes in the Katanga strewn with bleached bones of dead carriers, as reported in the press, nor did I lose a single carrier by death during

the whole of my journey, but in nearly every village I discovered men suffering from what the natives call "road-sickness," and I am convinced that the present oppressive transport system is responsible for an enormous loss of life.

The transport *corvée* has been discontinued in practically every other African Colony or dependency. Its retention in the Congo, although approved by the Commission d'Enquête, is contrary to the advice of all experienced African Administrators.

IV.—*The Native Land Question.*

The Decree of the 3rd June, 1906, entitled "Terres Indigènes," "Bulletin Officiel" for 1906, p. 226, is being gradually applied in the Katanga so far as non-effective occupation and lack of personnel will permit.

The adoption of King Leopold's "système foncier" in its entirety is likely to be productive of considerable hardship, if not injustice, to the natives whose territory it will affect. Little or nothing is known locally of native land tenure, for the Congo official still remains strangely ignorant of all that concerns the native. But there are one or two obvious points which the system of native land tenure in the Katanga would appear to share in common with that obtaining in other parts of Africa, and to these I would wish to draw attention.

It may probably be safely said that individual property in land does not exist. The existence of collective property, however, cannot be doubted. This collective property is owned, not by the village community, but by the tribe to which that community belongs or by the Chieftaney to which it owes allegiance. The boundaries of these collective lands are frequently natural; more often they appear to be purely arbitrary. But they have been sanctioned by immemorial tradition, and they are perfectly well-known and recognized to within a foot's length by the natives themselves. This fact is abundantly clear to any one travelling through the country, and it is corroborated by older residents. If an elephant, for instance, falls dead across a native boundary he is held to belong to the people in whose territory his head may happen to rest. It is the native custom for a Chief to escort the white traveller to the boundary of his territory, and beyond that boundary it would not be becoming for him to pass.

The Congolese are not precisely nomadic, and they seldom migrate outside what I may call their tribal areas. But within these areas village communities are continually on the move. These frequent changes are due to a variety of causes, the chief of which is probably the comparative poverty of the soil. The rotation of crops being unknown and the use of manure unpractised, after three or four years' cultivation the yield decreases and villages clear and plant new lands. There are other minor causes, most varied in character, which carry great weight with the native, but which may all be embraced under the general term "juju palaver." Some villages will be found to migrate annually, and in one secteur at least of the Katanga it is estimated that ten times the lands now cultivated should be left for the natives' future use. It is really astonishing to find the vast amount of land which shows signs of having been cultivated at one time or another. A mere visit to a village and its immediate surroundings does not necessarily afford any exact idea of the amount of land which it may have under cultivation. Very frequently the inhabitants for some occult reason have thought fit to plant their "mashamba" in the bush miles distant from the village itself, and it is in the "mashamba," not in the village, that their granaries will be found. This method may have been adopted originally on account of the unsettled state of the country and the frequency of tribal raids, but it has now become very general. At times it is a source of considerable inconvenience to the white traveller, who often has to wait hours to secure food for his carriers. Throughout a very large portion of the Katanga the prevalence of sleeping sickness, while reducing the population by some 50 per cent., has recently induced the remainder to change its position and has led to the disappearance of old and the upgrowth of new communities. The creation of white stations and the building of roads have in a few cases attracted the natives and in most driven them farther afield. Frequently officers have for sanitary reasons obliged the natives to change the site of their villages, generally in this particular case from marshy to higher ground. Under all these circumstances, therefore, neither the age of a village nor the number of its inhabitants can be reasonably regarded as a determining factor in any division of territory between the Company and its subjects.

I do not think that native land tenure should for the present be interfered with in any way, and the right of the native to come and go, to build his village where he chooses, to hunt and fish where he likes, should be left intact. Tribal custom and tradition are sufficiently strong to prevent injustice on the part of one tribe to another,

and land can be leased or sold on a small scale for commercial purposes without in any way infringing native rights.

The ebb and flow of population, which I have endeavoured to indicate, still continues and will continue until sleeping sickness shall have been stamped out. The occupation of the Comité Spécial is at present non-effective, and this territory has not yet reached the administrative stage. Native rights and customs have not been studied. The whole time of the officials is taken up with what I may call their commercial duties; with no clerical assistance their mere routine work is more than they can manage. In the stress of work I am afraid that some of the land returns already furnished have been compiled on the office table without even a visit to the locality concerned. Moreover, unsuited and unaccustomed as they are to administrative work of any kind, the Katanga officials would, I think, be the first to admit that they are wholly unqualified to undertake the difficult task which the delimitation of native lands will involve. If native rights are to be safeguarded, that delimitation should be carried out by a Special Commission, the members of which should be chosen from outside the ranks of the Congo Administration. But the idea is too premature; the time is not yet. For the moment, the delimitation and the elimination of sleeping sickness is of far more urgency and importance than the creation of Crown lands.

V.—*The Katanga Mines.*

The terms of the Agreements entered into (1) between the Congo Free State and the Union Minière du Haut Katanga, dated the 28th October, 1906, and (2) between the Comité Spécial du Katanga and the Union Minière du Haut Katanga, dated the 30th October, 1906, will be found in the "Bulletin Officiel" for 1906, pp. 432–457. The information contained in the present Report is from purely local sources.

The capital of the Union Minière is 52 per cent. Belgian and 48 per cent. British. The Comité Spécial du Katanga holds 60 per cent. vendor's shares, and the Tanganyika Concessions (Limited) holds 40 per cent. The Union Minière was to take over from the Tanganyika Concessions (Limited) on the 1st July, but the new Manager, M. Berthelot, the successor of Mr. George Grey, had not reached Kambové, the local head-quarters of the Company, on the 16th July.

The Katanga copper mines are reported to be among the richest hitherto discovered in the whole world. The ore yields from $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. to $22\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of copper, and the average yield of all the copper mines, in number over 150, is about 15 per cent.

Prospecting has been practically concluded, but comparatively little work on the mines has hitherto been done. At the Kambové No. 2 Mine, which I visited, and which is stated to be typical of the rest, shafts have been sunk to a depth of 100 feet and numerous surface cuttings have been made. At Kolwezi I found preparations in progress for smelting on a small scale on very primitive methods. The results are, however, most promising. The existence of at least 200,000,000*l.* worth of copper has already been proved, and there is no reason to believe that this figure is any more than a commencement; in fact, if local opinion is not more misleading than usual, it may be anticipated that the Katanga copper belt will shortly develop into a more important centre of the mining industry than the Rand.

The main copper belt may perhaps be said to run from Kambové on the east to Ruwé on the west. At Ruwé gold is mined and the yield is 8 dwt. to the ton. From Busanga there is apparently an extensive tin belt stretching for some 80 miles in a north-easterly direction. There are sixty known reefs at Busanga, no one of which is of very high value. The high value of tin lies in the alluvial areas, Busanga and Kasenso being calculated capable of producing 3,000,000*l.* worth of tin by pumps.

The new Mining Company, which starts with a working capital of 400,000*l.*, is anxious to get to work, but for this work there are three essentials: machinery, railways, and labour. It is difficult to do more than has already been done without heavy machinery, and the importation of this machinery must be delayed until railways are built.

The railways in question are four in number. The Lower Congo Railway will run presumably direct from Leopoldville south of the Sankuru to the Katanga. This route is still under consideration, and work has not yet been begun. The Chemin de Fer des Grands Lacs will eventually affect the tin belt by uniting the Lualaba with the Congo, but I do not think that its progress will be very rapid. The two more important railways are those from the south and directly from the west. On the former work has been temporarily discontinued on account, it is stated locally, of the Broken Hill Mine, which was possibly richer in fossils than in anything else, not having come up to

expectations. The most important railway, however, so far as the Katanga mines are concerned, will probably be that from Benguela through Portuguese territory to Lac Dilolo, and thence to Ruwé. After the first 200 miles from the coast the projected route for this railway runs through country which presents extraordinarily few difficulties. The latest report states that on this route work is proceeding satisfactorily.

The question of an adequate supply of labour is for the moment nearly impossible to forecast with any exactitude, for it will depend eventually upon what is now the bane of this part of Africa, sleeping sickness, about which so comparatively little is at present known. The Tanganyika Concessions (Limited) has hitherto drawn practically all its labour from North-Eastern and North-Western Rhodesia. These sources have now been closed owing to the spread of sleeping sickness to Southern Katanga, and recently it has called upon the Comité Spécial to recruit. The demands made have been insignificant, namely, 200 "boys" a month during May, June, and July, and these demands have been met. It remains to be seen to what extent the Comité Spécial may be prepared to bring pressure to bear on its subject population, and whether it will abide by the Regulations which will have to be laid down to prevent the propagation of sleeping sickness.

The number of white British subjects employed by the Tanganyika Concessions (Limited) is thirty-four. There was recently a floating British native population of 5,000, but this has now been reduced to 2,000 owing to the shutting down of the Busanga mine and the closing of the Rhodesian frontier on account of the prevalence of sleeping sickness.

The mine "boys" are usually engaged under a six months' contract (to be exact, five months and twenty-nine days). They are paid 6s. 8d. a-month and rationed. At Ruwé, which may be taken as a typical example, rations are distributed twice weekly, on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Each "boy" receives 6 lbs. of Kaffir meal on Wednesdays, and on Saturdays 8 lbs. of meal and 1 lb. of one of the following: beans, sweet potatoes, dried fish, native salt. In order to obtain a sufficiently varied diet, the "boys" commonly arrange themselves in messes of four or six. At Kambové fresh meat is given once a-week.

For food supplies the Tanganyika Concessions (Limited) depends mainly upon purchases made from the natives. It sends out agents to buy flour, and natives bring flour and other foodstuffs for sale to the stations. Difficulties sometimes occur, as will be evident from the attached correspondence (Annex (D)), but on the whole the system runs smoothly. In the neighbourhood of Kambové the villages pay their tax in kind to the Tanganyika Concessions (Limited) instead of to the Comité Spécial at Lukafa. These amount to from 10 to 12 tons per annum, and are accepted at the tax value. This arrangement is somewhat irregular, but it is a great convenience to the native, because it saves him a long and toilsome journey.

The Tanganyika Concessions (Limited) has established numerous stores at Kambové, Ruwé, and elsewhere, which offer a pleasant contrast to the Magasins d'État, and at which the native is afforded a large variety of choice and a real chance of meeting his requirements. The stock held by the Kambové store, for instance, was far superior both in quality and variety to anything I had seen in the course of my journey since leaving Sierra Leone. In accordance with the Regulations, no trading is allowed, and articles are sold at as near cost price as possible. Some profits, however, are almost inevitable in an affair of this kind, and accrue chiefly from a desire to arrive at uniform prices which the native can most easily understand. The profits, for example, at the Kambové store are very considerable. The Rhodesian "boys" are naturally paid in English money, which has already acquired a hold in the mining district. Here, as elsewhere in Congo territory, the absence of specie is regretted, and the introduction of a money currency has been repeatedly urged by the Tanganyika Concessions (Limited).

The Tanganyika Concessions (Limited) engages boys on a general contract to do any work which may be required of them. A large portion, therefore, of the local portage is done by regular labourers. For the transport from Madona to Kambové the Company has entered into an agreement with a transport contractor, Mr. D. Macdonald, of the former place. The distance from Madona to Kambové is 150 miles, and for this journey carriers are rationed, and receive 4s. apiece, which is paid to them in cash at Madona.

The successor of Mr. George Grey as Managing Director of the Union Minière is a Belgian, M. Berthelot. The change in the title of the Company implies, apparently, a change of language, namely, the substitution of French for English, hitherto used. On the 29th July an order reached Ruwé that for the future all the Company's correspondence would be conducted in the French language. According to the constitution of the

Company, half the officials are to be British and half Belgian. Hitherto Britons have largely predominated; in fact, at the present moment out of some forty employés thirty-four are British subjects. Among the latter the order for the change of language has caused great surprise and not a little dissatisfaction.

VI.—“*Les Révoltés.*”

At the request of Major Wangermée, the Acting Director of the Comité Spécial du Katanga, made to me at Ruwé on the 23rd July, 1907, I refrained from visiting more than the borderland of the territory held by the revolted Congolese soldiery in the south-west of the Katanga. Had no such request been made, however, I could not, without a military escort, which the Comité Spécial was not in a position to supply, have forced carriers to accompany me into a devastated area which is subjected to a reign of terror. Instead, therefore, of proceeding westward from Lulua, I was obliged to return to Ruwé and go thence to Bukama.

The original revolt, due to the tyranny of a martinet, took place in 1895, and the leader of the movement is an ex-sergeant named Yambayamba. It is more than probable that a large number of the original Révoltés have either died or disappeared, but the ranks have continually been increased by the addition of recruits obtained mostly immediately to the west of the Lualaba. The local official estimate, which I believe to be exaggerated, of the numbers of the Révoltés is from 7,000 to 8,000, and they are said to possess 5,000 modern rifles, ammunition for which they have in large quantities. They are able to refill cartridge cases, of which I secured specimens, and they are said to have moulds for making them.

The chief occupation of these Révoltés is slave-raiding. The original Révoltés decamped with their Albinis only. They now possess modern weapons of all descriptions, *e.g.*, Express rifles, Winchester repeaters, Mausers, &c. (and machinery for making cartridges). They capture more slaves than they can possibly themselves require; they must therefore have a market for them. I am afraid that in this particular case the native distinction between the white man, the black man, and the “Pétruqué” is founded not only on a certain vice, but on slave-raiding propensities. The Mabundu introduce guns and powder into the country. The middlemen between them and the Batatela and Balubas are the Mondembu. In the Révolté territory arms and ammunition are cheap, but food is scarce and proportionately dear. An outside price was possibly reached in June 1906 at Chininga, on the Lulupa, where the Mondembu gave the Balubas a cup of powder for a cup of flour.

The territory held by the Révoltés, which was placed under martial law during the present expedition against them from April to November 1907, lies within the following limits: On the north, 8th parallel south; on the east, the Lualaba-Kasai border; on the south, the 11th parallel south; on the west, 23° meridian east of Greenwich. Their raids are very extensive, and, with the exception of small areas in the neighbourhood of one or two white stations, from Lac Dilolo in the south to Katobwe in the north a stretch of country some 200 miles from east to west appears to have been devastated by them. Large native villages are, however, said to exist in the immediate vicinity of their camps, for they naturally reserve the majority of the women captured for cultivation and other purposes, and many of the young men they train as recruits. From all accounts their numbers show no diminution and their supply of fire-arms and ammunition is well maintained.

The Révoltés, so long as they are not molested, would seem to preserve a comparatively passive attitude towards the white man. Most of their territory has been visited and mapped by the prospectors of the Tanganyika Concessions (Limited). On only one occasion, I believe—in June 1906—have they ventured to attack a prospector’s camp, and then they suffered a loss of nine killed. It is from these prospectors that I have obtained most of my information.

The country to the south-west of the Lualaba is in a most deplorable condition. A transport rider, who arrived at Ruwé on the 21st July with waggons from the south-west, described the country through which he passed as in a chaotic state. The people were all armed, the villages stockaded, expecting daily to be raided by the Révoltés or the Batatelas. He entered the Katanga at Kasombo, and thence came via Kavinga and Kakando on to the Cunnyngham road past Kalena Hill to Ruwé.

In June 1903 a prospector of the Tanganyika Concessions (Limited) mapped the country on the Lubudi and found there a dense population, large villages, and food-stuffs plentiful. In June 1906 he visited the same locality. He found the villages destroyed, the “mashamba” overgrown with bush, and saw large numbers of carcasses

and skulls. In August 1906 the same prospector cut two slaves out of the stocks near Peremie's village, also on the Lubudi.

On one occasion the Révoltés raided in one day thirteen villages, all within 12 miles of a Belgian fort at Kayoyo.

In 1906 the raids of the Révoltés extended farther east than in any previous year.

I traversed what may be termed the frontier between Belgians and Révoltés, where the inhabitants, left defenceless by the former, are driven to undertake their own protection against the latter. For this purpose their villages are well stockaded, and they have many flint-and-cap guns and a plentiful supply of powder. The guns are of various make; three which I examined on the 23rd July were marked one Portuguese, one Birmingham, and one Liège. On the 2nd August I visited the village of Kiakamonga, which had been raided by a small party of Batatelas on the 15th July. The villagers were absent at the time fishing, and, besides women and children, there were only two old men left behind. The Batatelas killed these two men, but did not eat the bodies. They captured eighteen women, whom they took away as slaves. They withdrew towards the Lubudi.

Along the Lubudi itself the villages frequently have as many as seven or eight stockades; the entrance to these is by a narrow passage, through which one crawls on all fours with difficulty. Each village cultivates, usually inside, and sometimes just outside, its "bomas," sufficient crops to sustain life. The intercourse, except of a raiding nature, between village and village is extremely limited. The native paths have died out or are overgrown with bush. A state of terror reigns.

For some years the Révoltés have successfully evaded minor expeditions against them by crossing and recrossing the dividing line between the territories of the Katanga and the Kasai Companies. These Companies do not appear hitherto to have made any united effort to deal with them. An expedition, however, composed of State troops, left Lusambo on the 1st May, and was to be joined by 350 men of the Katanga native army at some point on the Sankurru on the 15th July. I have had no news of this expedition since I left the neighbourhood early in August; I shall be agreeably surprised to hear that it has proved successful. Up to the end of July, apparently two of the chief villages, Yambayamba and Mapéhuka, had been burned, and a son of one of the leaders captured. These villages have been burnt before, and may possibly have to be burnt again. The destruction of a native village is unimportant, and has little effect on the fighting capacity of the native.

The number of soldiers employed was probably more than sufficient to burn a number of villages, or to cope with the enemy if he would stand his ground, but wholly inadequate to round up an enemy who disperses only to reassemble. I do not know to what extent expeditions against the Révoltés have been necessary; I am aware that they have been totally ineffective. Military expeditions in cases like this are useless unless they are followed up by the effective occupation of the territory which it is sought to control. Nowhere have I gathered that there is any intention of immediately occupying the south-west portion of the Katanga, yet, until such occupation takes place, no improvement can be anticipated.

The Révoltés, left pretty much to themselves except for periodical ineffective expeditions, have hitherto confined themselves to slave-raiding on the west of the Lualaba. But the area of their raids has year by year gradually increased, while their camps have formed a refuge for the malcontents of the Katanga territory. They may at any moment assume the offensive, and in this event a movement hitherto limited in its operations might become a source of positive danger.

Immediately to the north of the Révoltés is the territory of Lupungu, the greatest Chief in the Katanga, who has at least 2,000 men, all armed with guns. Lupungu's authority and influence are very considerable, and it is to be feared that in the native's eyes he somewhat overshadows the local white Administration. The loyalty and intentions of this Chief are certainly doubtful, and it is significant that the garrison of Kabinda was reinforced preparatory to the operations against the Révoltés and to the Représentant's recent tour of inspection.

Closely related to Lupungu was the late Chief Kikondja, who, arrested treacherously in spite of a promise of safe conduct, was imprisoned at Boma, where he died, and was replaced by his son. The latter, now Chief of Kikondja, on Lae Kisale, the early home of the Révoltés, whither they desire to return, has unfortunately had to deal with a series of weak Chefs de Poste, and now flouts the white at his own door. When I descended the Lualaba in August, Kikondja's emissaries were collecting guns, the destination of which was Lupungu's villages. Along the whole of the western bank of the Lualaba the inhabitants are quiet, but disaffected; they have probably been too

nardly hit by sleeping sickness to give very much trouble. Should Lupungu and the *Révoltés*, however, join forces, they would carry the whole of the native population, and probably a third of the native army, with them.

In the south-west of the Katanga territory, therefore, the military danger is a very real one, and, although this fact is recognized on the spot, no adequate measures have been or are being taken to cope with possible, even probable, contingencies.

VII.—*Slave Trade on Lake Tanganyika.*

The so called Slave Trade on Lake Tanganyika still continues, but a very much larger area is affected by this Slave Trade than its title would imply. It prevails to a greater or less degree throughout the eastern portion of the Katanga territory. Slave-traders from Tanganyika have been found as far west as Lac Kisale, and some were recently captured at Kayumba, within 15 miles of Kiambi, the *chef-lieu* of the Tanganyika-Moero Secteur. Farther south slave-traders are active between Pweto and Lake Tanganyika.

The main centre of this Slave Trade is along the western shore of the lake, whence slaves are taken east. The western shore affords natural advantages peculiarly adapted to a commerce of this kind, consisting as it does of a series of creeks hidden by a natural screen of reeds from the lake itself, and surrounded by high, rocky, wooded hills on the land side. In several of these creeks I found sheds and canoes, the existence of which would not be guessed until one came right upon them, but which were evidently much frequented.

The prices paid for slaves near Tanganyika are somewhat higher than those obtaining farther west. Up to 20 dotis of cloth (say 3*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) is frequently paid for a man, and as much as 30 dotis (5*l.*) for a well-grown young woman. Slaves are conveyed across the lake in large canoes which are fitted with sails.

Although this Slave Trade is carried on with the knowledge and toleration of the local officials, it is absolutely untrue to state that those officials deliberately connive at its existence. This charge of connivance would never be brought except by writers who have no actual acquaintance with local conditions, and it displays an ignorance which I cannot too severely condemn.

Throughout Central Africa the question of slavery and slave-trading is a most difficult one, and I know from personal experience on the Niger and the Benue how very hard it is to check. In this connection a point not to be lost sight of is that not only the slave-traders and the Chiefs are in league against the white man, but also frequently the slaves themselves. It is this universal collusion of the principal parties concerned that renders the work of liberation so extremely difficult. There is nothing more ingrained in native habit and custom than slavery in one form or another. There are no raids, there is no violence; the trade is frequently carried on under the white man's very nose in a manner which would baffle the ingenuity of Scotland Yard to detect. It is impossible without great trouble and considerable expense to eradicate an evil which has been indulged in and profited by for countless centuries.

But, while the charge of connivance may be regarded as absurd, it must be admitted that the Katanga authorities have made no earnest endeavour and taken no adequate steps to check the Tanganyika Slave Trade. To root it out will prove a very expensive business, and I am not aware that extravagance has ever figured in the list of charges brought against the Congo Administration.

The distribution of "askari" in the territory under consideration is as follows: Kiambi, 123; Pweto, 11; Moliro, 18; Mtowa, 18. Those at the out-stations cannot well leave their posts. The 123 men stationed at Kiambi have to be kept on the spot, as their services might at any time be required in some portion of the Tanganyika-Moero Secteur. For some weeks during the early part of 1907 a patrol of fifty "askari" under a white officer was stationed between Mtowa and Moliro, and this patrol acted temporarily as some check to the Slave Trade. But it was withdrawn to join the expedition against the *Révoltés* in the south-west. In consequence of a report furnished by the White Fathers to the Agent at Mtowa, the latter succeeded in capturing some contrebandiers. They were brought to justice, but were not punished. Their non-conviction was interpreted to mean that rubber, ivory, and slave-trading might be continued with impunity. The Comité Spécial has a small steamer plying between Moliro and Mtowa. This steamer sails at regular intervals, which are presumably known to the contrebandiers. It can hardly, therefore, be regarded as any check to the Slave Trade. When I crossed Lake Tanganyika in a small sailing craft the steamer in question was undergoing three months' repairs, and a recrudescence of slave, rubber, and ivory smuggling was in progress.

A large portion of the territory lying in the triangle Kiambi—Mtowa—Moliro is a sort of no-man's-land. Unoccupied and untaxed by the Comité Spécial, it forms the happy hunting ground of the Tanganyika contrabandiers. I traversed approximately the centre of this territory from Kiambi to Bandoienville. It is a picturesque, hilly, well-watered country abandoned by the white man and exploited by the Arab. My native information for this portion of my journey is extremely limited, for the inhabitants, warned in some way of a white man's approach, fled incontinently. Now and again I overtook a straggler. For instance, at Ngoi, 30 miles east of Kiambi, all the inhabitants had fled to the bush with the exception of the Sultani. He stated that he and his people refused to collect rubber for "Bula Matadi," and preferred to deal with Arabs, who gave better cloth. He denied any slave-dealing, a denial which was received with ironical cheers by my carriers standing round. He explained that his people had left for the bush long ago, although on my arrival I noticed that a fire was still burning in almost every hut.

I left Ngoi on the 28th August. During the following five days I passed many villages, but they were all deserted. In these villages I saw considerable quantities of trade rubber, and *en route* I remarked many vines which had been cut. In the neighbourhood of Lusaka I came within the sphere of influence of the White Fathers, who here, as in other parts of Africa, are doing a work of which I cannot speak too highly.

Notwithstanding its very difficult nature, there is no doubt that the Tanganyika Slave Trade could easily be checked if properly taken in hand. A large number of canoes and considerable quantities of rubber have already been confiscated; in fact, the acquisition of canoes and rubber, rather than the liberation of the slaves or the punishment of the offenders, would seem to have been hitherto the primary object of the Administration. No arrangements are made for the accommodation of freed slaves, and there is every danger of their reversion. If they return to their villages they are probably punished by their Chiefs or resold. Slaves are not the only nor, I believe, the chief article of commerce on Lake Tanganyika. The main objects of illicit trading on Tanganyika, as on Lake Moero, are rubber and ivory. To check this trading big patrols are evidently unnecessary, but a cordon should be drawn along the western shore of the lake, and the interior should be effectively occupied by the establishment of half-a-dozen white stations.

VIII.—*Sleeping Sickness.*

Sleeping sickness was known to exist on the west coast of Africa three centuries ago.

The reports of Dr. Todd, compiled in the Congo between 1903 and 1905, and published in March 1906, first drew attention to its spread in the interior.

It is unnecessary to examine his reports in detail, but his conclusions are important:—

1. The enormous spread and great increase of sleeping sickness in the Congo Basin during recent years has been due in a great measure to the increase in travel following the opening of the country.
2. Cases of trypanosomiasis, though apparently healthy, may be detected by their enlarged glands.
3. Good results may be expected from the serious application of quarantine measures dependent for their efficiency upon cervical gland palpation.

The value of Dr. Todd's suggestions was immediately recognized by the Congo Administration, and in December 1905 instructions were issued to all its agents accordingly. These have been from time to time supplemented by a whole series of circulars, until to-day the sleeping sickness dossier assumes voluminous proportions. This series proves beyond a doubt that the Comité Spécial du Katanga has been keenly alive to the danger of the disease, and that it has repeatedly impressed upon its agents the absolute necessity of stamping it out. In fact, they have been told in large print that the eradication of the disease should be their primary duty, and that any failure to comply with instructions would be severely punished.

"Video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor." In connection with sleeping sickness, as in other respects, I regret to say that the Regulations are absolutely misleading. Here, again, it is necessary to distinguish between the Congo State on paper and the Congo State in fact. Pages 205 and 206 of the "Bulletin Officiel" for 1906 convey a totally false impression. The elaborate instructions issued are presumably for home consumption, or a hundredth part of them cannot possibly be applied with the existing

staff. The Congo medical staff of twenty-five, even if all were present on the spot at any one time, which is not the case, should be multiplied by ten if any effective measures are to be taken against sleeping sickness. Numbers of whites die every year for lack of medical attendance. In a previous Report (8th May, 1907), I quoted the instance of Kasongo, the chef-lieu of a district with a staff of from fifteen to twenty white officials, a large number of native employés, and a garrison of 600 soldiers, which had no doctor, and where I attended the funeral on the day after my arrival of a wounded soldier who had died because there was no medical man to look after him. At the principal stations where doctors happen to be present they have the greatest difficulty in coping with their purely official duties. Work as they will, they have no time to devote to the study of sleeping sickness.

When the Comité Spécial du Katanga had five doctors on paper only one was present on the spot. I do not know, however, that the difference was material, for the recommendations of the medical staff have been systematically ignored. In the whole course of my Katanga tour out of several thousand cases I never found a single one under treatment. Months ago the circulars gave it to be understood that lazarets had been established at Ankoro, Pweto, and Bukama, and instructions were issued to the medical staff at those places. As a matter of fact, when these circulars were issued the lazarets were not constructed, and no doctors had arrived. At Ankoro on the 30th May I found a lazaret, no sick people, although the district is full of them, and no doctor; at Pweto, on the 16th June, I found a lazaret, five sick, no doctor; at Bukama on the 8th August I found 100 per cent. of the population infected, no lazaret, no doctor, and twenty cases of medicine and instruments, the gift, I understand, of some philanthropic Society, lying unused in store.

In descending the Lualaba I discovered the reports I had already heard of the ravages of sleeping sickness to be more than justified. During the last two years the population of this district, the richest agricultural and the most densely peopled of the Katanga, has been decimated. In several cases villages had discontinued burying their dead, and the consequent filth and stench can be better imagined than described. One of the forms which sleeping sickness assumes at a certain phase is that of madness, and during this phase the sick are particularly prone to set something on fire. On two successive nights attempts were made to burn my tent, which I luckily succeeded, with the aid of my "boys," in checking.

Of the two out of ten species of tsetse fly discovered, the *glossina palpalis* is commonly confined to the rivers, and the land fly is the *glossina morsitans*. The opinion held at present is that sleeping sickness is transmitted by the *palpalis* and not by the *morsitans*. The areas of sleeping sickness, however, are not found to be coincident with the waterways or with the *glossina palpalis*, which does not quit them, it is supposed, for a greater distance than 60 yards. It has not yet been definitely proved that the *glossina morsitans* does not transmit the disease, and my personal experience would incline me to discredit such an assumption. Owing to the displacement of population occasioned by the presence of the white, it is extremely difficult to delimit properly infected areas and areas which may be considered free, because it is always necessary to determine if the cases found to exist have been imported. If the *palpalis* alone transmits the disease, a population on a waterway, among which a small number of advanced cases exists, will probably prove to be infected to the extent of 80 per cent. or 90 per cent., whereas the population of a land village, where a large number of imported advanced cases are found, may turn out to be practically free.

So very little definite information is at present available on the subject of sleeping sickness that it is not only dangerous, but difficult, to generalize. There would appear, however, to be one or two safe lines to act upon.

The question is primarily a medical one. A large staff of doctors is immediately required. The matter is so urgent that a special home study of the disease must be dispensed with. Moreover, a medical man of acute observation would probably pick up more information in a few weeks on the spot than during months of study in Europe. Probably the first efforts of a strong and efficient medical staff would be directed to locating the *glossina palpalis*. In this connection, what may be called the southern frontier of the fly has been already determined; that frontier is approximately the 11th parallel. More exactly the line of demarcation runs as follows: South-east from the Kalengwe Rapids to latitude 10° 30', south of the Lufira River, thence east on this latitude to the Luapula River; west of the Lualaba a line may be drawn directly west from the Kalengwe Rapids; no tsetse has been found between the Lubudi and the Lualaba, south of the mouth of the Kuluila, and Lac Kinda is reported free. South of the 11th parallel, then, the more dangerous fly has not hitherto been found in the Katanga. This would

appear to be the great dividing line, but throughout the Katanga territory the separation of infected districts and those which appear free should be effected at once, and what I may call the local distribution of the fly ascertained. The prevention of intercourse between the inhabitants of infected and non-infected areas should follow, the first point being not to cure the sick, for no satisfactory antidote has yet been discovered, but to rescue the healthy from contamination.

I am afraid the local authorities do not realize the gravity of the situation; it is still more difficult to bring the seriousness of the crisis home to the Central Government. I can conceive no method better calculated to propagate the disease than the immense transport system from north-west to south-east at present in force in the Katanga, which I have traced elsewhere, than that obtaining in the Congo proper, namely, compelling the sick to travel hundreds of miles to three or four central depôts.

The gist of the measures recommended, but not enforced, in the Katanga are—

1. The establishment of posts of inspection along the main routes in order to prevent the entrance of infected persons into uninfected districts.

2. The removal of infected persons from posts in uninfected districts to places already infected.

It will readily be understood that the application of these measures is not an easy matter, not only on account of the lack of personnel, for the Katanga Administration is a starved one, but also on account of the temperament of the natives themselves. The native here, as elsewhere, is a fatalist; he fails to recognize the disease until its later stages; he objects strongly to any medical treatment, especially inoculation. There are other more immediate difficulties which might easily be remedied. Averse as the native is to treatment, his aversion can be overcome by the provision of plenty of food and a certain amount of physical comfort. In the Katanga these elementary necessities are wanting.

The main centre of sleeping sickness is at present the Lualaba. The post to which all sick in the surrounding districts are ordered is Bukama, although it is not quite obvious how they can be expected to recover in a badly infected area. At Bukama no provision is made for their accommodation, and there is no food; not 5 per cent. of them, therefore, ever arrive. Force has been employed to compel the native to collect rubber, to make roads, to provide food-stuffs. But presumably the use of force in connection with sleeping sickness would be contrary to the Regulations. At Bukama I found the office of the Chef de Poste continually besieged for food by the few sick who had been sent thither. He had done his best to feed them, but the food question was acute, as may be gathered from the following extract from a Report on the Bukama district, dated the 31st May, 1907:—

“Les villages se dépeuplent; ceux de la rivière offrent un aspect lamentable. En voici un exemple: le village de Kibwé à quatre heures en aval, qui comptait il y a un an 190 habitants environ, n'en a plus que le tiers. Quant au voisinage immédiat, Tengaloshi, M'Bebe, Kamaloba, Bundwe, en agglomération, sont à peu près déserts au point que je ne sais pas y recruter deux courriers, et le moment est proche où Bukama sera à plusieurs heures de marche d'un village habité.

“Les villages riverains tendent à disparaître, et il est triste de constater que les habitants ne veulent rien faire pour échapper à leur sort; ils sont résignés, et il faut user de violence pour leur faire enlever les immondies qui avoisinent leurs huttes.”

In the “Bulletin Officiel” for 1906, p. 189, it is stated:—

“En ce qui concerne l'utilisation des voies d'eau préconisée par la Commission, il est permis d'affirmer qu'à l'heure présente, il n'est plus de cours d'eau navigable sur lequel ne circulent des embarcations à vapeur. Le Congo et ses affluents ont été utilisés sur toute leur étendue navigable, de manière à former un vaste réseau divergent de voies de pénétration.”

This statement is inexact if applied to the Congo south of Stanleyville, where canoes and not steamers are employed. One navigable affluent of the Congo is the Lualaba; another is the Luvu—on neither of these is a steamer to be found. From the point of view of sleeping sickness, transport on the waterways, the home of the *glossina palpalis*, is the means best calculated to propagate the disease. But to dispense with the waterways as a means of communication is out of the question; the risk, however, can be minimized by the substitution of a steamer service for that of canoes.

On the transport routes in the Katanga no earnest endeavour is made to check the progress of the disease. This progress has been roughly from north to south. Sleeping

sickness was introduced on to the Lualaba from Kabinda. For years past there has been a trade route between Kisale and Kabinda, 200 miles to the north. The Lac Kisale people caught and dried fish, which they carried to Kabinda, where they found a ready market. The first case to appear at Kabinda was about the year 1900. Dr. Todd, in March 1905, found Kabinda and its vicinity heavily infected. In 1905 Dr. Todd examined a number of the Lac Kisale fish traders, but found no trypanosomes. They had no doubt been exposed to infection at Kabinda, but the disease had not yet developed. Sleeping sickness therefore found its way to the Lualaba probably not more than two years ago. The reason why the disease has not spread to the south of the Kalengwe Rapids must be attributed to the fact that the people below the rapids have practically no intercourse with those above.

In October 1906, of 260 people living on the Lualaba who were palpated, 145 had unmistakably enlarged cervical glands, *i.e.*, 55 per cent. Yet the transport route from Bukama to Lukafu was continued until May 1907, and then only checked at the instance of the Tanganyika Concessions (Limited). The attached correspondence (Annex (F)) goes far to show that the Mining Company in connection with recruiting labour has had to protect itself against the Comité Spécial du Katanga. The closing of the Lualaba and the substitution of the Luvua route is really no gain, for the *glossina palpalis* is as numerous on the latter as on the former river, and there are a large number of cases between Ankoro, Kiambi, and Pweto. The adoption of the Luvua route will, I am convinced, result in the more rapid spread of the disease to the south-east. On the Luvua, as on the Lualaba, I had to travel gloved and veiled as if about to hive a swarm of bees.

In the south-west of the Katanga—on the Lubudi, for example—neither the *glossina palpalis* nor the *glossina morsitans* is found south of the 10th parallel, and Lac Kinda is known to be free from both these kinds of tsetse. But it is difficult to believe that the sickness will not soon envelop these districts also, in view of the fact that for years the Batatelas have been allowed to raid slaves on the western bank of the Lualaba with impunity, and still carry on their nefarious traffic undisturbed except for periodical ineffective expeditions. Apart altogether from the military danger, which is acknowledged locally to be a very real one, the effective occupation of this chaotic territory is imperative to prevent the propagation of sleeping sickness.

At present carriers are recruited from a heavily infected area on the Lualaba to carry loads to Kayoyo, to Lulua, to the railway survey at the source of the Lualaba, to Lukafu, and to other places in less infected areas.

I have already indicated that perhaps the non-contamination of the healthy rather than the cure of the sick should be the primary aim at present. But with regard to the sick assuredly something can be done. They could be moved to districts where the *palpalis* does not exist, comfortably housed, properly fed, and subjected to the atoxyl treatment, which has already proved to be successful elsewhere, and which may possibly be relied upon to sustain life until medical science shall have discovered a radical cure. To cope with a plague is the duty of an Administration, and not a subject to be confined to private munificence or individual philanthropy. 8,000*l.* may do something ("Bulletin Officiel," 1906, p. 293) to aid the discovery of a cure, but a larger sum will have to be provided for the application of that cure. The present policy of letting things slide may be prompted by the best of economic motives, but it is absolutely contrary to both the spirit and the letter of Article VI of the Berlin Act, which distinctly binds the Powers concerned "to watch over the preservation of the native tribes."

The most effective plan to stem the southward march of sleeping sickness would be to establish a cordon along, roughly, the 11th parallel. It will possibly be urged that the native will break through this cordon. He may do so, but only, I believe, to a limited extent. I have had occasion already to indicate certain disadvantages which the importation of supplies and material for the Katanga by the Boma-Kasai route may possess. Fortunately this is not the only route available. Taking the 11th parallel as a dividing line, and in order to check the propagation of sleeping sickness to the south, the Boma-Kasai route should be immediately discontinued and the Cape route substituted. There is another alternative. Pending the completion of the Benguela-Katanga Railway, an ox-transport route is already available, and material has already been introduced by ox-waggon from Benguela to Ruwé, the western end of the copper belt. On this route neither the *glossina palpalis* nor the *glossina morsitans* exists. By employing either of these routes the great highway of the tsetse could be closed: for internal distribution neutral posts could be established.

I have dealt at some length with this subject, because I conceive the check of sleeping

sickness to be the most important and most difficult problem which Central Africa has to face to-day. Both the *glossina palpalis* and the *glossina morsitans* are nomadic, and the French Commission at Brazzaville reports that mosquitoes can transmit the disease. I need hardly point out the dislocation and expense involved in the remedies which I have ventured to suggest, but the future of the whole of Africa is here at stake, and that future must be safeguarded at whatever cost. In the Katanga the eradication of sleeping sickness affects other interests than those merely of the Comité Spécial. The Comité Spécial happens to hold a strategical position so far as the propagation of sleeping sickness is concerned, and that position it should defend by every possible means in its power. The spread of this fearful disease to Rhodesia and the south is an event which no one having the future of Africa at heart can contemplate with equanimity.

IX.—Conclusions.

It would be an insult to the intelligence of the local officials to suppose that the June Decrees were framed on reports furnished by them, because these Decrees display so striking an ignorance of local conditions. With the more important of the Decrees in question I have already dealt. I have attempted to show that the new scheme of taxation, while cloaking the rubber tax, is not only oppressive, but also impracticable, and that its imposition is unjust, because the whole burden falls practically upon the natives within the comparatively restricted area around the white posts. If the experience of other nationalities is not to be disregarded, a hut tax not exceeding 5 fr. per hut should be substituted. In connection with the land question I have advocated non-interference, because nothing is known locally on the question, and the present staff is both numerically inadequate and inefficient. I have suggested that, when the Katanga has been effectively occupied and a reliable census of the population taken, the delimitation of native lands should be carried out by a Special Commission appointed for that purpose. I have already indicated the absence of any Magasins d'État and the delay in the introduction of a money currency. I have laid stress on the fact that no adequate measures are being taken to cope with sleeping sickness, and I have pointed out not only the rapidity of its spread from the west coast to the interior, but also the likelihood and danger of its propagation southwards. I have attempted to trace briefly the origin and upgrowth of the military danger, the centre of which is in South-West Katanga, the territory held by the revolted Congolese soldiery, and its possible spread to the north should Lupungu and Yambayamba join forces. In this connection the existence of the Slave Trade on Lake Tanganyika and the chaotic state of a large portion of the Tanganyika-Moero Secteur should not be lost sight of. I regard the view taken by Sir Harry Johnston on the native movement as that of an alarmist, but I cannot fail to point out that there exists a sentiment of widespread hatred against the white man. This sentiment, however, will have some difficulty in taking practical shape in the face of native disunion and sleeping sickness.

One of the most extraordinary features of the Congo system is the absence of any definite native policy. In the Congo no use has been made of the Arab, who with all his faults is under white supervision the best ruler of less advanced native races. With regard to the Katanga, the murder of Msiri has proved undoubtedly a political error of the first magnitude. It introduced chaos where order, even if combined with cruelty, had reigned. The Katanga authorities have realized that their territory cannot be developed without the assistance of the native, but they will not understand what is equally true, that it cannot be governed without him. The main object of any native policy should be to develop the native rather on his own lines than on ours. The old theory of europeanizing the native (see "Bulletin Officiel," p. 290), has failed in practice, a failure to which the West Coast native bears striking witness. Where any previous organization is to be traced, and where it is found to be sound, the native communities must be reorganized on their own lines and strengthened in their own environment. In this connection the native policy initiated by Sir Frederick Lugard in Northern Nigeria is coming to be generally regarded as a model of its kind. Elsewhere the careful study of native requirements will probably indicate the general lines of the policy to be adopted. In both cases it must be remembered the development of Africa is neither a commercial enterprise nor a philanthropic undertaking, but a happy mean between the two.

In the early stages of white occupation the division of judicial and administrative functions is not to be commended, because it is a division to which the native has not been accustomed, which he fails to understand, and which, consequently, in his eyes lowers the prestige of the Executive.

The native does not want law; he wants equity. Judicial officers in the Congo are,

I fear, slow to appreciate the fact that the protection of the native does not necessarily involve the persecution of the white.

The present system of sending convicts condemned to more than one year's imprisonment to serve their sentence at Boma is practically equivalent to a death sentence, for the native is much less able than the white to stand the test of climatic change. Each section of the Katanga should be provided with its own prison.

The conditions obtaining in the Katanga, both climatic and other, are so utterly different from those to be found on the coast that greater decentralization is imperative. The Katanga may become a Colony rather than a native Protectorate, for it is a country in which the white man can settle and thrive. By nature it belongs rather to South than to West Africa. Under these circumstances, King Leopold's monopoly affects something more than merely natives and commerce, although they are sufficiently important. Southern Katanga is a nascent industrial centre, where it will be difficult to preserve the monopoly hitherto maintained. The arrival of the railway, which is perhaps still five years distant, may bring with it a huge influx of cosmopolitan elements characteristic of a mining centre. There may arise a mixed community which will not be easy to tackle, and which certainly will not readily submit to a bureaucratic system. But the Katanga authorities do not foresee this future. They cling fondly to their monopoly. The applications of British traders on the east of Lake Moero to be allowed to establish factories in the Katanga have been repeatedly rejected. The present conditions under which land will be leased for farming purposes are such that British settlers will not accept them. For the establishment of factories in the Katanga an arrangement has been come to between the Comité Spécial and a certain Syndicate. The small trader is still to be excluded; there will be an absence of all competition; the Syndicate in question will merely be another monopoly within a monopoly.

The proper administration of a native Protectorate depends mainly on the personnel, more especially in the initial stages of occupation, when the individual counts for so much, when he is so powerful a factor for either good or evil. On p. 212 of the "Bulletin Officiel" for 1906 it is regretted that the Congo judiciary has failed to attract suitable men. It is not quite obvious why this remark should have been confined to the Magistrature, when it is universally admitted to be applicable to every department of the service. With certain notable exceptions, Belgium apparently produces few colonial administrators, and the Congo does not attract the best of these. In Belgium the Congo service has not hitherto been regarded as quite the thing for a man who can make his way otherwise. "Ses affaires marchaient mal; il est parti pour le Congo," is a remark too often heard. The failure to attract suitable candidates is not difficult to understand when it is realized that the whole service is run on commercial lines, that promotion depends not on administrative capacity, but on ability to collect taxes. The absolutism of King Leopold and his intolerance of failure have resulted in the creation of what is known locally as "l'esclavage blanc"—more pitiable, perhaps, than any black slavery.

ANNEXES.

Annex (A) I.

ITINERARY from West Coast to East Coast.

Date.	Route.	Means of Conveyance.	Remarks.
1907.			
March 4 to 6	Banana to Boma	Steamer.	
March 7	Boma to Matadi	"	
March 8 and 9	Matadi to Leopoldville	Railway.	
March 11 to 20	Leopoldville to Coquilhatville	Steamer.	
March 21 to 22	Coquilhatville to Nouvel Anvers	"	
March 23 to 30	Nouvel Anvers to Basoko	"	
March 30 to April 1	Basoko to Stanleyville	"	
April 1 to 14	At Stanleyville	"	Preparations for Katanga tour.

Date.	Route.	Means of Conveyance.	Remarks.
1907.			
April 15	Stanleyville to Ponthierville	Railway.	
April 15 to 19	At Ponthierville .. ..	..	Waiting for steamer.
April 20 to 24	Ponthierville to Kindu	Steamer.	
April 24	Kindu to Lomlombo	Canoe.	
April 25	At Lomlombo .. ..	..	Visit to railway.
April 26	Lomlombo to Kitingi	Canoe.	
April 27	At Kitingi .. ..	..	No paddlers.
April 28 to May 6	Kitingi to Kasongo	Canoe.	
May 7 to 12	At Kasongo .. ..	..	Delayed by malaria.
May 13 to 24	Kasongo to Buli	Carrier.	
May 26 to 29	Buli to Ankoro	Canoe.	
May 31 to June 5	Ankoro to Kiambi .. ..	..

Katanga Tour, May 13 to September 6.

Aug. 25 to Sept. 6	Kiambi to Baudouinville	Carrier.	
September 7 to 11	Crossing Lake Tanganyika	Sailing-boat.	
September 12 to 15	At Karema .. ..	..
September 16 to 30	Karema to Tabora	Carrier.	
October 1	At Tabora .. ..	..
October 2 to 13	Tabora to Mwanza	Carrier.	
October 14 to 19	At Mwanza .. ..	..	Waiting for steamer.
October 20 to 23	Crossing Lake Victoria Nyanza	Steamer.	
October 24 and 25	Kisumu to Nairobi	Railway.	
October 26 and 31	At Nairobi .. ..	..	Delayed by tick fever.
November 1 and 2	Nairobi to Mombasa	Railway.	

Annex (A) 2.

KATANGA TOUR.

Date.	Route.	Means of Conveyance.	Distance.
1907.			Miles.
May 13 to 24	Kasongo to Buli	Carrier (path)	182
May 26 to 29	Buli to Ankoro	Canoe (Congo)	80
May 31 to June 5	Ankoro to Kiambi	Canoe (Luvua)	180
June 7 to 15	Kiambi to Pweto	Carrier (road)	120
June 18	Pweto to Lukonzolwa	Steamer } Lake Moero {	30
June 28	Lukonzolwa to Kilwa .. ..	.. } .. {	50
July 1 to 7	Kilwa to Lukafa	Carrier (road)	116
July 10 to 14	Lukafa to Kambové .. ..	.. .. .. ..	85
July 17 to 21	Kambové to Ruwé .. ..	.. .. .. ..	96
July 21 to 28	Ruwé to Lulua and return .. ..	.. (path)	100
July 30 to August 7	Ruwé to Bukama .. ..	.. .. .. ..	158
August 9 to 13	Bukama to Kikondja	Canoe (Luabala)	118
August 16 to 22	Kikondja to Kiambi	Carrier (path)	177
Aug. 25 to Sept. 6	Kiambi to Baudouinville .. ..	.. .. .. ..	200
	Total .. ..	.. .. .. ..	1,692

Annex (B).

Case of Katoro.

MOLENGALE, Headman of Lukeka, Chief of village Molengale, duly sworn, states:—

For the past week I have been working with Capita Katoro, appointed by the White Man, and Headman Lupia of Kisungu, on the road between Talala and Molengale, which is part of the route Lukafu-Kilwa. Katoro has been cruel to the people of Molengale. He has compelled men and women to work out anthills. He asked my boys to give him "bukari." They told him to ask me for what food he required. He flogged them with his sjambok not only on the body, but across the face. I have seen him repeatedly flog men and women across the head; many of the women have swollen ears. On the 4th July I left him on the road to return to Molengale to salute you.

To-day one of the Molengale men came to me and reported that Katoro had flogged him and that he had run away. I reported this to my Chief, Lukeka, and he determined to go to Lukafu to the White Man. Katoro has come with us.

(Signed) MOLENGALE, his × mark.

Witness:
(Signed) TOM.

Sworn before me at Manda, Congo Free State, this 6th day of July, 1907.

(Signed) G. B. BEAK,
Acting British Vice-Consul.

Manda, Congo Free State, July 6, 1907.

Lukeka, Chief of village Molengale, duly sworn, states:—

The Capita Katoro has repeatedly sjamboked both my men and women working on road between Lukafu and Kilwa.

My Headman has frequently reported this fact to me. Katoro tried to force one of the women at work, named Montasenga, the wife of Mangilisia, to sleep with him. When she refused he flogged her, and afterwards her husband.

This morning I determined to report Katoro to the White Man at Lukafu.

(Signed) LUKEKA, his × mark.

Witness:
(Signed) TOM.

Sworn before me at Manda, Congo Free State, this 6th day of July, 1907.

(Signed) G. B. BEAK,
Acting British Vice-Consul.

July 6, 1907.

Katoro, Capita, armed with cap rifle No. 374 and sjambok, duly sworn, states:—

I was sent on the 27th June, 1907, by the Chef de Poste at Lukafu to superintend cleaning of road and repair of rest-houses on the route between Lukafu and Kilwa. This morning I sounded for people to come to work on the road near Talala, but Molengale, the Headman of the Chief Lukeka, told them to return to their village. Capita Lupia of Kisungu brought me a man this morning, whom I flogged. The White Man did not tell me to flog people. He told me I was to send a messenger quickly to Lukafu so soon as the English Consul ("Inglöse Mkubwa") passed. What Lukeka and Molengale have stated in regard to flogging is true.

I asked Montasenga to sleep with me, but when she refused I did not touch her, nor did I sjambok her husband.

(Signed) KATORO, his × mark.

Witness:
(Signed) TOM.

Sworn before me at Manda, Congo Free State, this 6th day of July, 1907.

(Signed) G. B. BEAK,
Acting British Vice-Consul.

Manda, July 6, 1907.

Annex (C).

COMITÉ Spécial du Katanga.

Secteurs.	Postes.	Nature des Postes.	Observations.
Du Tanganika-Moero	Lukonzolwa ..	Chef-lieu du Comité ..	Office auxiliaire d'État Civil. Siège d'un Conseil de Guerre. Bureau principal d'État Civil.
	Kiambi ..	Chef-lieu du Secteur ..	
	Ankoro ..	Poste	
	Buli ..	"	Bureau d'Immatriculation. Bureau Fiscal et Sous-perception Postale.
	Pweto ..	"	
	Kikondja ..	"	Bureau Fiscal et Sous-perception Postale et Bureau d'Immatriculation.
	Towa ..	"	
	Moliro ..	"	Bureau Fiscal. Siège d'un Tribunal Territorial et d'un Conseil de Guerre. Bureau d'État Civil et d'Immatriculation. Office Notarial.
	Lukafu ..	Chef-lieu	
	Du Haut Luapula	Kilwa ..	Poste .. ..	Poste Fiscal. Bureau d'Immatriculation. Office auxiliaire d'État Civil Bureau Fiscal. Siège d'un Conseil de Guerre. Bureau d'État Civil et Office Notarial.
Kasenga ..		"	
Kalonga ..		"	
Kavalo ..		"	
Nusofi ..		"	
Bukama ..		"	
Lulua ..		"	
Du Lomami	Kayoyo ..	"	
	Kabinda ..	Chef-lieu	
	Tshofa ..	Poste	
	Kabonga ..	"	
	Mutombo Mukulu ..	"	
	Lubefu ..	"	
Lac Kinda ..	"		

Annex (D).

Hardey Correspondence.

Dear Sir,

Mazanguli, March 3, 1907.

I WISH to bring to your notice that our food traders and carriers are being greatly interfered with in going and coming to Mazanguli by Chiefs Mpungu and Kavalamwema, on the other side of the Lualaba, in Mkawondo district. This thing has been going on for some time, and people are refusing to carry our loads. It is reported that Chief Mpungu tied up four men and wounded another. Chief Kavalamwema tied up three men and killed another. All these were returning home after carrying food to Mazanguli.

The food business is almost at a standstill on account of this, only about twenty loads arriving at this station in the past week. The trading Capitas report that the people are afraid to come on account of these unruly Chiefs. They should be severely dealt with and made to understand that they must not interfere or in any way meddle with any one on Company's business, otherwise it will disorganize the whole food supply, which will cause a great deal of inconvenience.

Please look into this matter at your earliest convenience, so that things may get back into working order.

Yours truly,
For Tanganyika Concessions (Limited).
(Signed) E. HARDEY.

Chef de Poste, Bukama.

Certified true copy:
(Signed) G. B. BEAK,
Acting British Vice-Consul.

Bukama, August 8, 1907.

Dear Sir,

Kapiri, May 12, 1907.

I AM sending bearer Manyoko to you to see if you can give him any assistance to collect food and get it carried to Mazanguli. The people absolutely refuse to transport the food to the store for the Capitas, and as it is impossible for myself to get away, I thought that it might be of great assistance if you could send a few of your policemen round with the Capitas to speak with the people and induce them to carry loads to Masanguli.

I ask you to do this, not, of course, on my own behalf, but for the furtherance of the business of the Tanganyika Concessions (Limited), or more properly speaking the new Mining Company.

Trusting that you will be able to render this assistance, I am, &c.

For Tanganyika Concessions (Limited),
(Signed) E. HARDEY.

The Chef de Poste, Bukama.

Certified true copy :
(Signed) G. B. BEAK,
Acting British Vice-Consul.

Bukama, August 8, 1907.

Annex (E) 1.

Ordre pour les Opérations Militaires contre les Révoltés du Kasai.

AU cas où la garnison de Lulua serait réquisitionnée par le Commandant des troupes de l'État du Congo chargé d'opérer contre les révoltés du Kasai, le chef de la troupe exécutera toutes les opérations militaires qui seront ordonnées par le dit Commandant, tant en dehors que dans la région du poste.

Ansistôt que la réquisition aura été reçue, on prendra les mesures prescrites par l'Article 10 du Décret du 3 Juin, 1906, sur les opérations de police et les opérations militaires.

A cette fin, la présente décision sera affichée à l'emplacement affecté à cet usage et proclamation en sera faite dans la région du poste.

Le Représentant du Comité,
(Signé) E. WANGERMÉE.

Lukonzolwa, le 27 Février, 1907.

Certified true copy :
(Signed) G. B. BEAK,
Acting British Vice-Consul.

Lulua, July 27, 1907.

Annex (E) 2.

Opérations militaires.

LE Commissaire de District du Lualaba-Kasai :

Vu les Articles 7 et 8 du Décret du 3 Juin, 1906, sur les opérations de police et opérations militaires ;

Vu les (1) et (2) de l'Article 13 de l'Arrêté du 23 Juin, 1906 ;

Décide :

Il sera entrepris, du 1^{er} Juillet, 1907, au 1^{er} Novembre suivant, une opération militaire contre les révoltés Batatela et leurs alliés habitant le pays limité au nord par le 8^e parallèle sud, à l'est par la frontière du District du Lualaba-Kasai, au sud par le 11^e parallèle sud, à l'ouest par le 23^e méridien est de Greenwich.

(Signé) G. GUSTIN.

Lusambo, le 5 Avril, 1907.

Certified true copy :
(Signed) G. B. BEAK,
Acting British Vice-Consul.

Lulua, July 27, 1907.

Annex (E) 3.

Régime militaire spécial.

LE Commissaire de District du Lualaba-Kasai :

Vu l'Article 25 du Décret du 22 Novembre, 1888, pour le régime militaire spécial,

Vu l'Article 1^{er} de l'Arrêté du 4 Octobre, 1898, sur les conseils de guerre;

Vu l'Article du Décret du 3 Juin, 1906, sur les opérations de police et les opérations militaires;

Décide :

Est placée sous le régime militaire spécial la région limitée au nord par le 8^e parallèle sud, à l'est par la frontière est du district du Lualaba-Kasai, au sud par le 11^e parallèle sud, à l'ouest par le 23^e méridien est de Greenwich.

(Signé) G. GUSTIN.

Lusambo, le 5 Avril, 1907.

Certified true copy :
(Signed) G. B. BEAK,
Acting British Vice-Consul.

Lulua, July 27, 1907.

Annex (F).

Correspondence between the Comité Spécial du Katanga and the Tanganyika Concessions (Limited).

Dear Sir,

Ruwé, August 31, 1906.

I BEG to bring to your immediate notice that the medical officer of the Company (Dr. Massey) has informed me that he has discovered the microbe of the sleeping sickness (trypanosomiasis) in several of the Kabinda men sent here by the Représentant to work.

These people are also infected with spirillum fever (tick fever), and, as reported already, three men and one woman have died from this fever. In fulfilment of the instructions laid down in the Belgian Government Regulations (copy of which, dated Boma, 7th December, 1905, I now forward you), I have considered it advisable to take the following steps:—

I have written the medical officer (as you will see by the copy inclosed) that I intend to return all uninfected natives from the Kabinda district at once, and to establish a segregation camp to be chosen by the medical officer and myself at a suitable place away from this mine.

All buildings that have been inhabited by these natives will at once be burned down. It is to be remembered that these natives have been kept during their stay in this district separate from all other natives.

I regret that I have been forced to take these steps without waiting your instructions, but the Regulations of the Belgian Government appear to me to be so distinct and clear that there is no other course open to me but to follow them rigidly.

I regret that the experiment of employing these natives from Kabinda, a work undertaken at considerable personal trouble to M. le Représentant, Commandant Tonneau, should have resulted so disastrously.

Trusting that my action in this matter will meet with your approval, I am, &c.

(Signed) B. G. M. HARRISON, *Local Manager,*
Tanganyika Concessions (Limited), Ruwé.

H. Cayley, Esq., Manager,
Tanganyika Concessions (Limited), Mazaunguli.

Certified true copy :
(Signed) G. B. BEAK,
Acting British Vice-Consul.

Ruwé, July 29, 1907.

Dear Sir,

Ruwé, September 7, 1906.

I BEG to inclose a copy of the Report handed in to me by the medical officer of this Company (Dr. Massey) in reference to conditions of health of the men sent here from Kabinda by M. le Représentant Tonneau to work. You will notice that Dr. Massey reports that 9 per cent. of these men are afflicted with trypanosomiasis, and that other 13 per cent. have been in hospital, and unable to work. I may add that these people brought with them rather over 29 per cent. of women. There are also at least 5 per cent. of physically unfit men. Totalling up the undesirables and non-workers, I find they amount to 47 per cent. of the total arrivals. All of these are drawing food, and most of them require the valuable and otherwise much needed services of the Company's medical officer.

I may inform you that Dr. Massey has been urgently called by Mr. Cayley, the Assistant Manager, to go to the Mazanguli district and investigate the condition of the natives living on the Lualaba, in our food supply district. It is reported that these people are dying in numbers from some unknown disease. The doctor has been unable to respond to this call, owing to his having been constantly in attention on the Kabinda people now in Ruwé.

In view of these facts, I think it most advisable to carry out the instructions given by Dr. Massey in his Report as to the future treatment of these Kabinda people. I beg you to notice that Dr. Massey reports that these thirteen men, although they had trypanosomiasis, are not ill, and can be returned to the infected district they came from. This is also the opinion expressed by Dr. Todd (as quoted in Dr. Massey's Report), the specialist engaged by the Belgian Government to investigate the sleeping sickness, and by whose advice the Regulations regarding sleeping sickness were compiled.

Dr. Massey holds the full and extended Reports of Dr. Todd, which are at your disposal should you wish further confirmation.

Therefore, M. le Contrôleur des Mines, I intend to draft off all Kabinda men that are in any way affected, and otherwise all those invalidated from doing their work, also the physically unfit. These I propose returning to the Chef de Poste at Kisumba *en route* for Kabinda, which is an infected area.

It is noteworthy that Dr. Todd reports that 13 per cent. of the Kabinda natives were found to be in the early stages of sleeping sickness.

I earnestly beg you to give this matter your most serious and prompt consideration, as it will no doubt entirely depend on our immediately returning such natives as are reported as infected with trypanosomiasis whether we will be permitted in future to recruit labour for these mines from other uninfected districts.

It is my opinion as well as that of the Company's medical officer that these infected people be returned immediately to the district from which they were recruited, so that the Ruwé district may not become an infected area.

I will draft out to-day at 1 P.M. all undesirable Kabinda men, whom I will have ready on the ground cleared on Block A, and I would be glad if you could make it convenient to attend.

I am, &c.

(Signed)

B. G. M. HARRISON, *Local Manager,*
Tanganika Concessions (Limited), Ruwé.

M. H. Manfroy, Contrôleur des Mines,
Comité Spécial du Katanga, Ruwé.

Certified true copy:
(Signed) G. B. BEAK,
Acting British Vice-Consul.

Ruwé, July 29, 1907.

LIST of Kabinda Men and Women deceased at Ruwé.

No. 47 Ilunga ..	No. 41 gang ..	2 Capitão Kabanda..	Tick fever.
„ 159 Kabala ..	„ 20 „ ..	7 „ Kabongo..	Died in hut suddenly.
„ 143 Belgike ..	„ 3 „ ..	7 „ „ ..	Tick fever.
„ 34 Tumba ..	„ 22 „ ..	2 „ Kabanda..	„ „
„ 98 Goyi ..	„ 9 „ ..	4 „ Kamona ..	„ „
„ 30 Mukamari ..	„ 14 „ ..	2 Kabanda..	„ „
„ 105 Tambusuku ..	„ 16 „ ..	4 Kamona ..	Suddenly, no cause apparent.

Chala, wife of Mwasa (jaundice).

Congo Free State.—No. 10 Kachale, was being treated in hospital for tick fever and disappeared during the night. His Capitão, Kabanda, says he does not know where this man has gone. Local Capitãos also say they have searched for him but cannot find him.

(Signed) B. G. M. HARRISON.

Ruwé, September 8, 1906.

Certified true copy:
(Signed) G. B. BEAK,
Acting British Vice-Consul.

Ruwé, July 29, 1907.

Dear Sir,

Ruwé, September 8, 1906.

Owing to 9 per cent. of the men sent here to work from Kabinda having been found to be infected with trypanosomiasis, eight having died since their arrival from spirillum fever, an average of over twenty being daily under medical treatment and unable to work, besides others being physically unfit for work, I am returning these men to Kabinda.

I am writing fully to the Chef de Poste at Kabinda, giving him full details concerning these men.

I am sending two reliable Europeans to escort the "safari" to Mazanguli, who are instructed to report to the local Manager at that place. They will, if necessary, accompany the men to Kisamba.

All these men were given, on their arrival, 2 yards of calico and a thick woollen sweater ("chemise d'homme"). They will receive their full pay due to them on their arrival at Mazanguli.

Food will be provided for them to Kisamba, and I am sending you with them two trusses ("charges") of calico for their food-cloth from Kisamba to Kabinda. I will be glad if you will kindly give them each the amount of food-cloth necessary for their journey to Kabinda.

Should you incur any other expense in connection with returning these men to their district, I will be obliged if you will notify me of the same.

I am taking every precaution and the greatest care to return these men to their district. In consideration of the unfortunate result of these men having been sent to us, with undoubtedly the very best intentions, from an infected area, causing me to return them after one month's work, at great expense to this Company, I trust you will kindly do your utmost to pass them through your district on their way to Kabinda.

I am, &c.
(Signed) B. G. M. HARRISON, *Local Manager,*
Tanganyika Concessions (Limited), Ruwé.

The Chef de Poste, Kisamba.

Certified true copy:
(Signed) G. B. BEAK,
Acting British Vice-Consul.

Ruwé, July 29, 1907.

Dear Sir,

Ruwé, September 8, 1906.

I am dispatching to-day to Kabinda, viâ Mazanguli, all the people sent here to work from that district.

It has been found that 9 per cent. are infected with trypanosomiasis (sleeping sickness).

Messrs. Gillespie and Billin escort the "olendo" to Mazanguli, and should you think it advisable to send them, or one of them, through with the men to Kisamba, please give them the necessary instructions.

Mr. Gillespie carries all the papers in connection with these people, and I beg you to read them all. Letters to the Manager and others will be left open for your perusal.

Mr. Gillespie will take through to Mazanguli with him sufficient calico to pay off the men, and two trusses, which please forward to the Chef de Poste at Kisamba, to be used for "posho" from there to Kabinda.

Mr. Gillespie is instructed to follow the medical officer's advice in travelling these people through the district. A copy of the doctor's advice is carried by Mr. Gillespie.

I will ask Mr. Gillespie to forward you this letter ahead of the "olendo," to give you notice of their arrival. They will not camp in Mazanguli.

I am, &c.
(Signed) B. G. M. HARRISON.

The Local Manager, Tanganyika Concessions
(Limited), Mazanguli.

Certified true copy:
(Signed) G. B. BEAK,
Acting British Vice-Consul.

Ruwé, July 29, 1907.

Dear Sir,

Ruwé, September 8, 1906.

I AM returning to-day all the Kabinda men sent here to work. My reasons for doing so are as follows:—

Of the men recruited for work at Ruwé 149 arrived with 29 women and 2 infants.

Several of them complained of being sick on their arrival, and were at once attended to by the Company's medical officer (Dr. Massey).

It was found that most of those who reported sick were suffering from spirillum fever. The Capitas told the doctor and myself that the tick ("chimpanu") was very common on the road from Kabinda.

I regret to say that eight have died since their arrival. A list of their names and causes of death is inclosed.

For the last three weeks an average of over twenty have been under medical treatment and unable to work.

You will see from the copy of the medical officer's Report (inclosed*) that thirteen of these men, or 9 per cent., are infected with trypanosomiasis.

A list of their names, giving their Capitas' name, reference number, and region from which they come, is inclosed.*

These people are naturally much upset by the number of deaths that have occurred

* Not printed.

since their arrival, and the Capitas inform me that ten men died on the road here from Kabinda.

Every care and attention has been given these people, and the men have been given the ordinary work on the alluvial gold working, a few (twenty) being sent to Kolwezi (7 miles from Ruwé) to cut wood for charcoal, and ten others were sent for a short time to Musonoi (7 miles from Ruwé) to work for one of the Company's employés.

Instructions were given me by the Manager of the Company that these men were not to be worked hard, and these instructions have been strictly carried out. They have not done as much work as a similar number of Awemba would have done in the same time. Being unaccustomed to the work, this is natural.

The behaviour of these men has been good, but of late they have become dispirited, and inclined to shirk their work, no doubt owing to the deaths of their friends. They were also upset and somewhat alarmed by having to be medically examined (according to the Regulations for sleeping sickness) for trypanosomes.

In accordance with the medical officer's Report, and after consulting the Controller of Mines, I am now returning the whole of these people back to Kabinda, which is an infected area.

I am sending two reliable Europeans to conduct these people through to Mazanguli, and should the local Manager of the Company at that place deem it advisable, he will instruct Messrs. Gillespie and Billin to go on with the men to Kisamba.

Food for the road will be provided to Kisamba, and I am sending two trusses ("charges") of calico to the Chef de Poste at Kisamba requesting him to give each man and woman the necessary food-cloth to take them to Kabinda.

The men will be paid their wages at Mazanguli in full. Every precaution will be taken to return these people to you in safety.

I regret that it is necessary to return these people, after they have been recruited with considerable trouble and sent here to work with the very best intentions, but it is done in accordance with the Regulations for sleeping sickness forwarded me by the Manager.

I am, &c.

(Signed) B. G. M. HARRISON, *Local Manager,*
Tanganyika Concessions (Limited).

M. le Chef de Poste, Kabinda.

Certified true copy:
(Signed) G. B. BEAK,
Acting British Vice-Consul.

Ruwé, July 29, 1907.

No. 7.

Vice-Consul Michell to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received January 21.)

Sir,

4, Lansdown Place East, Bath, January 22, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith a despatch which I prepared for the late Captain Cromie, but which I was prevented by illness and other causes from putting into a proper shape until lately.

I have thought it better to send it to you, though, so late rather than to suppress it altogether. I hope to be able to send you the concluding portion of this despatch in a few days.

I have, &c.

(Signed) GEO. BABINGTON MICHELL.

Inclosure in No 7.

Vice-Consul Michell to Acting Consul-General Cromie.

Sir,

Stanleyville, August 15, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that I have received the "Bulletin Officiel" of the Congo Free State (No. 5) for May 1907, containing a Report addressed to the Sovereign.

As this Report refers to myself and to the despatches published in the White Book "Africa No. 1 (1907)," and makes me appear to justify, in some respects, the system enforced by the State on the Congo, I beg leave to submit to you my opinion of that system.

It is truly discouraging to any well-wisher of this country, and especially to one who would regard with a favourable, or at least an impartial, eye the efforts of a civilized State to administer so large a territory, beset with unusual difficulties, to see

the disingenuous, not to say false, light in which the facts are presented in this Report. In partisan newspapers one expects willful blindness to the rights of the other side, but the "Bulletin Officiel" is not the place for deliberate misrepresentation.

I do not think that any one denies that the Congo State has introduced some improvements, and that magnificent work has been done by many individual agents, Belgian and foreign. But I do not hesitate to say that the whole policy of the State, in every detail, is its own enrichment regardless of the inhabitant, black or white, excepting so far as he is a source of profit.

I will take the various headings *seriatim* into which the Report is divided, and will show that in every case the above statement is true.

The "Secrétaires-Généraux" have presented in the most favourable light the results of their efforts, but in reference to my reports and to all the matters in controversy have carefully refrained from refuting the charges made against them. "Reform" attempted in this spirit is simply hopeless.

It is stated (p. 219) that "the circulars and instructions which comment on the Decrees are not confidential," but are published in the "Bulletin Officiel." It is true that some are so published, but the monthly circulars, which are the really important ones, are strictly confidential, and are not published. The "Secrétaires-Généraux" are surprised that "complete ignorance" should prevail in England as to the legislative and administrative measures published in the "Bulletin Officiel" (p. 45). I doubt whether the Secretaries themselves are very familiar with the contents of these volumes published monthly during the last twenty-two years, containing a chaos of Decrees, "Arrêtés," Regulations, and Laws of which no index exists, and which no public discussion has drawn any attention to. Many orders are published only by being posted up in the stations. These have the force of law, and they concern the local populations far more intimately than the Peeksniffian formulæ of the "Bulletin Officiel."

Besides, as I have stated before, the text of these publications is often misleading without the accompanying circulars, which, I repeat, are confidential.

Ibembo, September 23, 1907.

With regard to (1) territory and population, (2) political situation, (a) the rights of inhabitants, (b) legislative power, (c) executive power, (d) judicial power, (e) chieftainship, (f) recruiting of workmen on public works, I have expressed my opinions in former despatches, and further experience confirms them.

By the way, I note that on p. 107 "the Notables of the tribes are summoned, whenever circumstances allow, to take a course with the 'Chefs de Poste' so as to initiate them in the rules of administration." I have not seen any publication of this Law.

Referring to military operations, a very off-hand description is given on pp. 115-118 of the revolts which have broken out in all parts of the country. The object is to minimize their importance. The outbreaks of the Medje, the Mouvu, and the Semliki mountaineers are treated as mere local dislike of foreigners. The truth is that the whole country between Bafwabole and Lake Albert Edward, the Chopo and the Aruwimi, Banalya and Mandingwe, Medje and Avakubi, has been at open warfare with the State during nearly the whole of this year. The "local effervescence" of the Chiefs of the Lulua Sector would be depicted by the natives and the American missionaries in a totally different light from that given on p. 116. The exploits of the police after the massacre at Yabohika, in the Lomami district, were not much to their credit, and the execution of one Chief and the escape of the others is undoubtedly regarded by the Topoke as a cheap price for the blood of two white men.

Chapter III treats of the economic situation. First, natural products: The minerals are of course claimed by the State; their abstraction is naturally a source of profit to the State and to the concessionary Companies, the object being to remove these riches from the country, and no pretence is made of thereby benefiting the natives. In former days the blacksmiths, coppersmiths, and other artificers of the native villages were well supplied with ore, and made good use of it; it is questionable how these industries are to survive.

The products of the soil, as every one knows, have been appropriated wholesale by the State. India-rubber, the principal product and the richest, benefits the white man and no one else; the same is true of gum-copal. Palm oil is indeed a valuable article of food, but the State consumption of it is growing so enormously that it is becoming rare and increasingly dear.

The other wild fruits of the forest form the staple food of the natives, and their cultivation is a matter of perfect indifference to the State. It will be noticed that in the section on agriculture nearly the whole space is taken up with (1) india-rubber, (2) cocoa, (3) coffee, (4) spices, and other products purely for export. Such articles as do not pay for export, as, for instance, cocoa and coffee, are being abandoned, only sufficient being raised to supply the State Agents.

All the efforts of the Botanical Gardens at Eala are directed to raising plants that will pay. Those which only serve for native consumption, such as bananas, manioc, sugar-cane, maize, rice, sesame, and monkey-nuts are left entirely to the natives to cultivate or degenerate as they will. The natives owe nothing that they eat to the Government; rice was introduced by the Arabs, and the State lays a very heavy tax on it. The paragraph on p. 139 seems to imply that the State plants rice; this is not the case. The Mahomedan population and time-expired soldiers and workmen are compelled by the State to plant rice, which the State buys from them at such a ridiculously low price that it amounts to a severe imposition upon these classes. The 1,000 tons of rice "negotiated on the market of Stanleyville" has been one of the heaviest burdens that district has had to bear.

"Kwanga" and smoked fish are native inventions and fabrications. The State, instead of favouring these products, nearly strangles them with incessant heavy impositions.

The policy of the State is well illustrated in the case of cotton. Although there is no reason why the cultivation and manufacture of this fibre should not become an important industry, as in Northern Nigeria, the State does nothing to favour it, as it does not pay for export. The plant is widely distributed and grows freely, but the valuable oil to be extracted from its seeds seems to be entirely unknown. The natives are greedy of oil and use great quantities, which they extract laboriously from pea-nuts, sesame, and palm kernels. I have suggested the use of cotton-seed oil to many Chiefs, but they had never heard of it before. There are many other products which grow freely, such as fenugreek, chick-peas ("garbanzos"), ginger, cloves, onions, vetches, and all kinds of leguminous plants, which would be of immense value to the badly-fed natives and their flocks, but which would require the encouragement of the State. Needless to say the Government does not give the subject a thought, but contents itself with saying (p. 137), "It is difficult to induce the native to undertake the cultivation of anything more than the needs of his own existence require."

The raising of live stock (p. 143) occupies two pages, and refers to cattle, horses, and zebras, and says (p. 144), "The State stations have to keep up flocks of small cattle and poultry in order to secure a supply of fresh meat for the staff without having to depend upon the natives, who, in certain places, do not attach sufficient importance to breeding."

The little flocks intrusted to the care of a few of the "Chefs de Poste" are utterly inadequate. Besides, the "Chef de Poste" has to account for every head periodically. None of the cows, a few of which are to be found here and there, give an ounce of milk. When Mr. Grenfell lay dying at Basoko, Dr. Grossule had to send to a native village three hours' distant in the bush to obtain a little goat's milk for his patient, though there was a large herd of cows in the station. The same thing occurs at Stanleyville, Romée, and other places that I know.

The soil of this country is incredibly rich; the sun, though tropical, is so often obscured by mists that almost anything will grow in abundance with the minimum of labour and trouble. If the Government responded to the duties which it has taken upon itself by appropriating the country and its inhabitants and accepting from the natives a contribution so vast that it not only pays for the whole administration, but also leaves a rich balance, it would secure the miserable native at least a decent supply of food. Instead of this it is daily impoverishing him and his country.

This question of the supply of fresh food is rapidly becoming acute. The natives have no idea of the profitable or economic breeding of the few goats, sheep, and fowls they possess; the enormous and perpetual demands of the State Agents, who require to be well supplied every day with these commodities, aggravates their most wasteful system of consuming young cattle, breeding mothers, eggs, &c., regardless of reproduction. Eighteen months ago sheep and goats, though their numbers were comparatively few locally, could be obtained in sufficient quantities and paying prices from Kasongo. This plan was, however, so wasteful that only about one-fifth of the animals survived to reach the Falls. They were then worth about two dotis of cloth, worth about 5 fr. To-day it is almost impossible to buy a sheep or goat. The State obtains them by heavy pressure, as they do also fowls and eggs. The Manyema

country is almost denuded. At Kasongo itself sheep and goats have to be brought in from several days' distance. The Railway Company is feeding its men on preserved meat and fish imported from Europe, and are selling the same to the natives. I enlarge on this point because I foresee a very critical position in the near future.

As I am travelling, and cannot tell when I shall be able to continue this despatch, I send you the part already complete without further delay.

I have, &c.

(Signed) GEO. BABINGTON MICHELL.

No. 8.

Vice-Consul Armstrong to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received January 27, 1908.)

(Extract.)

Boma, December 17, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that I left Leopoldville on the 15th August on board the steamer "Peace" for my journey in the Lake Leopold II district. Being unable to obtain the necessary workmen for the steamer and engineer's supplies at Kinchasa, where the steam-launch was fitted out, I was obliged to visit Bolobo, a station of the Baptist Missionary Society on the Congo River.

I arrived at Bolobo on the 20th August, and was detained there for twelve days owing to an accident which occurred to the steamer. Whilst there Mr. Murdoch, of the Baptist Missionary Society, returned from a trip to the lake, and the information obtained from him determined me in making a journey to the towns he had visited close to the lake, and of which he gave such an unfavourable account.

Acting upon his advice, I decided to visit these towns from the lake, and not, as he had done, from Bolobo, thus avoiding the long journey through a thinly-peopled and unimportant part of the district.

I accordingly left Bolobo on the 2nd September, and, descending the river as far as Kwamouth, started up the Kasai. I arrived at Mushie, a post on the juncture of the M'fimi and Kasai Rivers, the former leading into the Lake Leopold II, on the morning of the 7th September, and I arrived at Nioki, the first State post of importance after Kwamouth, on the 9th September.

There is very little to report on the part of the Kasai River up which I passed, with the exception that there are hardly any natives living on the banks; and at Mushie, once a very large and important native town, there are now only a few native huts inhabited by a mere handful of natives. The engineer and captain of my steamer had visited this village several years ago, when in the employ of the late Rev. William Grenfell, and recollects this village as being a very large and populous one. The natives declare this depopulation is owing to the labour demands made by the State, while the latter declares it is owing to sleeping sickness and small-pox.

This depopulation, which is very marked over all the district, is probably attributable to both causes, as many certainly die from exposure, and others run away to escape this forced labour; while small-pox epidemics have been known here, but I only saw two cases of men pitted with small-pox.

On the banks of the M'fimi River are evidences in many places of what were once important native towns, which now either do not exist at all, or contain but a meagre population of from twenty to thirty people.

I was told by a State officer who had been several years in the service of the State in this district, that the people of the river banks had been practically stamped out by the ravages of small-pox some few years ago.

It is very difficult to form an estimate of the population living on this river, but I was given to understand by a State officer that my estimate of 200 persons was a liberal one.

The length of the M'fimi River, *i.e.*, from Mushie to the entrance of Lake Leopold II, I should judge to be about 150 miles, and the inhabitants upon its banks belong to the Ba-boma tribe.

The people of these river villages supply a chikwangue and fish tax to the State. I was unable to find out the amount in kilogrammes which the towns at which I stopped supplied, but I presume the tax is everywhere the same, and none the less burdensome than in other parts.

At the village of Moleke, situated at a distance of about 40 miles from Mushie, the people supplied 50 "bunches" of chikwangue and 50 "bunches" of fish every week,

which they have to deliver at Mushie by canoe. The 50 "bunches" of chikwangué I presume to mean 50 kilog.

The State valuation of the kwanga is 4 centimes per kilogramme.

The natives complained that they received practically nothing for their tax, which occupies the greater portion of their day's work.

They are supposed to be paid at the rate of 4 centimes per kilogramme for their chikwangué, which, if carried out, would mean that the village tax in money would amount to 104 fr. per annum, and in return they would receive 104 fr. worth of merchandize; but the valuation is a purely arbitrary one, since, by the system of monopoly, no competition exists, and therefore no relative value can be attached to the produce. No one but the State Agents visit this part of the country, with the exception of the Roman Catholic missionaries, who travel on State steamers, and who profit by the prices fixed by the State.

The people are paid by the State in trade goods for their produce, and as the transport of merchandize upon the river steamers from Leopoldville to the Lake Leopold II costs 90 fr. (3*l.* 12*s.*) per ton, the prices of merchandize, which consists chiefly of cotton cloth and salt, are very high. I found that a yard of ordinary cotton cloth costs 1.62 fr. per fathom (about 7½*d.*); whereas salt, which is of a very good quality, is valued at 2 fr. (or 1*s.* 7½*d.*) per kilogramme.

I was informed by the "Chef de Poste" at Nioki that the villages within his district were taxed in rubber. The amount of rubber required of each adult male native was 1 kilog. 200 grammes per month. This represents 14 kilog. 400 grammes per annum, or a tax of 7 fr. per head in money, the rubber being valued at 50 centimes (or 5*d.*) per kilogramme. For this each native receives a remuneration of 7.20 fr. in trade goods, *i.e.*, the State valuation of his tax.

This amount of 1 kilog. 200 grammes of rubber is calculated by the State as forty hours' work.

The natives in the district of Nioki formerly made 4 tons of rubber per month, but since the "strict observance" (a statement which subsequent experience entirely refutes) of the law of forty hours' labour this has been reduced to 1 ton 200 kilog. per month. The "Chef de Poste" informed me that the natives in his district had refused to work rubber, and were paying nothing to the State as a tax. I was unable to visit these towns, being desirous of devoting my attention to the districts on the banks of the lake.

At the next post, N'kutu, I found that practically the same conditions prevailed as at the former place.

No action had been taken by the State, up to the time I left, against these people who had paid no taxes.

I left N'kutu on Thursday, the 12th September, and proceeded to Inongo, the head station in the Lake Leopold II district, where I arrived on the same day.

I called upon the Commissaire of the district and other officials, and I was shown all over the station, which is well built, but surrounded by a swamp. I observed about forty-five natives in chains, who, I was informed, were undergoing punishment for non-payment of the rubber tax.

These prisoners came from the village of Ibenga, on the north-east of the lake, and I afterwards ascertained that the task of these people to obtain rubber was far easier than that of any other village I visited.

On the following morning these people were released from the chains, but still kept as prisoners.

On visiting the brick-making establishment at Inongo I had an illustration of the work of the prisoners. There were three of them in a pit up to their knees in clay performing the duty known as "puddling." They wore nothing but a small loin cloth, and were perspiring at every pore. It was with difficulty that they withdrew their legs from the mixture of clay and water, and a capita kept them constantly on the move. I make a note of this, as it was difficult for me to understand why they disliked being made prisoners more than being rubber gatherers.

From Inongo I crossed the lake to N'celenge, a native village on the lake, about an hour's steam from Inongo, the place of delivery of the rubber tax of a group of villages. This village consists of about 100 people. Their tax to the State is 200 chikwangué and 200 fish, which has to be taken across the lake to Inongo in canoes every day. There are forty women in the town, and each one has to deposit five chikwangués on the beach every morning, each weighing about half a kilogramme. This food-stuff is valued by the State at 4 centimes per kilogramme, and the natives are paid accordingly.

Native labour is valued at 8 centimes per day, or 2 fr. 40 c. (1*s.* 11*d.*) per month in

addition to their food ("chikwangué"), which is supplied to them by the State, who in turn levy it as a tax upon the people, giving them a small remuneration of 4 centimes per kilogramme for their work.

The natives of this village complained only of their remuneration, and not of the endless work imposed upon them, their reasons being that they worked rubber, to obtain which they had to go very long distances, there being none left in the forest surrounding their village.

The State have appointed one of the villagers as capita, and his duty is to see that the taxes are duly paid. He informed me that it was very difficult to make the people supply the amount demanded by the State, and that they were often short in their deliveries, for which they receive no punishment, generally speaking; occasionally a messenger would be sent, who would chastise those who were short. It happened that after I had left this village on a visit to the interior towns one of these messengers was sent to N'celenge, and the captain of my steamer, whom I had left at the village awaiting further instructions, tells me that this messenger caught several people, chastised them for not having brought over their daily tax to the State post of Inongo, commandeered two or three fowls for himself, and threatened them with imprisonment if they did not at once fulfil their obligations.

It is most important that the State should receive their food-stuff regularly, otherwise their workmen would be short of food.

The Chief of N'celenge had no authority whatever over the people, being unable to relieve them of their work or benefit them in any way.

On Sunday, the 15th September, I sent for the capita and Chief, and informed them of my intention to visit some towns in the interior, and requested them to supply me with carriers. This they consented to do on the following morning. When the time arrived there was not a man to be seen in the village. Two State soldiers who had been hunting arrived, and I explained to them what had happened. They searched the bush behind the native huts and found two or three men who then came forward. The capita explained that the men did not wish to go, because they would receive no payment for their work. I told the capita that I was quite prepared to pay the men, and that I would deposit the amount of salt and cloth agreed upon with him before starting, provided he would guarantee the safe arrival of my baggage at its destination. This he agreed with the natives to do, and plenty of workmen, more than I actually needed, were forthcoming.

Upon my arrival at my destination, a village called M'pili, some of the carriers wished to engage themselves to go the whole journey overland with me, which they eventually did.

The village of M'pili consists of a few small huts, and contains a male population of ten adults. Their tax to the State is 1 kilog. of rubber per man per month or 120 kilog. per annum for the whole village, which calculated upon a money value of 50 centimes per kilogramme, the remuneration which the State allows them amounts to 60 fr. (2l. 8s.) per annum for the whole village.

This amount they are paid in trade goods, *i.e.*, cotton, cloth, or salt, in the following manner:—

At the end of every thirty days, which is called market day, the tax is taken to N'celenge, a few hours distant from their village.

The work of two men (called by the State a "Chef de groupe") is put together, which should amount to fifteen strings (each man making seven and a-half strings).

One man of each "Chef de groupe" is deputed to carry this amount to N'celenge, so that five men only have to appear on market days. If the amount which each man brings is of good quality, and none but the best is accepted (all inferior being burnt), he receives in exchange two yards of cotton cloth (*i.e.*, one yard each). One string of rubber weighs when dry 170 grammes, so that on market day it is wet, and must weigh more than 170 grammes, as it takes about three months to dry, I am told.

If the amount is less than that specified by the State the natives receive payment in proportion to the amount which he brings.

One of the natives of this village brought me a strip of common white domestic, about 2 yards long and 12 inches wide, which he stated he had received in payment of his rubber, complaining that he had not received his full payment, and adding that a piece of cloth of such dimensions was of no value to him.

In answer to my questions, he stated that his rubber tax for the month had been completed.

I mentioned this to the "Inspecteur d'État," whom I met afterwards in the lake, and he explained to me that he had received similar complaints, but that he had in each case proved to the native that the amount specified had not been brought in.

He also stated that the native could allow his remuneration to accumulate if he so desired, but they were "so distrustful" of the European that they preferred to take what they were given at the time it was due.

I do not in the least doubt the absolute sincerity of the "Inspecteur d'État," whose statements I accept without hesitation; but in this case, from what I have seen and heard from others, I should be inclined to the opinion that the native's distrustfulness was due chiefly to fear of the European, for, in order to maintain the present system of rubber taxation, nothing but fear of the consequences of shortage in the supply could make them fulfil their obligations, and submit to a tax involving incessant labour.

The natives assured me that they spent twenty days and nights in the forest in each month to collect the amount of their tax. They told me that they were not ill-treated by the officials; and that they were thankful the armed sentries have been withdrawn from their towns; their people were no longer killed, and that they were living in the hope that their taxes would be reduced.

A capita resides in the village and is chosen from among the inhabitants. His duty is to see that the taxes are duly carried to the State post when they become due at the end of the thirty days, and for this purpose he has a calendar made of thirty small sticks threaded on a string, one of which he moves every day. He receives no remuneration from the State, and therefore takes a share of his townsman's earnings.

From M'pili I walked to N'gongo, which I believe to be the largest village on the west side of the lake.

This village, together with a few small villages in the surrounding country, contained, according to the census made by the State, 120 adult men, 17 of whom had recently run away to the Mission station at Bolobo to escape the hardships of the rubber tax, and others, the Chief told me, were on the verge of departure, which I should think was highly probable.

This village was once very large and influential, but the history of past years, which has been written by Mr. Consul Casement and Mr. Scrivener, of the Baptist Missionary Society, the information of the Chief and natives who survived the treatment, and the manifest evidences of these abuses which are still witness of past maladministration, convince me that the population must have formerly been very dense.

A number of people have fled to the village nearer the main river, and have placed themselves under the protection of the respective Chiefs of the villages at which they reside.

I refer to past abuses, not with the intention of hinting that such things are still in existence, but with a view of explaining the possibility of enforcing the payment of taxes which are such a burden to the people.

This village (N'gongo) supplies 1,440 kilog. of rubber per annum. The tax is 6 fr. per head payable in rubber at the rate of 50 centimes per kilog. Each man, therefore, has to supply 1 kilog. per month. The tax, therefore, amounts to 720 fr. per annum, for which they receive 720 fr. in trade goods as remuneration. The natives work from twenty to as much as twenty-five days in the forest collecting the tax.

It takes them eight days to get from their town to that part of the forest where the rubber grows. The distance which they cover in the eight days must be nearly 300 miles. They tell me that they very often exhaust their supply of food, in which case they are either obliged to go without or beg from some village in the neighbourhood to whom they give payment in bows and arrows.

The village is divided into forty "Chefs de groupe" of three men each, one of each "Chef de groupe" being responsible for the delivery of the tax at N'celenge (30 miles distant), on the market day (the 30th day).

The capita is a native of the town and resides there. He is an old employé of the State in the past, and was, he told me, responsible for many abuses which he performed under the orders of the European. He is disliked by the people, which is only natural, and is quite aware of the reason. He says that he makes the people work without ill-treatment, which is borne out by the natives themselves, but receiving no pay whatever from the State, retains a liberal portion of the tax-gatherers' payment. The same applies to the Chief, who takes a portion of their rubber, which he sends to the State in exchange for barter goods.

The Chief is a native of a small village in this district, and being an influential man and friendly with the State at present, has been given a medal, the recognized insignia of his office.

The villagers are not at all pleased with him, accusing him of sacrificing their interests for his own comfort and well-being.

The Chief, on the other hand, says that he is quite aware of the hardships which the native undergoes in the collection of rubber, and the constant work which the tax entails. That if the villagers refuse to supply the tax the result will be a repetition of past ill-treatment. He himself would be obliged to fly to the forest to escape imprisonment. He also urged them to consider that now the sentries had been withdrawn their wives and children were living in comparative tranquillity.

The tax-gatherers told me that they were not satisfied with the Chief, who was entirely in the hands of the capita, and who, they said, received all the payment for their work. On making inquiries, the Chief told me that the State had lent him five goats and five guns, which the people accused him of having received as payment for the rubber they had made, whereas the goats and guns were not his property, but only given him on condition that the people worked.

The villagers also accused him of having informed the State of the flight of some of their men to Bolobo to escape the rubber tax, adding that in doing so he was directly conniving with the State to obtain their arrest and return to their village. They, the villagers, were also making arrangements for a general exodus, and if the Chief would not help them by keeping silent their flight would be impossible.

I arrived in this village in time to see the arrangements that were made for taking the rubber to the market of N'celeuge. The capita and his retinue summoned the people to bring their rubber by blowing a horn. The tax-gatherers assembled at his compound with the rubber, where it was counted, and a representative of each "chef de groupe" was chosen. On the following morning they set out for N'celeuge accompanied by the capita.

From N'gongo I went to Lishoko, a small village near the State post of M'bongo. The people of this town make 250 chikwangues, which has to be taken to the State post, about 6 miles distant, every four days.

The village and its dependencies number twenty-six working men. It formerly contained thirty, four having run away to Bolobo.

The supply of chikwangué is the women's tax, and the men have to supply palm leaves and string for roofing houses and large mats, which are eventually sent to the new State post at Inougo.

The conditions of the people here are identical with those of other villages supplying chikwangué.

I then proceeded to the State post at M'bongo. The officer in charge had unfortunately left two days before my arrival, so that I had no opportunity of obtaining information as to the distances the natives went to gather rubber.

The post had formerly been a very large one, but now shows signs of having been neglected.

I was informed by my interpreters, one of whom was a native of the village of N'gongo, and the other who had made a journey through this country some two or three years previously, that this town of M'bongo was once very large. All that remains to-day is a population of perhaps twenty people, living in a state of filth it is difficult to describe.

I returned to the lake via N'gongo to M'bali, an old State post on the lake.

This town, or group of towns, comprise sixty adult men. Their individual tax to the State is 1 kilog. 200 grammes of rubber per month. These people are obliged to go to the district in close proximity to the State instruction camp at Irebu on the main Congo River to find rubber. The people state that it takes them seven days' walk to get into the rubber forest and six days' actual work in the forest to make their tax.

This is the more significant seeing that upon examination of their tax-paper I found that the average amount of rubber they had supplied to the State as a tax in the first half-year of 1907, viz., from January to May inclusive, averaged 25 kilog. per month, whereas the amount they should have supplied was nearly 60 kilog. per month. This bears out the statement that it is impossible to make the amount required in a month.

The villagers complained that they receive no pay for their work, and seeing that they are paid in cloth at 7½*d.* per yard, or salt at 1*s.* 11*d.* per kilog., at the rate of 50 centimes per kilog. of rubber, it was impossible that they could have received more than a very small payment. The capita told me that he had been often beaten and imprisoned for shortage in supplies.

The rubber on the west side of the lake is practically worked out, and that which remains is scattered over the country which is at a distance of from 25 to 30 miles from the Congo River.

I left M-Bali and proceeded to the country at the extreme north-east and north-west of the lake, visiting Lukanga, Lomi, and Bolia on its banks, and from Lomi I went overland to Bolia, passing through the largest and most important town I have seen in the Congo Free State, viz., Ibeke.

At Lukanga and its surrounding villages there are thirty-three "Chefs de groupe," that is, ninety-nine men, and the tax is 99 kilog. of rubber per month, or 1 kilog. per man monthly.

The capita, who is an old employé of the State, stated that the people of this village went to Irebu and Lake Mantumba for their rubber.

The men were absent when I arrived at the village, and the capita said they had been gone seven days when I arrived, and he further informed me that the taxes here were payable every fifteen days, and that the people went out for ten or twelve days twice monthly. I afterwards found out that the reason of this double tax was that they never brought sufficient in the first ten or twelve days, and it consequently took them a further ten or twelve days to make up arrears.

According to their tax-paper, they only supplied 596 kilog. of rubber during the whole of the year 1906, which would go to prove that the present tax is excessive.

Corporal punishment and imprisonment are inflicted for shortage in supplies, but more leniency in this respect has been shown them in the last two months.

They complained that they received no pay for their work. I chanced to be present at Bolia when they brought in their rubber, and I can state that they were remunerated on that occasion, but it is fair to them to add that the State capita, who assisted the "Chef de Poste" to receive the tax, told them in my presence that they could be thankful that I was there, for otherwise their rubber being below the specified amount and not of the best quality, and having been dipped in the lake to make it weigh more, they would have been imprisoned and paid nothing had I not been there.

At Lomi the Chief told me that he had about forty men, and their tax-paper showed the number as forty-five, viz., fifteen "Chefs de groupe" of three men each. Their tax was 45 kilog. per month.

The village, the Chief told me, was divided into two parts, taking their rubber alternately to the post every fifteen days. The people go to the borders of Lake Mantumba for the rubber and spend the greater part of their time in the forest.

They say they receive no pay, and the Chief tells me that he was recently imprisoned at Bolia for six weeks.

I visited the State post at Bolia before making my journey into the surrounding country. The post is small but well kept. The "Chef de Poste" was away when I arrived, and the post was in charge of an agricultural agent, who was engaged in making a rubber plantation in the surrounding forest. The work had only just been started, and he had seventy-five men working with him. He knew very little about the taxation of the people.

I returned to Lumbi, from whence I started on a journey overland to Bolia.

The roads, with the exception of the part from Ibeke to Bolia, are in a deplorable condition, and, in fact, generally speaking, have very nearly disappeared, there being no communication between the towns by the route I followed.

The whole of this part of the country is an inundated forest, with occasional strips of high land. The water in many places was waist deep, and it was at the time I visited the country the dry season. In the rainy season the roads are almost impassable.

At Boliabompeti there were thirty working men, *i.e.*, ten "Chefs de groupe," who should supply 30 kilog. of rubber per month. They stated that there was very little rubber in their district, and that they had to go to the Lake Mantumba country to find it. They spend from twenty to twenty-two days in the forest.

I was informed that three men had been imprisoned two weeks before my arrival, but had been released shortly afterwards.

They complained that they received little or no payment. Upon examination of their tax-paper I found that they had only supplied a fraction over 43 kilog. of rubber in the first six months of this year, *i.e.*, from January to June inclusively, whereas they should have supplied 180 kilog. or 30 kilog. monthly.

Upon my arrival at Botuale, the next village, there was not a person in the village. It appeared to be quite new, and in two huts there were fires still burning. Soon after my arrival an old woman appeared, who told me that the Chief would return to the village on the following day.

The men, with the exception of the Chief and capita, and two others who had gone to the next town of Ibeke to deliver their rubber, were in the forest collecting their tax.

The Chief arrived in the night, and a few more women gradually returned to the town from their hiding places in the bush when they found that there was no danger.

The town consisted of ten working men, a few women, and only two children, one a boy of about 12 years and the other a girl of 4 or 5 years.

The capita had no tax-paper, as he told me that they were under the Chief of the village of Ibeke.

Their tax was 1 kilog. of rubber per head.

On the following day two men returned from taking their rubber to Bolia, about 35 miles distant. They had taken fifteen strings, about 22 kilog. 400 grammes, and had received in remuneration 1 yard of blue baird cotton cloth. They told me that their tax had been complete, and that the State officer had ordered them to return with more rubber in ten days' time.

They told me that they spent the greater part of their time in the forest surrounding Lake Mantumba, and complained of the hardships of travel and work in the forest, which, for the greater part of the year, was under water.

I then went to Ibeke, the largest and most influential village in all the lake district.

This village, together with small outlying villages, contains 981 adult men divided into 327 "Chefs de groupe," and they supply 3 kilog. of rubber per group, *i.e.*, 1 kilog. per head, or 981 kilog. per month.

The capita of this town, who is the son of the Chief Ilanga, is also responsible for a further group of villages containing 135 men, who likewise supply 1 kilog. of rubber per head per month.

According to the tax-papers in possession of the capita of Ibeke village, the natives had only supplied 4 tons 412 kilog. of rubber for the first six months of this year (1907) instead of 5 tons 986 kilog., the amount assessed.

The Chief, capita, and people were unanimous in declaring that they, the rubber gatherers, spent only four days per month in their village, the remainder of their time being spent in the forest making rubber.

In confirmation of this, I repeat a statement made to me some days after having visited these towns by a native employé of the post of Bolia. This man appeared, from his statements, to be a messenger of the post, his duties being to carry letters for the State officers at Bolia to the State post at Bikoro on Lake Mantumba, and also on rare occasions to Coquilhatville. I questioned him as to the distances between Bolia to Bikoro and Coquilhatville, which, he said, were three and six days respectively. The "Chef de Poste" at Bolia told me he thought it would take eight days to go from Bolio to Bikoro.

The messenger told me that to make the afore-mentioned journey in three days required forced marches, and that the rubber gatherers would take four to five days. The roads, he said, were inundated with water at nearly all times of the year. In reply to inquiries as to the time the rubber gatherers spent in the forest collecting their tax, he informed me that they spent from ten to fifteen days actually in the forest. In explaining the hardships of their work he also told me that they very often exhausted their food supplies before their tax was complete, in which case they went to Ikoko, an American Mission station and native village on Lake Mantumba, to purchase food, and for which they had to pay very dearly to the natives. Having made inquiries from the Mission at Ikoko, I obtained confirmation of this statement.

Between Ibeke and Bolia there is a series of small villages, and these, together with the other villages, which I did not visit, form what is called the "Chefferie" of Bolia. This group contains 1,695 working men, who are taxed 600 grammes of rubber per head per month, *i.e.*, 1 ton, 17 kilog. per month.

This part of the country seems to be still fairly thickly populated, and the State census for the Bolia "Chefferie" for this year estimates the number of women and children at 4,030.

I tried to visit the N'kiri River on the north-east extremity of the lake, but failed to get over the sand-bar at the entrance. This part of the country is inhabited by the N'kundu people, against whom the Government are conducting a punitive expedition by reason of their refusal to work.

I was desirous of visiting these people, but was informed by the "Chef de Poste" at Bolia that it would be unsafe to do so without an escort.

I was likewise unable to visit the village of Ibenga or the Lukenie River at the entrance of Lake Leopold II.

I spoke with the capita of Ibenga, who told me of the imprisonment of his people, as reported in the previous pages of this Report. He informs me that the

distance from his village to the rubber forest was only two or three days, which proves that the task of these people is far easier than that of any village I visited.

When I returned to Inongo I had an interview with the "Commissaire de District," and he asked me if I had heard of any abuses committed against the natives. I informed him that I had heard of only one case, in which a native had been killed by a sentry in the village of Bokoki. My informant insinuated that the "Chef de Poste" at M'bongo had heard of the matter and inquired into it as soon as it had happened, and had tacitly agreed not to report it so long as he made the people work. I did not tell this to the "Commissaire de District," as, when he asked me the question quoted above, the matter had entirely escaped my mind, and as he read me a de-patch on the subject from the "Chef de Poste" at M'bongo, which he seemed to have received soon after the complaint had been reported to me, stating that "the charge was quite untrue for the reason that he (the 'Chef de Poste') had never heard anything about it," my informant might have been charged with maliciously calumniating a State officer, in which he would have been seriously handicapped, seeing that the "Commissaire de District" had ordered the "Chef de Poste" himself to immediately constitute an inquiry—he being an officer of the judicial police—pointing out to him that "his not having heard of the matter was no reason in support of his view that such an act had not been committed."

I then mentioned to him the conclusion I had formed as to the taxation, saying that the people worked from twenty to twenty-five days per month. He stated that he had received similar complaints of a sufficiently serious nature as to have inspired him to write to the State "Inspecteur" suggesting a revision in the tax with regard to its application being so modified as to conform with the fundamental principle of forty hours' labour per month.

There is not the slightest doubt in my mind that the average month's work of every native is not less than twenty days.

The improvement that has been made by the application of the Reform Decrees of June 1906 is solely in the withdrawal of the armed sentries, a reform which the serious decimation of the population by the sentries demanded.

In every village I visited I saw evidence of this, which was confirmed by the natives. This is the more remarkable, seeing that the inhabitants are of an exceedingly tractable nature, and do not resent—as do the N'gombe tribes of the A.B.I.R. country—their past treatment, attributing the misdeeds solely to the initiative of the soldiers, whom they call "Hausa people," and the majority of whom were probably British subjects.

I saw nothing which led me to view the occupation of this country in the light of an Administration. The undertakings of the Government are solely commercial, with a sufficient administrative power to insure the safety of its personnel and the success of its enterprise; the natives have no time or opportunity to raise or to discuss questions which in normal conditions require the presence and careful consideration of administrators, and therefore the State appears to treat them as negligible quantities.

The "Chefs de Secteur" and "Chefs de Poste" have their hands full in their efforts to make the natives pay their taxes. They have no time to look into other matters, even should they so desire. On the other hand, a native would as soon think of offering himself for punishment as to go to a State post, except when the delivery of his tax obliged him to. This attitude of the native towards the European seems to be the general state of affairs outside the Free Trade zone, between Banana and Leopoldville inclusively, and it is only lately the natives of Stanley Pool have learnt confidence in the European. In the Lake Leopold II district the natives are only just beginning to settle down. The "Commissaire" of the district informed me that he was using all his efforts to make them return to their villages.

The "Chefs de Secteur and Poste" are continually touring through their districts with the object of making the native work. They spend at least fifteen days in each month among the natives.

Mr. Murdoch, in his article which appears in the weekly edition of the "Times" of the 1st November, states that the natives are required to bring in fifteen strips of rubber each. According to their tax-papers this is not the case, as fifteen strips of rubber would weigh, as Mr. Murdoch says, in giving the weight of a strip he purchased, and which I saw weighed, 2 kilog. 550 grammes, whereas the individual tax is not calculated at more than 1 kilog. 200 grammes anywhere, as far as I know. The natives brought each thirty strips, he says, which being the case, they brought more than their tax. These people were evidently from the village of N'gongo, as this was the only village which supplied more than they were actually obliged to.

He refers to the thirty strips of rubber being the work of two men, in which case their statements to him did not coincide with what they told me, or with the conditions of the tax-paper—which divided the village into “Chefs de groupe” of three men—so that thirty strips of rubber represented the work of three men and not two. And even this would be more than the amount of their tax, as seven and a-half strips equals, roughly speaking, 1 kilog. 200 grammes. I also purchased a strip of rubber which, when weighed two months afterwards at Leopoldville, contained 170 grammes.

This is a discrepancy of small moment, since the importance of the tax, whether it is of 1 kilog. or 10, rests upon the time taken to produce that amount. I accept absolutely the statements of Mr. Murdoch and the natives as to the distances the natives cover to obtain the amount of their tax.

The people in the Yambata district complained that they spent the greater part of their time in the forest, and as their tax was 3 kilog. of rubber per month, as compared with the amount of 1 kilog. 200 grammes imposed in the Lake Leopold II district, it would appear that the amount of the tax was fixed more with a view to obtain as much rubber as possible than to adhere to the law of forty hours' labour.

The native is remunerated at the rate of 50 centimes per kilog. for the rubber he produces, and, despite their statements to the contrary, the tax-papers show that they receive this amount, and I believe they are paid, with the exception of one or two rare instances, and these are not paid probably by reason of their continual failure to adequately fulfil their obligation, which is in almost every case impossible.

The following is an estimate of the profits of the State on their rubber tax. I take the village of N'gongo as being a large one, and one of the few villages that supply the amount actually assessed:—

Amount assessed yearly	..	..	..	..	1,440 kilog. of rubber.
					£ s. d.
1,440 kilog. of rubber at 10 fr.	..	..	..	..	576 0 0
Amount paid to natives at 50 c. per kilog.	..	..	..	..	28 16 0

I calculate the rubber at 10 fr. per kilog., the value placed upon it by the State in the Commercial Report issued this year. The market value in Antwerp is from 12 fr. to 13 fr. per kilog. From this amount of 576*l.* must be deducted, the cost of transport which cannot be more than 2 fr. per kilog. rendered at Antwerp, so that the net profits derived from this one village would be a little more than 456*l.* per annum. One hundred and twenty natives, together with their wives and children, which would bring the population of the town to about 400 souls, share this amount of 28*l.* 16*s.*, and as this is paid in cloth at 7½*d.* per yard and salt at 1*s.* 7½*d.* per kilog., it is evident that they cannot receive very much each, and that they complain of their remuneration. The cost of administration I have, of course, not taken into account. I hear on good authority that the cost of administration increases the value of the rubber to the State to not more than 1 fr. per kilog. The State could therefore well afford to be more generous in the respect of remuneration, seeing that nothing whatever is spent on the development of the country for the good of the natives. Even the State capita receives no wage, and, as I have said, participates in the remuneration given to the workmen.

The outlook for the future of this country is not very bright. The “Commissaire” of the district informed me that the cost of administration was very high, and that he just managed to make a profit on the enterprise, which he further stated to be a small one. If such is the case, an increase of remuneration would appear difficult. Again, I hear from Europeans as well as natives that the rubber is practically worked out. This statement would scarcely need confirmation, even if such confirmation were possible.

The native has no means of leaving the country. The only possibility of a change from his continual hardships is to go to the Mission station at Bolobo; but it is obvious that only an infinitesimal proportion of natives can obtain work on a Mission station; twenty or thirty would be as many as they could employ. Some few have left in past years and had taken refuge in various villages in close proximity to the Congo River; but even these were subjected to much suffering by reason of their being unable to procure food until they had made gardens of their own, and in many cases not only were they called upon to give up half of the produce to the Chief, in accordance with native custom, but some were totally deprived of the fruits of their work by the villagers. The law on the other hand forbids them to leave their towns without a special sanction from the competent authorities. The natives, therefore, have no means of communication with the outside world, and they have nothing left them to exchange for supplies, such as salt, for which they are literally starving.

The Tribunal of the First Instance of Leopoldville visits the lake three times a year, and remains at Inongo for one month each time. They have presumably very little to do, the native having no cause to complain, as far as the law is concerned.

The Judge cannot reduce the amount of the tax, neither is he able to increase the remuneration. A reduction of the tax would be of no material value to the native; on the contrary, he would receive a smaller remuneration.

From what I gathered, with regard to the dispensing of justice, it would appear extremely difficult for State officers to commit misdemeanours or acts of violence without being punished; and the punishments which the natives declared to have received were not contrary to the law, with the exception of the imprisonment of natives at the post of Bolia, where I was told the natives were incarcerated in a small sentry house, about 8 feet in diameter, and that as many as fifteen or twenty had been crowded into it at once.

I heard of the accusation made by Mr. Murdoch, relative to the treatment of a capita who had been given a mixture of tobacco leaves, pepper, and water to drink, but I had no means of verifying the statement.

No. 9.

Vice-Consul Armstrong to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received January 27, 1908.)

Sir,

Leopoldville, December 18, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you details of the food tax in the district surrounding Stanley Pool.

I make no comment upon the tax in money which has been allowed to a certain proportion of the male and female inhabitants in this district, as being quite new I have had little or no opportunity of finding out exactly what it implies, but if it is conscientiously applied it should prove of great benefit to the people.

The amount of the tax in money is 6 fr. per head, and the acceptance of money in lieu of produce rests exclusively with the "Commissaire de District." I am informed that payments of taxes in money have been refused in many towns in the Stanley Pool district.

The taxation of women in money (and in Kwanga) creates a precedent which does not exist in any West African Colony as far as I am aware, and it necessarily follows that women who cannot supply Chikwangue are permitted to pay their tax in money where they are living with their countrymen outside their towns, who are in the employment of the Missions or the traders, &c., which means that married men are called upon to supply a double tax.

The tax in Chikwangue falls exceedingly hard upon the female population of this district. It is the women alone who supply this tax, which is imposed as follows:—

The tax when levied in Chikwangue is based upon a value of 24 fr. per annum. The market value at Leopoldville is 10 centimes per kilog. The State remunerates the native at the rate of 6 centimes per kilog., and the difference, viz., 4 centimes, is credited to him for the payment of his tax.

It is impossible to fix this tax with regard to the law of forty hours' labour per month; the time which each native occupies in making gardens, clearing forest, cultivating the plants, transporting the root from garden to village, soaking in water previously to eventually pounding and boiling to render it the taxable produce, is impossible of calculation.

The amount required of each woman is therefore 400 kilog. per annum, which is calculated by the State as follows:—

400 kilog. at 10 centimes market value, 40 fr.

400 kilog. at 6 centimes State valuation, 24 fr.

The difference is therefore the amount of her tax, viz., 16 fr.

The men, on the other hand, are taxed in labour, which is not supposed to exceed 40 hours per month. Their duties consist in carrying the tax in Chikwangue to the State, an objection which they do not always carry out, as one frequently sees both women and children engaged in this work.

For the convenience and equalization of portorage the district supplying Chikwangue are divided into zones.

In the first zone the villages range from an hour to a day's journey from the receiving station. The natives supply their tax every four days.

In the second zone, from one to two days' distance, in which case the tax is supplied every eight days. The third zone has now been abolished, and the people take their tax to a post on the railway every four days, and are allowed 8 centimes per kilog. instead of 6 centimes as in the first and second zones.

To what extent they are subject to other *corvées* depends entirely upon the demands of the State authorities in the district. The villagers are naturally dependent to a certain extent upon the men to carry the food tax to the State posts; but the law recognizes the right of the "Commissaire de District" to call upon the men for purposes of porterage in the district. I am not aware that such porterage is demanded to any large extent, and, indeed, the needs of the Chikwangue carrying almost precludes the State from levying anything but a very small percentage of the male population for porterage, as the food tax is required to be carried to the State posts every four or eight days according to the distance of the towns from the State receiving posts throughout the year.

The natives complain very bitterly of the hardship of this tax. I am informed by the natives themselves, the missionaries, and from intelligent natives, who have received good educations, and whose testimony I should accept without reserve, that the women are constantly at work to supply this tax. To such an extent is this true that it is impossible for any one of them to leave their towns at any time for fear of the consequences of a shortage in the supply, for which they are liable to punishment.

I have received several complaints from the natives that no reduction was made to them for reasons of sickness in their towns, and I am told by the authorities to whom I mentioned this complaint that the natives in many cases address such complaints only to the receivers of taxes, who are not authorized to grant reductions, and who it would appear take little or no interest in the natives, instead of to the "Commissaire de District," or the judicial authorities. I was further informed that the competent authorities had received no complaints from the natives since the application of the June 1906 Decrees; and this statement would appear to confirm the opinion that the natives made their representations through the wrong channels.

In summarizing the foregoing Report, the most important points are:—

1. The severity of the tax upon the women, which I am told, on good authority, has seriously reduced the birth rate in the towns.
2. The constant work involved by making Chikwangue almost every day, and which is required to be delivered every four or eight days.
3. The frequency with which the taxes become due curtails the freedom of the native to such an extent as to preclude him from doing anything which would be of material benefit to himself or family.

The reason for making the Chikwangue tax payable in such a constant manner, and in such short intervals, is that it spoils in a few days, and unless quite fresh it is almost uneatable.

With regard to the porterage of the food which devolves upon the men, I would point out that it does not, as far as I am able to find out, require all the men in the town to carry the tax to the post on each market day, and the reason that women and children are often employed in carrying out this *corvée* is that the men are to a large extent engaged in the making of new plantations, hunting for game, which forms a large portion of their customary food, &c. This would account for the misstatements so often made that the men do no work, and leave it all to the women. Native customs define clearly the duties of men and women, and do not differ widely in this respect with European customs, and although the duties of the former are perhaps more varied and thus less burdensome, the degree of those duties is none the less important to the welfare of the town.

The men's duties as applied to towns and districts paying taxes in Chikwangue are, perhaps, at the present time of very small importance, but this is due to the fact that they have no business, having practically nothing left to them to trade with. A very important item in the native man's duty is the construction and repairing of their houses, which judging from the condition of the houses in every part of the State that I have visited—with the exception of the State camps which are admirably built and none more excellent from every point of view than those at Leopoldville—would go to prove that the extent of their duties to the State were exceedingly heavy.

Since my arrival in Leopoldville in April last, I have heard of no cases of imprisonment or restraint of any kind being imposed upon the natives for shortage in their taxes. Exceptional leniency in this respect would seem to prevail; nor do I believe

that such punishments have been inflicted, and this consideration towards the native would be proved by the fact that I knew of a village close to Leopoldville that had failed to bring in its tax for several months.

The natives of the Stanley Pool district inhabiting the banks of the Congo River above Leopoldville and Kinchasa, extending over a distance of some 150 miles, have been refused the alternative of paying their tax in money. Similar conditions prevail in other parts of this district below Leopoldville. The payment of the tax in money is the only means the native has of purchasing his freedom, and procuring for himself the value of the produce which he now gives to the State.

If there is no money in some of these towns it is obviously the fault of the State for the system they maintain. The wealth of this district is foodstuff, and its appropriation by the State has made it impossible for the native to obtain money.

In the adjoining French Colony the price of Chikwangué is higher than in the Congo Free State. This is due to the fact that in the French Colony the price of foodstuff is governed by the supply and demand of a free market.

I was informed by the Acting Commissaire-General of the French Congo that the natives of the district of Brazzaville (which corresponds to the Stanley Pool district of the Congo Free State) and throughout the French Congo, with very rare exceptions, pay their taxes in money readily, and in the case of the Brazzaville district, they pay more per head than is actually assessed. His Excellency further informed me that it is absolutely forbidden by law—which is strenuously observed by the officials—to use any force or restraint whatever in the collection of taxes without the special permission of the French Colonial Office.

A market has now been built at Leopoldville, and the natives who are free to dispose of their foodstuff are gradually being brought to avail themselves of the benefits it affords.

It is obvious that the Reform Decrees as applied to this district are quite inadequate.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JACK P. ARMSTRONG.

No. 10.

Consul Thesiger to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received January 27, 1908.)

Sir, *Boma, December 31, 1907.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a Memorandum regarding the application of the labour tax in the Congo Free State, showing how, from the administrative point of view, this tax is made the means of effecting considerable economies in the State expenditure, and from the commercial side a source of revenue far exceeding the sums which the monetary equivalent of the tax could ever produce. In both cases it presses with extreme severity upon the native, who is practically tied down, in those districts where the tax is enforced, from one year's end to another to a life of continual labour for the State, receiving in return for his produce a price far below the market value, and for his work a remuneration less even than the low cost of labour as fixed by the State itself.

As regards rubber, the State has at least the excuse that this product of the soil belongs to the State, and that the remuneration paid for its collection is merely pay for work done on the forty hours a-month basis; but as regards the tax in "chikwangué," the State is dealing with a produce which, even by their own account, belongs to the native, and so should either buy it at its market value or permit the native to sell it freely where he will and pay his tax in money. Needless to say it does neither of these things, but obliges the native to bring in large quantities on a valuation fixed by the Administration and paid for in trade goods maintained at a fictitious value.

Thus the State fixes not only the value of the goods, which it obliges the native to accept in payment for his produce, but also determines at its own free will the price of the commodity which it forces the native to sell or rather to hand over, and so gains a double benefit from the exchange; and not content even with this, the Administration takes credit for the payment of this small amount which it states to be "un acte de pure condescendance," in noways obligatory upon them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILFRED G. THESIGER.

Inclosure 1 in No. 10.

Memorandum regarding the Application of the Labour Tax in the Congo Free State.

IN dealing with the tax in labour or in produce, it must be remembered that it is based in theory on the idea of forty hours work a month, or on a monetary valuation equivalent to a tax varying from a minimum of 6 fr. to a maximum of 24 fr., but in practice the evidence shows that it is very often impossible to arrive at any conclusion as to the monetary or time-basis on which the tax in any district is fixed, as even the statements of the local officials in the same district do not correspond.

In both cases, however, it has been proved time and again that the amount due, however valued, is invariably exceeded, and it seems to be indeed limited only by the needs of the State or the working capacity of the native.

From the administrative point of view the tax in "chikwangue," the native bread-stuff, with which the native employés, labourers, and soldiers are fed in the Upper Congo districts, is one of the most important.

In Leopoldville the State employs some 1,200 workmen, who, together with a detachment of 120 soldiers and their wives and children, number about 2,000 persons for whom rations are found, by imposing a tax in chikwangue on the women living in the surrounding villages. To obtain the necessary supply the tax is estimated at 100 kilog. per head yearly, for which, by "un acte de pure condescendance," the State pay 6 centimes a kilog. in trade goods, thus apparently giving back in kind the full value of the tax of 24 fr. imposed.

As a matter of fact, the local market of chikwangue is 10 centimes a kilogramme, and on the other side of the Stanley Pool 25 centimes per kilogramme can be obtained at Brazzaville in the French Congo. Thus, if the native were free to sell the produce of his own lands and of his own labour, each 400 kilog. would be worth at least 40 fr., leaving a profit of 16 fr. to the native even after the maximum tax had been paid.

Were this 6 centimes paid in coin the injustice would still be evident, but it is paid for in trade cloth, of which the State has in Leopoldville a practical monopoly, at a value of 10 fr. a-piece of 7 metres, or in other trade goods a similar valuation. These figures speak for themselves. It may be further noted that the natives, having no use for all the cloth so earned, are glad to sell it again at 8 fr. a-piece, thus incurring a diminution of their wage. This is so generally the case that a regular trade is carried on in the cloth so retailed.

As regards the time and labour necessary to produce these 400 kilog. of chikwangue, the reports of Mr. Vice-Consul Armstrong, the American Consul-General, Mr. Smith, and the missionaries all agree that to produce the amount necessary to free her of all obligations to the State each woman has practically to work incessantly twelve months in the year. So much so is this the case that Mr. Armstrong reports "it is impossible for any of them to leave their villages at any time for fear of the consequences of a shortage in the supply, for which they are liable to punishment," while the Rev. Mr. Stonelake and the Rev. Mr. Hope-Morgan both testify that, in consequence of the incessant labour imposed by this tax, the women have practically ceased to bear children. Their work is further increased by the fact that the chikwangue has to be brought in every four, eight, or twelve days, and, although this is supposed to be the men's work, as a matter of fact it is carried out to a very large extent by the women and children.

Forced labour, such as this, differs only in name from slavery, and by it the Administration are enabled to feed their workmen at a merely nominal rate instead of having to buy chikwangue on the open market or of importing rice at a considerable cost to the State.

A solution of this question would be the payment to the State workmen of what is known here as "chop-money," namely, a weekly sum for food, which each man then provides for himself. By this means the supply of local produce would be encouraged, the native producer would get a fair price, while the cost to the State would be small. It would, however, mean the introduction of a system of payment to the workmen in coin and indirectly facilitate the payment of the taxes in money, two things which the Administration have no wish to introduce into the Upper Congo.

Mr. Armstrong's Report of the 17th December, 1907, shows that in the Lake Leopold II district the price paid for the chikwangue is 4 centimes a kilog., mentioning especially Moleke, where the village has to supply fifty bunches of chikwangue and

fifty bunches of fish weekly, and the natives complain "that they received practically nothing for their tax, which occupies the greater portion of their day's work." At N'celenge the tax is 200 chikwangués and 200 fish daily, and each woman having to deposit five chikwangués, weighing about half a kilogramme each, every morning on the beach, and this amount has to be taken across the lake to Inongo every day. Here, again, Mr. Armstrong notes that they complained "only of the remuneration and not of the endless work imposed upon them."

These cases bear out what I have said in the introduction to this Memorandum as to the tax being limited only by the needs of the State on the working capacity of the native, as round Leopoldville, where the soil is poor, 400 kilog. a-year is about the limit each woman can produce, while in the more productive forest land the quantity is about doubled and the remuneration decreased, so that the nominal money value of the tax remains unchanged.

Mr. Consul-General Smith's Report bears out these statements, and, talking of the Leopoldville district, he says: "In my visits to the surrounding villages I did not see a woman who was not busily engaged in making chikwangué for the State, from which they receive but a trifle more than half its market value at Leopoldville." In the same Report he mentions that "at Bolenge the tax in dried fish is four bunches per week per man, weighing about 1 lb. to the bunch. The price paid is 1 mitako (small brass rods) per bunch, while the current value is ten to fifteen times this amount. The native fishermen complain of the difficulties of supplying the amount demanded and the inadequacy of the remuneration. In high-water, when fish are scarce, they are obliged to go a distance of 80 miles to the Ubanghi River to secure them;" and, again, "at Lulanga similar conditions prevail, the remuneration for the kwanga ("chikwangué") and fish is only one-tenth of its current value, and I learned on the best authority that the soldiers sold their rations exacted by the State as a tax at a price ten times in excess of the remuneration allowed the native."

These instances of the State's dealing with the native, which are examples of and not exceptions to the general rule, could be increased indefinitely, but are, I think, sufficient to prove that the administration under the present system of taxation treat the actual produce and property of the native as their own, inexorably exacting what they need, and paying for it what they choose.

Under these circumstances, the depopulation of these districts, to which Mr. Armstrong and Mr. Smith both bear witness, is scarcely surprising, and it is certain large numbers of the natives fly to the French side to escape the burdens put upon them by the State, while the incessant work and exposure, especially in the rubber-collecting districts, must encourage the ravages of small-pox and sleeping sickness among an underfed and overworked population.

With regard to the collection of rubber, in which only the work of collecting is reckoned, the rubber itself being counted as the property of the State, the tax is based on the law of forty hours' labour per month, but all the evidence goes to show that the actual time employed works out at an average of twenty to twenty-five days per month, the remuneration being as inadequate as in the food tax, while the systematic underweighing of the rubber produced is, at one post at all events, definitely proved.

Mr. Smith's Report deals with the district formerly held as a Concession by the "Société Anversoise" north of Upoto. Briefly stated, this Report shows that at N'gali, the centre of the rubber producing district—one of the richest in the country, the tax is fixed at 3 kilog. monthly, the remuneration at 43 centimes a kilogramme paid as usual in trade goods, the time occupied in collecting the quota of rubber being on the average twenty to twenty-five days, as the natives have to travel four or five days to the place where the vines are found and take from ten to fifteen days in collecting the amount required. At N'gali the American Consul-General was present at the delivery of the rubber, and noticed that the amounts as called out and noted in the books were not correct, and, on drawing attention to this fact, was informed the scales were not correct, and actually weighed $1\frac{1}{2}$ kilog. more than the correct weight. With reference to this he remarks: "Even admitting that he told the truth, the natives were being unmercifully cheated, as I distinctly saw baskets weighing $6\frac{1}{2}$ to 7 kilog. called out at 4 or 5 kilog. Many times baskets over 5 were called as 3 kilog. I remained a couple of hours watching this illuminating spectacle, during which time twenty or twenty-five men had already been marched away to prison for being short."

Further comment is unnecessary.

At Mopolanga and the surrounding villages similar complaints were made by the natives as at N'gali.

At Bavenge there are about 700 men on the rolls, and the Agent reported that it

was rarely they did not bring in their full quota. The tax here is also 3 kilog. a-month, and is remunerated in brass rods.

At Yambata the tax-rolls showed 1,500 men subject to the rubber tax, which there, as at the other places, was 3 kilog. per month per man, and is paid in machets. Mr. Smith was enabled here to make an interesting experiment, carried out with the help of the State Agent, as to the possibility of collecting the required amount of rubber in forty hours. The result showed that under the most favourable conditions it would take eighteen days a-month, or 215 days a-year, to collect the amount imposed as a tax equivalent to forty hours' work a-month, and this without any allowance made for the time occupied in going to and returning from the vine-growing localities. Mr. Smith's experiment being of such a novel and interesting nature, I transmit a copy of his own account of it herewith as a separate inclosure.

Mr. Smith notes that, on visiting an outlying village near Yambata in company with the "Chef de Secteur," it was found that the inhabitants (men, women, and children) had all taken to the bush on their approach, and could only be induced to return when the State official had sent out a man to tell them they had only come to "see."

This example, which is not a solitary one, of the effect of the humanitarian and civilizing efforts of the administration is heightened by the Consul-General's description of the village itself: "Here, as in all the villages I had visited since leaving Upoto, there is no visible sign that the people possess anything at all beyond their squalid and filthy hovels and a small patch of ground near by planted with manioc for the common use and to furnish kwanga for the post, occasionally a few fowls or goats. The women are entirely naked, and the men wore simply a loin cloth, made usually of the thin bark of some tree rendered pliable by pounding."

This is the condition of affairs in what is considered one of the richest rubber producing sections of the State.

In the Lake Leopold II district, visited by Mr. Armstrong, the time occupied in collecting the rubber appears to be also twenty to twenty-five days. The rubber in the district west of the lake is practically worked out, which accounts for the average tax levied per man being only 1 kilog. per month. The State officials in this district evidently make some capital out of the reduction of the amount of the rubber collected at present as compared with what was formerly brought in, and talk of the strict observance of the law of forty hours' labour. Mr. Armstrong's Report shows how utterly fallacious this argument is. At Nioki it was claimed that the natives formerly made four tons per month, but that this had now been reduced to 1 ton 200 kilog. per month, while at M'bali, where the tax is 60 kilog. per month, the average amount accepted was 25 kilog. Mr. Armstrong visited the latter place, and reports that the natives, owing to the exhaustion of the rubber, have to walk seven days to get to the vine-bearing forest, where they take six days to gather the required amount.

Thus explained, the reduction amounts to nothing more than that, owing to the rubber vines being worked out in certain districts, a smaller quantity must necessarily be accepted, but to gather it the native must work for the same or a longer period than before when the vines were near at hand and plentiful, receiving for the same number of days a lesser remuneration.

As I have already said, the regulation of this tax on a monetary or time basis is a mere farce, the only limits being fixed by the fertility of any given area and the collecting capacity of the native. In the rich Bangala district, visited by Mr. Smith, where rubber is plentiful, the tax is 3 kilog. per month; in the worked-out region near Lake Leopold II, where rubber is scarce, it is 1 kilog. In both instances the tax is assessed at forty hours' labour per month, and the natives work twenty to twenty-five days out of every thirty.

A few examples of this may be quoted from Mr. Armstrong's Report:—

At M'pili, numbering ten adults, the tax is 1 kilog. per man monthly. Time spent in the forest, twenty days. At N'gongo, 120 adult men, tax 1 kilog. per month; here they have to go eight days' journey to the forest, and it takes them in all twenty to twenty-five days to collect the rubber. At Lukanga and surrounding villages there are ninety-nine men; tax, 1 kilog. per month.

Here the rubber is collected twice monthly, and the people are out for two periods of from ten to twelve days each month.

Other instances might be given, but I think these are sufficient to show that a reduction of the amount of rubber to be handed in every month does not mean any diminution of the tax, but can usually be attributed to the growing scarcity of the

rubber itself, and that the nominal forty hours' labour means incessant work and privation for twenty to twenty-five days each month.

The only improvements to be noted in the state of these two districts are a cessation of the worst form of atrocities which were so common before the visit of the Reform Commission, and an evident tendency to an increased leniency in the Lake Leopold district as regards the shortages of rubber brought in, the State officials in certain posts evidently recognizing the impossibility of the task imposed upon the native.

It must, however, be remarked that the most frequent examples of this leniency occur in those regions where the rubber is being fast worked out; in the richer districts the punishment for shortage seems still generally to be exacted.

The system which gave rise to these abuses still continues unchanged, and so long as it is unaltered the condition of the natives must remain one of veiled slavery. Their own feeling at present seems to be one of relief that the former acts of violence and cruelty have so largely diminished and that the sentry system has been altered, but it is very largely the fear of a return to the former state of things that makes them endure the incessant work and hardship entailed on them by the labour tax with so little complaint except as regards the paucity of their remuneration.

In regard to this point, I must mention that I have heard through the Director of Justice that a proposal is now being considered to increase the remuneration. This information which he gives with all reserve would, if true, mean something, but the change would, in reality, be altogether insufficient, as it would not imply any change in the system, and would leave the hours and amount of labour unchanged.

Inclosure 2 in No. 10.

Experiment made by American Consul-General.

AT Yambata the opportunity for which I had been seeking, namely, to prove by a practical test the assertions of the natives as to the time necessary to gather 3 kilog. of rubber, presented itself. It was claimed by all the State Agents whom I had questioned upon the subject that the tax was not excessive, it being easily possible to gather the amount of the impost within the forty hours monthly prescribed by the law as the maximum of time the native must labour to fulfil his obligations to the State. It was contended that the native idled his time away in the forest in search of game; that, in substance, he did not apply himself to his task. The "Chef de Secteur" at Yambata was apparently so certain of this that I requested permission to take a number of natives into the forest, set them at work gathering rubber for a given time, and thus prove to my own satisfaction whether their complaints were or were not reasonable and just. The "Chef de Secteur" willingly consented, apparently confident, from the State's standpoint, of the successful result. Accordingly five natives were chosen from one of the villages and placed in charge of one of the State capitas. It was arranged that these five men should work for four hours each, or a total of twenty hours' work, in which time to correspond to the tax imposed, and the maximum of forty hours they were supposed to produce $1\frac{1}{2}$ kilog. (1,500 grammes) of rubber. The place selected for carrying out this experiment was at one hour's march through the forest from the post, and was chosen by the "Chef de Secteur" as being especially rich in rubber vines, The men also were of his own choosing. I had nothing to do with this part of it. Arriving on the spot two of the men were put at work under the surveillance of Mr. Memminger and Mr. Dodds, the other three under the "Chef de Secteur" and myself. All the men had been promised an adequate remuneration and exemption from their taxes for the following month by the "Chef de Secteur" as an incentive, and certainly not a slight one, to do their best. I can testify to the fact that these men did not lose a minute from the time we commenced work until the expiration of the four hours. The vines were numerous, and but little time was taken up in the search for another when one had been exhausted. The rubber was delivered to me and carefully weighed upon my return to the post, with the following result:—

	Grammes.
Total weight.. .. .	650
Two men gathered each 200 grammes	400
The other three	250

An analysis of the result works out as follows:—

Collectively: Twenty hours' labour should have produced 1,500 grammes. Twenty hours' labour actually produced 650 grammes, or 43 per cent. of tax imposed. To

gather the quantity required these men would have been obliged to work an average of ninety-three hours each per month, or eleven days five hours at eight hours per day, 140 days each year.

Individually : Four hours' labour should have produced 300 grammes. Two men actually produced in this time each 200 grammes, or $66\frac{2}{3}$ per cent. of tax imposed. To gather the quantity required these men would be obliged to work an average of sixty hours each per month, or seven and a-half days, ninety days each year.

And again : Four hours' labour should have produced 300 grammes. Three men actually produced in this time an average of only $83\frac{1}{3}$ grammes, or about 28 per cent. of tax. To gather the quantity these men would be obliged to work an average of 144 hours each month, or eighteen days, 216 days each year.

In considering the above, it must further be borne in mind that the time necessarily occupied in reaching the locality and returning is not calculated. This would, of course, relatively reduce the amount gathered within the given time and increase the average time necessary to produce the quota demanded by the State. It must also be remembered that the element of chance enters largely into the question ; the two men who secured 200 grammes each were fortunate in finding large vines immediately after entering the forest ; the other three were not, and, although they worked fully as hard, only succeeded in securing $83\frac{1}{3}$ grammes each. If, to be perfectly fair, we accept the average time employed by the five men as a basis, and add thereto eight days each month for the time necessary to reach the place and return (eight days is not excessive as an average of the time thus employed), we find that these men must labour nineteen days and five hours each month, or practically 236 days each year. During the month, if they produce 3 kilog. of rubber, it is worth, according to the latest market value at Antwerp, 12 fr. 50 c. per kilogramme, or 37 fr. 50 c. They receive for this a machete upon which the State places a valuation of 1 fr. 10 c. and a small handful of salt. I purchased at Leopoldville from an English trader two of the same machetes for 50 centimes each.

Further Correspondence respecting the
Independent State of the Congo.

[In continuation of "Africa No. 1 (1907)"]

*Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Com-
mand of His Majesty, February 1908.*

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FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING THE

INDEPENDENT STATE OF
THE CONGO.

[In continuation of "Africa No. 1 (1908)."]

*Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty.
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Further Correspondence respecting the Independent State of the Congo.

[In continuation of "Africa No. 1 (1908)."]

No. 1.

Sir A. Hardinge to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received June 25.)

(Extract.)

Brussels, June 24, 1907.

I TO-DAY addressed to M. de Cuvelier a note, of which I have the honour to inclose copy herewith, respecting the acquisition of new sites by the British Protestant Missionary Societies in the Independent Congo State.

Inclosure in No. 1.

Sir A. Hardinge to M. de Cuvelier.

M. le Chevalier,

Brussels, June 24, 1907.

I AM directed by His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to approach the Government of the Congo Independent State on the subject of the desire of certain British Protestant Missionary Societies, engaged in evangelistic work in its territories, to acquire several new sites for Mission stations.

Two of these Societies, the Congo Balolo Mission and the Baptist Missionary Society, have applied to the Local Administration with a view to the acquisition of such sites, but have, so far, been unable to obtain from the latter any definite replies.

As it appeared possible that the local authorities might have felt a certain reluctance to move in the matter without previous authorization by the Central Government, the Societies concerned have thought that the speediest way of obtaining a favourable decision on behalf of their respective Missions in the Congo would be to ask His Majesty's Government to assist them by the exercise of its good offices at Brussels, and Sir Edward Grey has accordingly instructed me to recommend and support their applications.

The Congo Balolo Mission desire to obtain a site at Monpona, in the A.B.L.R. Concession, occupying a fairly elevated position, and about 10 acres of ground, with sufficient river frontage.

The Baptist Missionary Society are anxious to secure two new Mission sites, beyond Stanley Falls, on the Lualaba River:—

1. In the neighbourhood of the town of Mbondo, on the east bank of the river, and about 5 miles south of Kilundu, 36 miles up stream from Ponthierville.

2. In the neighbourhood of the town of Waika, on the west bank of the river, 35 miles north of the northern terminus of the Kindu-Katanga Railway.

Both Societies are prepared to pay a reasonable price for the purchase of sites in these districts, and I have the honour to request you, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, to be good enough to indicate any plots in the neighbourhood of the above-mentioned localities which may be available, due regard being had both to their suitability for such stations and to their fitness for human habitation.

Convinced that the Congo Government, which, even if the provisions of Articles V and VI of the Berlin Act had not recommended Christian Missions of all denominations to its special and impartial protection, has spontaneously expressed in your own

recently published Report to the King-Sovereign its warm appreciation of their value as agencies in the work of civilization, alike moral and material, and its desire to co-operate with them, will gladly take this new opportunity of assisting and forwarding their efforts, I transmit these applications to you, M. le Chevalier, with the certainty of an early and favourable reply, and I beg you to accept on this occasion, with my anticipated thanks, the assurance of my high consideration.

(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

P.S.—I should not omit in this connection to remind you that a site formerly granted to the Baptist Missionary Society, one of the two Societies on whose behalf I am making this request, and for which it still holds the title-deeds, at Mundungu, on the Himbiri River, was occupied by the Congo State, and that, notwithstanding promises of compensation or the granting of another site in exchange, they have secured no redress.

A. H. H.

No. 2.

Sir A. Hardinge to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 19.)

(Extract.)

Cog-sur-Mer, August 14, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, with reference to my despatch of the 24th June, a copy of a note which I have just received from the Congo Government on the subject of new sites for British missions in its territory.

Inclosure in No. 2.

M. de Cuvelier to Sir A. Hardinge.

*Département des Affaires Étrangères, Bruxelles,
le 13 Août, 1907.*

M. le Ministre.

LE Gouvernement de l'État du Congo a examiné avec attention la lettre que votre Excellence m'a adressée le 24 Juin dernier, en vue d'appuyer les demandes que forment la Congo Balolo Mission et la Baptist Missionary Society d'acheter des terrains, la première à Mompono, la seconde à Ubondo et à Waika.

La demande de ces missions ne spécifie pas si les terres dont il s'agit sont des propriétés privées de particuliers; dans l'affirmative il leur appartient de se mettre en rapport avec les propriétaires, en vue d'obtenir la cession des terrains; à cet égard, le droit des missions d'acquiescer des propriétés immobilières leur est garanti par les Traités, et le Gouvernement n'a pas à intervenir dans l'exercice légal que feraient les missions de ce droit.

S'il s'agit de terres appartenant à l'État, ce n'est qu'après avoir pris auprès de l'Administration locale les renseignements nécessaires que le Gouvernement sera en mesure de décider si, en fait, il y a lieu pour lui de consentir à la vente de ces terres.

Abstraction faite de cette question, le rappel que fait votre Excellence des dispositions des Articles V et VI de l'Acte de Berlin laisserait supposer que ces dispositions sont interprétées par les missions comme leur donnant un droit à l'obtention des terrains qu'elles jugent leur convenir.

Le Gouvernement de l'État ne pourrait partager cette manière de voir. L'Article V stipule que les étrangers jouiront indistinctement, pour l'acquisition de leurs propriétés mobilières et immobilières, du même traitement et des mêmes droits que les nationaux. L'Article VI dit que les Puissances protégeront, favoriseront, sous distinction de nationalités ni de cultes, toutes les institutions et entreprises religieuses; que les missionnaires Chrétiens et leurs escortes seront également l'objet d'une protection spéciale; enfin, que le libre et public exercice de tous les cultes, le droit d'ériger des édifices religieux et d'organiser des missions appartenant à tous les cultes ne seront soumis à aucune restriction ni entrave.

C'est en vain qu'on chercherait dans ces Articles, comme dans le texte entier de l'Acte de Berlin, la base d'un droit, pour les missions de toutes confessions à occuper, posséder ou acquérir des terres en dehors des modes légaux d'acquisition. L'Acte de Berlin n'a créé, sous ce rapport, aucune situation privilégiée pour les missions, et les termes "favoriseront ou protégeront les missions" de l'Article VI ne peuvent être compris en ce sens qu'il leur appartiendrait d'obliger les propriétaires à leur céder ou vendre leurs propriétés. Comme tout particulier, national ou étranger, elles peuvent exercer librement leur droit d'acheter, sous réserve de l'assentiment du vendeur.

Ces points sont mis plus encore en évidence par les Protocoles eux-mêmes de la Conférence de Berlin. Non seulement ces Actes n'imposent aux Puissances possédonnées dans le Bassin du Congo aucune obligation de ce genre, mais ils montrent même qu'en employant les termes "favoriser" ou "protéger" au lieu de celui d'"aider," qui avait été proposé primitivement, les Puissances ont entendu restreindre à son sens naturel le devoir qu'elles assumaient vis-à-vis des missions. La protection due aux missions, devoir dont l'accomplissement relève de chacune des Puissances sur son territoire, se conçoit comme comportant les mesures nécessaires pour garantir les personnes et les propriétés des missionnaires, assurer le libre exercice des cultes, donner même aux établissements de mission un traitement de faveur en ce qui concerne, par exemple, les charges fiscales, mais ces mesures sont du domaine des décisions de chaque Puissance intéressée.

Des juristes Belges et étrangers, dont l'avis a été demandé sur la portée de l'Acte de Berlin à cet égard, aboutissent aux mêmes conclusions dans les consultations qu'ils ont délibérées.

Si le Gouvernement a cru nécessaire de marquer, M. le Ministre, le caractère de pure bienveillance dont s'inspire sa politique à l'égard des missions, en ce qui concerne notamment l'attribution de terres aux missionnaires, il constate aussi que ces sentiments ont eu l'occasion de s'affirmer à l'égard des deux sociétés de missionnaires dont m'entretient votre Excellence. Ces missions, en effet, possèdent dans l'État de multiples établissements; ceux de la Congo Balolo Mission sont installés à Banza-Loanga, Lulanga, Bongandanga, Bonginda, Ikau, et Léopoldville; ceux de la Baptist Missionary Society à Gombe Lutete, Kinshasa, Lukolola, Bolobo, Monsembi, Bopoto, Mondungu, Yakusu, Natadi, Tumba, et Yalamba.

Il me sera permis de dire que la sympathie du Gouvernement du Congo ne peut au même degré être acquise à toutes les missions Protestantes, les agents de certaines d'entre elles ayant pris à l'égard du Chef de l'État une attitude d'opposition en des formes et des termes hautement critiquables; il est des membres des deux missions dont s'occupe précisément la lettre de votre Excellence qui ont qualifié publiquement le Roi-Souverain de "inhuman monster," "devil incarnate," et l'ont accusé des crimes des plus odieux. Le Gouvernement est nécessairement amené à se demander si ceux qui s'animent de tels sentiments sont bien indiqués pour enseigner aux indigènes, en même temps que les préceptes de la charité Chrétienne, le respect dû aux institutions établies.

Je demande aux autorités locales leurs avis et considérations sur les demandes de terres que votre Excellence a formulées au nom des deux missions dont il s'agit. Il paraîtrait d'ailleurs plus simple, si les missionnaires désirent obtenir de nouveaux emplacements, qu'ils se portent acquéreurs de telles des terres que, aux termes du Décret du 3 Juin, 1906, le Gouvernement est appelé à mettre annuellement en vente ou en location.

Quant aux terrains de Mandungu (Itimbiri), dont il est fait mention dans le post-scriptum de la lettre de votre Excellence, le Département des Finances m'a fait savoir que ce terrain est toujours la propriété de la Baptist Missionary Society, et qu'il n'est pas à sa connaissance que l'État ait fait à cette Association les promesses de compensation ou de cession d'un autre terrain en échange.

Je saisis, &c.
(Signé) Ch. DE CUVELIER.

(Translation.)

M. le Ministre,

Brussels, August 13, 1907.

THE Government of the Congo State has carefully considered the note which your Excellency addressed to me on the 21th June last in support of the application of the Congo Balolo Mission and the Baptist Missionary Society, with a view to the purchase of sites, by the former at Mompono, and by the latter at Ubondo and Waika.

The application of the missions does not state whether the land in question is private

property; if it is, the missions can communicate with the owners with a view to the acquisition of the sites; in this respect, the right of the missions to acquire landed property is guaranteed them by Treaty, and the Government is not concerned with the lawful exercise of this right by the missions.

If the land belongs to the State, the Government is not in a position to decide whether it should, in fact, assent to the sale of the said land until it has obtained the necessary information on the subject from the local Administration.

Apart from this question, the reference which your Excellency makes to the provisions of Articles V and VI of the Berlin Act would lead one to suppose that the said provisions are interpreted by the missions as giving them a right to acquire any sites they may consider desirable.

The Government of the State is unable to take this view. Article V provides that foreigners shall enjoy, without distinction, in acquiring personal or real property, the same treatment and the same privileges as the subjects of the Congo State. Article VI lays down that the Powers shall protect, and shall assist without distinction of nationality or creed, all religious institutions and undertakings; that Christian missionaries and their escort shall also be entitled to special protection; lastly, that the free and public exercise of every religion, the right to erect religious buildings, and to organize missions belonging to any religion whatever shall be unrestricted and untrammelled.

We should look in vain in these Articles, or, indeed, in the whole Berlin Act, for any trace of a right accorded to missions of any sect to occupy, possess, or acquire land in any but the legal manner of so doing. The Berlin Act did not create in this respect any privileged position for the missions, and the terms "favoriseront ou protégeront les missions" in Article VI cannot be interpreted in the sense of giving them the right to compel the owners to cede or sell to them their property. They may freely exercise their right to purchase, subject to the assent of the seller, like any other individual, whether a subject of the Free State or a foreigner.

These points are still further brought out in the Protocols themselves of the Berlin Conference. Not only do these Acts not impose upon the Powers with possessions in the Congo Basin any obligation of the kind, but actually show that by employing the terms "favoriser" or "protéger," instead of the word "aider," which was originally proposed, the Powers intended to limit to its natural meaning the duty which they assumed in regard to missions. The protection due to missions, a duty the fulfilment of which rests with each Power in its own territory, is understood to entail the measures necessary for guaranteeing the person and property of missionaries, for insuring the free exercise of religion, even for according missionary establishments favourable treatment in regard, for instance, to fiscal charges, but such measures are for each Power interested to decide for itself.

Belgian and foreign juriconsults whose opinion has been asked as to the bearing of the Berlin Act on this point have come to the same conclusions in the consultations which they have held.

If, M. le Ministre, the Government has thought it necessary to emphasize the disinterested and benevolent character of its policy towards the missions, more particularly in regard to the adjudication of land to the missionaries, it also has to observe that it has given proof of these sentiments in regard to the two missionary societies of which your Excellency spoke to me. These missions do, in fact, possess numerous establishments in the State. Those of the Congo Balolo Mission are situated at Banza-Loanga, Lulanga, Bongandanga, Bonginda, Ikan, and Leopoldville; those of the Baptist Missionary Society at Gombe Lutete, Kinshasa, Lukolela, Bolobo, Monsembi, Bopoto, Mondungu, Yakusu, Natadi, Tumba, and Yalamba.

I may add that the sympathy of the Congo Government cannot be extended to all the Protestant missions equally, as the agents of some of them have adopted in regard to the Chief of the State an attitude of opposition, which has assumed a most reprehensible form and method of expression; members of the two missions which are the subject of your Excellency's note have publicly alluded to the King-Sovereign as an "inhuman monster," a "devil incarnate," and have accused him of the most odious crimes. The Government cannot but ask itself whether persons animated by such sentiments are precisely those best qualified to inculcate in the natives the respect they owe to established institutions while teaching them the precepts of Christian charity.

I shall ask the local authorities to furnish their opinion and views as to the application for land which your Excellency has made on behalf of the two missions in question. It would seem simpler, however, if the missionaries desire to

obtain fresh sites, that they should acquire such sites in those lands which by the terms of the Decree of the 3rd June, 1906, the Government is bound annually to sell or let.

With regard to the sites at Mandungu (Itimbiri), of which mention is made in the postscript of your Excellency's note, the Financial Department has informed me that the said site is still the property of the Baptist Missionary Society, and that it is unaware that the State has promised to compensate the said Association or to cede to it any other site in exchange.

I have, &c.
(Signed) Ch. DE CUVELIER.

No. 3.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Hardinge.

Sir, *Foreign Office, February 1, 1908.*
I SHALL be glad if you will ascertain from M. de Cuvelier if he has received a reply from M. Droogmans on the subject of the sites available in the Congo Free State for mission stations.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. GREY.

No. 4.

Consul Thesiger to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received February 17.)

Sir, *Boma, January 17, 1908.*
IN the "Mouvement Géographique" of the 22nd ultimo I noticed an unsigned letter bearing on the question of the introduction of money and the general payment of the natives in coin, in which the writer expresses surprise that the Missions, who are the most earnest advocates for the introduction of this system as a step towards reform, have not adopted it in all stations where they are in contact with the natives

As a good deal of stress appears to be laid on this point both here and in Belgium, I have the honour to point out various reasons why this course is impossible for the Missions before further action is taken by the State in the same direction.

In the first place the Administration, which refuses to accept any coinage but that of the State, has hitherto neglected to furnish an adequate supply of this coinage. So much so is this the case that even in the towns of the Lower Congo business houses have great difficulty in always obtaining sufficient specie for their needs, and in Matadi at this moment there is a serious money crisis arising out of this shortage, and the State has been obliged to authorize their officials and the Railway Company to accept 50 per cent. of all payments in French coinage, of which there is a plentiful supply in the neighbourhood of the Pool; but even so, traders and others find a difficulty in obtaining the remaining portion in the Congo currency. Under these conditions it is obviously impossible for the Missions to introduce the payment of the natives in coin into the districts of the Upper Congo.

On Stanley Pool the Missions have for years paid their workpeople and paid for produce in cash, whereas the State, which has so often expressed its anxiety to see the natives educated up to the point of understanding the use of money, and has for years asked the Missions to do all they could to introduce it into the country, has only lately followed suit, and now pays some of its workmen half in cash and half in cloth, but still refrains from paying for produce in money.

Furthermore, in most of the upper districts money under the present régime is useless to the native. Although the State is anxious to obtain the personal tax in money from such natives as are employed by the Missions, and so cannot supply a tax in labour or in kind, it is in no way desirous of introducing the payment of this tax in coin as a general rule. The present system is too profitable from the labour point of view, and too economical when the tax is paid in food-stuffs at a fraction of their real value. I know on good authority of two cases where the native actually

brought the money and offered it as payment of his tax and it was refused by the State, who insisted on his supplying the so-called equivalent in produce. Thus, as regards his indebtedness to the State, money to any but the Mission-employed native is useless. From the personal point of view, it would in too many cases be likewise worthless, as there are no magazines or stores where he could purchase cloth or goods.

The power to introduce money and cash payments into the Upper Congo lies in the hands of the State alone, and it is only when they have done their share of the work that the Missions can carry it on.

Before any improvement can be effected the State must issue at least twice or three times the amount of the currency at present in circulation, and give the native the possibility of purchasing what and where he will. As matters now stand, even at Leopoldville the small trader cannot compete with the State, owing to the heavy freights and the excessive taxation to which he is exposed, and further up country it would be absurd even to think of opening a store in districts where the native cannot pay in money and may not pay in produce, since the only articles which could profitably be accepted by a trader in exchange for goods of any kind are the private property of the State or of a concessionary Company.

The money question has a very important bearing on the condition of the native population and their relation to the Administration, and the State, while outwardly professing their anxiety to spread the use of coined money over the whole Congo, have neglected all steps which would render such a thing possible.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WILFRED G. THESIGER.

No. 5.

Vice-Consul Micheli to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received February 17.)

(Extract.)

4, Lansdown Place East, Bath, February 10, 1908.

WITH reference to my despatch addressed to the late Consul-General Cromie,* commenced at Stanleyville on the 15th August, 1907, and continued at Ibembo on the 23rd September, 1907, and which I had the honour to transmit to you on the 23rd ultimo, I have the honour to inform you that I have been prevented by ill-health from concluding the same heretofore.

I have, however, been able to make notes from time to time on the statements of the "Bulletin Officiel" on which I commented in that despatch, and I now beg to express to yourself my opinions on certain further points touched on by the Secrétaires-Généraux of the Sovereign of the Congo State.

The practical abandonment of the whole of the Kwango province is merely referred to on page 146 as "the suppression with a view to economy of a certain number of posts."

The State appears to consider that the increase of importations to be expected from "the new organizations created in 1906 by the State, both for the prospecting and working of mines and for the construction of railways," is sufficient compensation for the loss of revenue from these abandoned posts. Here again it is evident that the chief solicitude of the Government is for profit, and not just administration.

Roads and Railways.—The "Bulletin" takes very lightly my account of the state of the roads in the Province Oriental (page 247): "It is true that the state of the roads and bridges leaves something to be desired, but it seems as unjust to find fault with the State for that as it would be unreasonable to hold the British Government responsible, for example, for the state of the roads in the Soudan." The difference is that the natives who live on the roads in the Soudan are not nearly crushed to death with the upkeep of their roads, portorage, and entertainment of travellers, as they are in the Congo.

On page 156 is an absolutely incorrect statement: "At present there are no more than three great portorage routes—from Kasongo to Tanganika, from Buda to the Nile, from Pania, on the Kasai, to the Luakaba." No mention is made of the roads from Stanleyville to the Nile, via Avakubi; from Ponthierville to Avakubi, via Makalla, from Avakubi to Beni; and the enormous traffic by canoe on the Aruwimi. Much

* See "Africa No. 1 (1908), No. 7."

is made of the railways, the motor-car road from Buta to Bambili, and the steamers on the Rivers Congo (Lualaba), Aruwimi, Itimbiri, Kasai, &c. It cannot be too much emphasized that these means of transport are not intended to ease the burden of portage on the natives, but to provide a cheap and paying means of getting at and carrying the chief riches of the country. It cannot be said that "they have in any way lightened the burdens of the people." The "Great Lakes Railway" to the south can have no more effect on the above-mentioned roads than the Brighton road has to do with Ireland. The steamers on the Upper Lualaba belong to the Railway Company; were imported, built, and managed by them; they carry the Railway Company's goods and the goods of the State by an arrangement, but they are in no way open to the public.

The only steamers on the Aruwimi are, (1) a little old boat which runs occasionally from Basoko to Yambuya, two days distant, and (2) a tiny steamer belonging to the Railway Company, which is sent from time to time from Stanleyville to Yambuya, via Basoko, to fetch lime for the use of the railway. The rest of the whole length of the Aruwimi and Ituri and their confluents, the Lulu and the Nepoko, is worked by the natives and their canoes. These rivers are full of rapids and cataracts, and are extremely dangerous, and lives and cargo are constantly lost. No attempt has been made by the State to improve this state of affairs.

A pilot, a young Swede, superintends the navigation of the Congo between Bertha Island near Roméc, and Stanleyville, and has laid down buoys and charted that part of the stream.

Captain Holmquist was employed for some months blowing up the rocks which obstructed the navigation of the Upper Lualaba near the Lowa. With these two exceptions, nothing whatever has been done, nor a penny spent by the State, on removing the dangers and difficulties of the Chopo, the Lindi, the Aruwimi, the Louami, the Lulu, the Itimbiri, the Likati, the Ubangi, the Bonakandi, the Welle, the Rubi, or any other river in the State. On page 167 it is stated, "navigation charts have been prepared indicating the routes, sand-banks, rocks, and snags." Such charts as exist are in no way due to the State; they have been made by chance travellers and by captains of steamers on their own initiative. Not a single navigating officer has received a copy of any properly-made chart; they have to make their own tracings from any paper they can borrow from a friend. It will scarcely be believed that the only chart possessed by the captain of the steamer navigating the Itimbiri is a tracing of an old and incorrect map made by a trader, of which one whole section is missing. This I know to be the case by personal experience.

Postal and Telegraphic Service.—It would be supposed that the adherence of the Congo to the Universal Postal Convention would imply that the rates of postage would be equal in both directions, but this is not the case. Postage to the Congo is 25 c. per half-ounce; postage from the Congo to Europe is 50 c. per half-ounce. As for the parcel post, the cost is divided up in a strange manner. The postage is ostensibly 2 fr. 50 c. for 5 kilos. But a person sending a parcel from Europe to a friend on the Congo, and imagining that, having prepaid this postage, his correspondent will receive the parcel in due course, would be much mistaken. The addressee is notified that he will receive his parcel on payment of (1) 1 fr. for territorial tax; (2) 10 fr. more for supplementary tax for the interior; and (3) the duty chargeable on the contents.

As for the telegraph, no reference is made to the fact that the lines extend no further than Coquilbatville, twelve days' distance from Stanley Falls.

Taxation.—On this subject, on which I have already reported more than once, I will only say here: (1) The native is far from idle; as a rule he is physically unable, and the climate and conditions of his existence unfit him, for sustained hard labour; and (2) there is nothing ennobling in mere forced labour without profit or progress or prospect of advancement. It is stated on p. 196: "It is work which has prevented the natives from falling again into the violences of barbarism, the remembrance, and perhaps the regret, for which he has preserved. Idleness infallibly leads him back to it." And "To inculcate in the native the taste for work, a remuneration is granted to him in exchange for his contribution in produce or in labour" (p. 197).

It is difficult for those who have not seen it to realize the sordid poverty, the hard life, and the constant dangers, the severity of the climatic conditions, in which the native lives. He owns no more than do the beasts of the forest. Hunting, fishing, and planting are dangerous and toilsome. Those who imagine that the Congolese has only to lie on his back and let the fruits drop into his mouth are strangely mistaken. Considering all things, the native blacksmiths, basket-makers, weavers, wood-men,

canoe-makers, net-makers, fishermen, hunters, &c., perform an astonishing amount of work in the most intelligent and skillful manner. The women, too, are constantly employed in tilling the ground (which the men clear of the bush), making pottery, preparing food, &c. The native feels the climate as much as the white man, and is less able to resist the sun, the damp, the poisons and the fevers and other diseases in his naked, ill-fed, ill-protected and ignorant condition. These kill off 50 per cent. of the children, and another 25 per cent. before they reach manhood. In fact, none survive but the very pick of the people, and the bodies of these bear the marks of the severe trials through which they have passed.

Medicine and Hygiene—The Administration has, it is true, made some attempt at a medical service, but the high-flown account in Chapter V is certainly misleading. To dignify by the name of hospitals the wretched booths in which the sick natives are huddled is on a par with the general tone of this Report. A brick building, without windows or doors, and large enough to accommodate about fifty patients, was nearly finished at Stanleyville when I left in September, 1907, but, of course, not yet habitable. The Office Vaccinogène at Stanleyville is a small house occasionally occupied by passing travellers, but at other times closed, ever since I arrived at Stanleyville. I believe there is also a cow somewhere in the station. The Vaccination Officer is a respectable young man employed as a clerk in the Stanleyville railway station; who was formerly a medical student, but did not complete his course. I do not know what vaccinations he may have performed on the left bank of the Congo, but I am not aware of any cases on the Stanleyville side. In any case, the name is all that exists of a vaccination centre.

No. 6.

Sir A. Hardinge to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received February 17.)

(Extract.)

Brussels, February 13, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to report that I have had two interviews with M. de Cuvelier since the receipt of your despatch of the 4th instant on the subject of sites for Missions in the Congo State.

He has informed me that, in view of the impending annexation of the Congo State to Belgium, the Congo Government does not now intend to offer for sale any lands under the Decree of the 3rd June, 1906, its reasons being that it deems it inexpedient to modify during the discussion of the annexation question the statement of its assets and liabilities annexed to the Treaty of the 28th November.

I told M. de Cuvelier very plainly that you would not, in my belief, be satisfied with this answer; that it was absurd to contend that the sale of a few acres in the Province Orientale to British Missionary Societies, which had been pressing for them in the face of systematic obstruction for nearly four years, could be deemed a modification of the statement of assets and liabilities, since the Congo Government would have in cash a sum equal to the value of the properties sold, which, moreover, would be turned from waste to occupied and cultivated lands; and that its attitude was equivalent to a confession of unfriendliness to British missionary work.

M. de Cuvelier strongly deprecated any such interpretation, and wished me, in reporting this conversation to you, to say that he entirely repudiated any want of sympathy with our missionaries. I said these were mere phrases which were contradicted by the acts of the Congo Government. I must remind him that nearly two years ago he had received a very courteous letter from the General Secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society, requesting information as to the mode of applying for new sites, to which, notwithstanding repeated reminders, no answer had been sent; and I felt bound to say that the manner in which the Congo Government had dealt, and was dealing, with this whole question constituted, in my opinion, a practical disregard of our Treaty rights.

He said that his jurists had been unanimous in advising him that the Berlin Act did not compel any State in the Conventional Basin to alienate lands to missionaries. I replied that I was not now talking of the Berlin Act, though the latter undoubtedly pledged its Signatories to assist Christian mission work in their African possessions within the Conventional Basin, but of the Anglo-Congolese Treaty of 1884, which secured to all British subjects the right of buying lands in the Congo State. If the Congo Government first declared itself the proprietor of the whole territory, and then refused to sell to an Englishman a single acre of the land thus appropriated, it was

nullifying and therefore violating Article II of our Treaty. M. de Cuvelier, whilst contending that the Treaty secured to British subjects the right of settling and buying property, but without creating any obligation for the State to sell its domain lands, observed that as a matter of fact it was only a question of waiting two or three months, by which time the question of annexation would presumably have been solved, since this delay involved no danger to the Protestant Missions, which, as the Appendices to the Treaty of Transfer showed, had obtained numerous sites for their stations. I said we could none of us say how much longer annexation might be delayed, and he promised, if events were to indicate that it was again to be postponed, that the Congo Government would reconsider their decision not to offer any State lands for sale.

No. 7.

Sir A. Hardinge to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received February 24.)

Sir, *Brussels, February 22, 1908.*
 I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, in continuation of my despatch of the 13th instant, a copy of M. de Cuvelier's written reply, which I have just received, to my latest inquiries respecting sites for British Missions in the "Province Orientale."

I have, &c.
 (Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

Inclosure in No. 7.

M. de Cuvelier to Sir A. Hardinge.

M. le Ministre, *Bruxelles, le 21 Février, 1908.*
 J'AI eu l'honneur de recevoir la lettre que votre Excellence a bien voulu m'adresser, après notre entretien du 11 courant, pour me demander, comme elle l'avait fait déjà en cette entrevue, les intentions du Département des Finances au sujet de la mise en vente ou en location de terres appartenant à l'État.

Je n'ai pas perdu de vue, M. le Ministre, la correspondance que nous avons échangée les 24 Juin et 13 Août, 1907, au sujet des demandes de terres de deux Missions Anglaises, ni notre entretien du 28 Octobre, au cours duquel je vous ai informé que le Département des Finances s'occupait de réunir les informations nécessaires pour la détermination des terres que le Gouvernement comptait mettre en adjudication publique.

Mais ainsi que j'ai eu l'honneur, M. le Ministre, de l'exposer à votre Excellence le 11 dernier, le Gouvernement, en raison de la situation transitoire actuelle créée par le Traité de Reprise du 28 Novembre, ne procède plus momentanément à des ventes de terres. Le Gouvernement, en effet, a précisé, en ce Traité, actuellement déposé au Parlement, les droits de propriété immobiliers concédés à des particuliers, Sociétés, ou Missions, et il considère qu'il ne lui appartient pas de modifier l'état de choses ainsi fixé et acté.

Cette décision, provisoire, est d'ordre général et ne procède que de ces seules considérations. Comme j'ai été amené à le dire à votre Excellence, le Gouvernement de l'État n'est mû, en cette circonstance, pas plus qu'en aucune autre, par nul sentiment défavorable aux missionnaires Protestants, encore qu'il en est parmi eux dont l'attitude à l'égard de l'État du Congo n'est pas exempte de critique.

Je saisis, &c.
 (Signé) DE CUEVELIER.

(Translation.)

M. le Ministre, *Brussels, February 21, 1908.*
 I HAVE had the honour to receive the note which your Excellency was good enough to address to me after our interview on the 11th instant, to ask me, as your Excellency had already done during that interview, what were the intentions of the Financial Department with regard to the sale or leasing of State lands.

I have not forgotten, M. le Ministre, the correspondence which passed between us on the 24th June, and the 13th August, 1907, on the subject of the desire of two British Missions to buy land, nor our interview on the 28th October, at which I

informed you that the Financial Department was engaged in collecting the necessary information for deciding what land the Government intended to put up to public auction.

But as I had the honour, M. le Ministre, to inform your Excellency on the 11th ultimo, the Government, on account of the provisional situation now existing in consequence of the Treaty of Cession of the 28th November, is not for the time being selling land. The Government, in fact, has enumerated in that Treaty, now submitted to Parliament, the concessions in property made to private persons, Companies, or Missions, and is of opinion that it is unable to alter the state of things thus settled and duly recognized.

This decision, which is merely provisional, is of a general kind, and has been taken from these considerations alone. As I have informed your Excellency, the Government of the State is not actuated in this case any more than in other cases by feelings of hostility to Protestant missionaries, although there are among them persons whose attitude towards the Congo State is not above criticism.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DE CUVELIER.

No. 8.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Hardinge.

Sir, *Foreign Office, March 2, 1908.*
I HAVE received your despatch of the 13th ultimo on the subject of sites for Protestant missions in the Congo State.

I approve the language used by you in your conversation with M. de Cuvelier, as reported in that despatch.

You should address a note to his Excellency, requesting the Congo Government to give an assurance in writing that, should annexation not be voted by Parliament before the end of May, they will without further delay sell to British missionaries suitable sites in or near the localities indicated by them.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. GREY.

No. 9.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Hardinge.

Sir, *Foreign Office, March 2, 1908.*
I TRANSMIT to you herewith copy of an order of the House of Lords asking for further correspondence respecting the Independent State of the Congo, and other papers bearing on the grants and title-deeds of Companies in the Free State.

I understand that practically all such documents of this nature as it is possible to publish are to be found in Annexes A, B, and C of the "Traité de Cession de l'État Indépendant du Congo" in "La Belgique,"* of which a copy was sent home by you in your despatch of the 6th December, 1907. The only two Companies of which the original grants do not appear to be comprised in this collection are those of the A.B.I.R. and the Société Anversoise du Commerce au Congo, which have presumably been omitted owing to the handing over to the State of the exploitation of their territories.

I do not see that any of the original grants recently laid before the Belgian Parliament contain any allusion to the power of enforcing labour from the natives, but this is no doubt because such power in those cases where it existed was conferred by direct administrative order under the Decree of the 18th November, 1903.

I should be glad if you would furnish me with any observation you may have to offer on the matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. GREY.

* Copies will be found in the Library of the House of Lords.

Inclosure in No. 9.

Address of the House of Lords, dated February 24, 1908.

ORDERED by the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in Parliament assembled, that an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, praying His Majesty that he will be graciously pleased to order that there be laid before this House "Further correspondence respecting the Independent State of the Congo, and other papers, if any, bearing on the grants and title deeds of Companies in the Free State."

No. 10.

Sir A. Hardinge to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received March 9.)

Sir, *Brussels, March 4, 1908.*

I HAVE the honour to state, in reply to your despatch of the 2nd instant, that the inclosures in my despatch of the 6th December last contain, as you conjecture, all the information available for publication on the subject of the grants and title-deeds of Companies in the Independent Congo State.

The original Concessions of the A.B.I.R. and Anversoise Companies, a summary of which will be found on pp. 62 and 63 of Annex D to the Treaty of Cession* (Report on the situation of the Congo attached to the Annexation Bill of 1895), are anterior to the Decree of the 18th November, 1903, to which your despatch refers, and I think it very unlikely that copies of them, if they were obtainable for publication, would be found to contain any reference to forced labour, or to differ in this or in their other main features from the grants and Concessions published in Annex A. Nor have I any doubt that the explanation of this circumstance suggested in the last paragraph but one of your despatch is the correct one.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

No. 11.

Sir A. Hardinge to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received March 17.)

Sir, *Brussels, March 16, 1908.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, copy of the note which I have addressed to the Congo Government on the subject of mission sites in the Independent State.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

Inclosure No. 11.

Sir A. Hardinge to M. de Cuvelier.

M. le Chevalier, *Brussels, March 16, 1908.*

I DULY transmitted to His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs the note which you did me the honour to address to me on the 21st ultimo respecting sites for British Christian missions in the Independent Congo State, and I reported to him the verbal exchange of views which had taken place between us on this question.

Sir Edward Grey has approved of the stress laid by me on the rights to the acquisition of landed property in the Congo State guaranteed by it to British subjects, under Article II of the Convention of 1884, between Great Britain and the International Association of the Congo; but, in view of the considerations set forth by you, he has merely instructed me to require from the Congo Government a formal assurance that, if the Annexation Bill, now before the Belgian Parliament, is not passed before the close of its session in May next, that Government will, without further delay, sell to the British Missionary Societies concerned sites in or near the localities which they have indicated.

* Copies will be found in the Library of the House of Lords.

I should be grateful, M. le Chevalier, for a reply at your earliest convenience to this note, to which I have the honour to annex a translation, and I avail, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

No. 12.

Vice-Consul Armstrong to Consul Thesiger. — (Communicated by Consul Thesiger, March 30.)

(Extract.

Leopoldville, February 22, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith an extract from a journal, being an account given by the Rev. A. Stonelake, of the Baptist Missionary Society, at Kinchasa, of the hardships of the chikwangue tax in the Stanley Pool district. I also inclose you Mr. Stonelake's report of the interrogations to which he was subjected by the "Substitut" of the Procureur at Leopoldville.

The same "Substitut" asked me to call at his office some few days previously to his visit to Mr. Stonelake at Kinchasa. When I called upon him he said that he would like to interrogate me with reference to certain statements made by Mr. Stonelake which appeared in the press (Inclosure 1).

I asked him whether he wished to interrogate me in the capacity of witness, to which he replied in the affirmative. I told him that he had no right whatever to do so. He said that personally he was not sure as to his right, and having consulted the Judge and the Procureur, the former expressed the opinion that he had, whilst the latter stated that he did not know.

I then asked him if he had received an order from the Governor-General to interrogate me, to which he replied that he had not, adding that the matter had been received by his predecessor, and that as far as he knew there had only been an order given requesting an investigation of the facts reported.

I told him that I would not consent to be interrogated, but that if he so desired I would tell him what I knew of the affair, provided that if he used my evidence at all, he would give me assurances that the whole of my statement would be quoted if it were for use in the press. To this he agreed. I explained to him the reason why I requested him to state all I had to say and not extracts was because I was not there as stated in the letter. I explained to him how the discrepancy arose—which is amply reported in Mr. Stonelake's letter (Inclosure 2), and I added that as the portage of chikwangue by women and children was of such common occurrence, and so well known to every one residing in the Stanley Pool district, I could arrive at no other conclusion than that the State would attempt to disprove Mr. Stonelake's and Mr. Howell's statements by their inaccuracy in reporting that I was present.

He asked me if I knew who the gentleman was referred to in Mr. Stonelake's letter as "a missionary of a sister Society." I replied that I could not furnish him with the information, but I would advise him that unless he wished to be confronted with facts concerning the chikwangue tax and portage which would reflect little credit on the system, to make no further attempt to ascertain who was the gentleman referred to.

The discussion was carried on in the most friendly manner.

Inclosure 1 in No. 12.

Newspaper Extract.

Rev. A. Stonelake's Evidence.—The Burden of Food Tax.

THE Rev. A. Stonelake, of the British Baptist Missionary Society at Kinchasa, Stanley Pool, Congo State, writing to a friend under date of the 29th August, 1907, says:—

"To get to the villages we had to pass through Leopoldville, the capital of this district. At the time I was in company of the American Consul and English Vice-Consul and a missionary of a sister Society. As we were walking along the main thoroughfare a caravan passed us bringing in the usual kwanga (native bread) tax from a village three days' journey away. We paused outside the house of a District Judge, whilst a dozen boys, varying from 5 to 8 years of age, passed us. There were also quite

as many women in the party, and in one long section of the caravan we counted only one man in the group. It is well known to be illegal for women and children of tender years to carry this kwanga (native bread). Yet this happened right outside the house of the very official appointed to see that the law is respected, and these officials would have the world believe that the statements of the missionaries are travesty of the truth, vile calumnies, &c. I have nothing to say against the officials at Leopoldville as men. They have some 1,500 people to feed over there, and it keeps the people of the village perpetually occupied preparing the food. The fault is with the head in Belgium, who seems to sleep neither day nor night in devising plans by which to enrich himself out of these people, and who yet absolutely refuses to import the food for their sustenance. The sooner the system is altered the better. Indeed, I almost doubt whether the change will not come too late."

Inclosure 2 in No. 12.

Rev. A. Stoaeluke to Vice-Consul Armstrong.

Dear Mr. Armstrong,

Kinchasa, Stanley Pool, February 19, 1908.

THE Substitute came to see me this morning to interrogate me as to some statements which appeared in print, attributed to me. He gave me the option of going to Kinchasa, Leo, or being questioned in my own house. I preferred the latter.

He brought a native with him, but I soon discovered that he was no good, and objected to speak through him. However, one of the clerks from the Garé came along, so it was arranged. I asked the favour of the presence of Mr. Longland, so that my Committee and colleague would not have to reply simply on my report of what transpired. This was granted; indeed, the Substitute was kindness itself.

First, I was asked if I had sent anything to the journals at home *re* the kwanga tax at Leo. My reply was that I have never once sent to any journal any statement bearing on the political condition of the Congo. That I was never more surprised than when I saw something, attributed to me, in print.

Did I possess a copy of what appeared?—Yes. Would I let him take a copy?—Yes. Then he extracted what I possessed, which appeared in the "Daily News" on the 3rd October, 1907. Whilst copying it he remarked, "I see Mr. Howell acknowledges that it was a letter you sent him."

Did Mr. Howell send you this report?—No, neither did he say he had used my letter in any way.

Is this a reporter's account of the meeting?—In all probability, Yes.

How did you receive the copy? In a letter?—No, it came in a packet of newspaper cuttings sent by a relative.

Do you know if it appeared in any other paper?—This is the only copy I have seen or heard of.

Do you admit the truth of the statements contained therein?—Such statements as I myself made which are therein reported, most certainly.

What was the date and where the place where you saw these things?—Monday, the 19th August, 1907, in the main road of Leopoldville. We specially stopped almost outside your official residence, between that house and Dr. Broden's, and saw what is attributed to me.

Who were you with?—I must politely refuse to answer. But you have sworn to tell the whole truth to the question put to you?—And I am telling nothing but the truth. But I have assured you that what has appeared in print is the substance of a letter sent to Mr. Howell. Had I known it would be likely to appear in print I should probably have asked the consent of those who were with me to insert such. Therefore, I hold it is not right to expect me to divulge names without permission, seeing their names would not have been published in print with my approval without that permission having been first granted.

But you already state that you were in the company of the English Vice-Consul and American Consul and a colleague. Will you not definitely give me the names?—This question was asked me in various forms at different times. My reply was, "I desire to make a correction as to the English Vice-Consul." Then I explained that I wrote American Consul and Vice-Consul, but there was no American Vice-Consul when Mr. Howell left Congo, so he probably thought I referred to yourself. But I said I must politely decline to be more explicit in giving names without their permission, lest I incriminate or cause inconvenience to other people. I wish to take the full and

sole responsibility—not for Mr. Howell's speech, but for what is correctly reported therein of my letter. Then I pointed out exactly what I acknowledged as mine.

Did you or any of your companions speak to these boys?—No, I think not. Did you speak to any of them?—Yes, I myself spoke to a woman and a man.

Did they say where they came from?—Yes; that is what I asked them, and they said "Tampá." How do you know it is a three days' journey?—One of my companions made the statement first, and I subsequently confirmed it by inquiries, that it is three days on the road and the fourth day arriving at Leo.

What companion said so?—I politely decline to say. I make myself responsible for the statement.

Did they complain, the carriers?—No, I asked no questions other than where they came from, which was merely a friendly way of greeting them. I am not in the habit of eliciting complaints from natives, and, indeed, discourage it.

Describe the party you saw?—They seemed to me in three sections. The first part was composed of men, women, and children. The second all women and children, with only one man in the group. The third section I have no recollection of. The second section I noticed more particularly, because they were all women and children. I remarked upon the fact to my companions, and one of them replied, "Yes, I only saw one man in the group."

Who was that companion?—I decline to say.

Was the Chief present?—I do not know him, and recognized no one as Chief.

Do you know the name of the man and woman you spoke to?—No, I do not know the name of a single person in the village. As I have said, I spoke to them more by way of giving a friendly greeting and quite without any thought of making any future use of their statement.

After some further explanations *re* what I did admit writing, the proceedings closed, having lasted considerably over two hours.

The only other thing I remember saying was that in my note book I entered at the time that there passed us at least a dozen boys and quite as many women. When he entered that fact he stated they were all under 8 years. No, I said, I do not say they were all under 8, but that some were. So an addendum had to be written embodying this qualification.

He also made a note of the fact that I said I had seen the women and the boys actually carrying the kwanga.

Yours sincerely,
(Signed) ALFRED STONELAKE.

No. 13.

Sir A. Hardinge to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received March 30.)

Sir,

Brussels, March 28, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith, with reference to my despatch of the 16th instant, copy of a note from M. de Cuvelier, embodying the Congo Government's reply to my note respecting sites for Missions in the Congo State.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

Inclosure in No. 13.

M. de Cuvelier to Sir A. Hardinge.

M. le Ministre,

Bruxelles, le 28 Mars, 1908.

J'AI l'honneur d'accuser à votre Excellence la réception de la lettre qu'elle a bien voulu m'adresser au sujet des intentions du Gouvernement de l'État Indépendant du Congo, en matière de vente ou de location de terres domaniales, dans le cas où le projet d'annexion actuellement soumis au Parlement Belge ne serait pas adopté avant la clôture de sa Session au mois de Mai prochain.

Au cours de nos entretiens antérieurs, lorsque votre Excellence envisageait l'ajournement de la reprise, j'ai déjà eu l'occasion de constater spontanément qu'au cas où semblable éventualité viendrait à se produire, le Gouvernement du Congo, les circonstances actuelles se trouvant dès lors modifiées, aurait naturellement à examiner

les mesures à prendre pour que les Décrets du 3 Juin, 1906, prévoyant la vente ou la location de terres domaniales, reçoivent leur exécution sans nouveau délai.

Je dois, M. le Ministre, faire des réserves sur l'interprétation que donne votre lettre au Traité de 1884 entre la Grande-Bretagne et l'Association Internationale du Congo, dont l'Article II, en consacrant pour les sujets Britanniques "le droit de séjourner et de s'établir" sur les territoires de l'Association, ainsi que "le droit d'y acheter et de louer des terres, des édifices, des mines, et des forêts," ne crée pas pour l'État l'obligation de vendre aux particuliers telles terres qu'il leur conviendrait de déterminer.

Je saisis, &c.
(Signé) Chevalier DE CUVELIER.

(Translation.)

M. le Ministre,

Brussels, March 28, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of the note which your Excellency was good enough to address to me on the subject of the intentions of the Government of the Independent State of the Congo in regard to the sale or lease of domain lands in the event of the Annexation Bill now before the Belgian Parliament not being passed before the close of the Session in May next.

In our previous interviews, when your Excellency contemplated the possibility of annexation being delayed, I gave a spontaneous assurance that, in such case, the Congo Government, the present circumstances being thenceforth modified, would of course have to examine the measures to be taken for giving effect to the Decrees of the 3rd June, 1906, dealing with the sale or lease of domain lands, without further delay.

I should, M. le Ministre, make reserves as to the interpretation given in your note of the Treaty of 1884 between Great Britain and the International Association of the Congo, of which Article II, allowing to British subjects "the right to dwell and to settle" in the territory of the Association as well as "the right to purchase and lease lands, buildings, mines, and forests there," does not constitute an obligation on the State to sell to private persons any land which it may suit them to select.

I have, &c.
(Signed) Chevalier DE CUVELIER.

No. 14.

Sir A. Hardinge to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received April 8.)

Sir,

Brussels, April 6, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a copy of the reply which I have sent to M. de Cuvelier's note of the 28th ultimo on the subject of sites for British missions in the Congo State.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

Inclosure in No. 14.

Sir A. Hardinge to M. de Cuvelier.

M. le Chevalier,

Brussels, April 4, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your note of the 28th ultimo respecting the sale of sites for British Christian missions in the Congo, and to add that I have forwarded a copy of it to His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

Pending the receipt of Sir Edward Grey's further instructions, I will merely venture to observe, with reference to paragraph 2 of your note, that I have not claimed that our Treaty bound the Congo State "to sell to private British subjects such lands as the latter might find it convenient to select." All I have maintained is that, inasmuch as the Congo Government has appropriated the greater part of the lands available for sale within its territories, its refusal, persisted in for several years past, to alienate any portion of such lands to British Protestant Missionary Societies has, by making it impossible for the latter to use the rights secured to them by Article II of the Treaty of 1884, practically nullified these rights as a direct result of the State's own action.

I avail, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

FURTHER Correspondence respecting the
Independent State of the Congo.

[In continuation of "Africa No. 1 (1908)."]

*Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Com-
mand of His Majesty. May 1908.*

CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING THE

TAXATION OF NATIVES, AND OTHER
QUESTIONS,

IN THE

CONGO STATE.

*Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty,
June 1908.*

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Correspondence respecting the Taxation of Natives, and other Questions, in the Congo State.

No. 1.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Hardinge.

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 5, 1908.

THE Belgian Minister called here to-day and informed me that the recent debates in the House of Lords and the House of Commons, and the statements made by Lord Fitzmaurice and myself on those occasions had suggested certain observations to his Government, who had instructed him to point out to His Majesty's Government in a friendly way the impression made upon them, as well as the manner in which the present phase of the Congo question was viewed by the Belgian Government, and the manner in which they considered that question should be viewed in foreign countries.

While recognizing the care with which Lord Fitzmaurice and subsequently I myself had expressed our anxiety not to arouse the susceptibilities of Belgium by direct interference in affairs which exclusively concerned that country, Count de Lalaing said that his Government were bound to admit, not without regret, that our last statements on the subject differed from those we had made previously, and that we no longer seemed ready to leave them to consider at their discretion and in complete freedom of judgment the conditions of the annexation of the Congo.

By rousing the national sentiment, always so liable in Belgium to become excited at anything resembling in any way pressure from without, His Majesty's Government, without being aware of it, were running the risk of rendering increasingly difficult the task assumed by Belgium, and were running counter to the wish loudly expressed by us on more than one occasion to see Belgium annex the Independent State.

This departure from the attitude of reserve to which His Majesty's Ministers had so rigorously adhered at the outset took place at a time when the Treaty, which was to effect the annexation, was on the point of being submitted in its final shape to the Representatives of the nation.

Count de Lalaing then proceeded to draw my attention to what the Belgian Government considered to be inaccuracies in the language used by Members of His Majesty's Government in speaking of the transfer of the Congo as only to be carried into effect on conditions satisfactory to Great Britain. It was a matter of great importance, he said, that these inaccuracies should not be allowed to take root abroad.

The Belgian Government had only concerned itself up to the present with negotiating the actual Treaty of Cession, which was to put an end to the existence of the Independent State in favour of Belgium. This was a question which could only be discussed between the Belgian and Congo Governments, and which could admit of no interference from without. That was the first factor in the annexation. The Belgian Government would then, in co-operation with the Chambers, elaborate the organic law of the future Colony, which would from that time be subject to Parliamentary control. This again, however, was a question of internal sovereignty to be discussed between the Government and Chambers, and could not properly form the subject of criticism on the part of a foreign Power.

Count de Lalaing went on to say that after the annexation of the Congo had become an accomplished fact, his Government intended to take over all the obligations devolving from the Free State as well as those contracted by Belgium herself in signing the Berlin and Brussels Acts. The special régime which those Acts set up in the Conventional basin of the Congo would, in fact, be binding upon Belgium in the same manner as it was on all those Powers who had possessions in the interior of that basin. The Belgian Government did not, however, admit that they could be required

to furnish further information on the decisions they might be led to adopt in this respect.

Count de Lalaing concluded by saying that the Belgian Government and Parliament were on the eve of assuming responsibility for decisions of greater importance than any with which Belgian statesmen had been confronted since the establishment of the Belgian State, and that those decisions would have to be arrived at with all due consideration. His Majesty's Government, whose friendship was highly valued by the Belgian Government, could not contest or doubt the correctness of the Belgian attitude, nor could they better facilitate the annexation of the Congo, of which they had always declared themselves in favour, than by abstaining from any action which at this critical juncture might interfere with the complete liberty of action of the Belgian Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. GREY.

No. 2.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Hardinge.

Sir, *Foreign Office, March 27, 1908.*

WITH reference to my despatch of the 5th instant, I have to inform you that His Majesty's Government consider it desirable, in view of the conversations respecting the Congo question which I have had with the Belgian Minister, for them to offer some observations to explain what is their view of the Treaty obligations of the Congo State, and what in their opinion is required to bring the administration of the State into harmony with these obligations.

His Majesty's Government have received with much satisfaction the assurances of the Belgian Government that they recognize that, after annexation, the territory of the Congo State will remain subject to the provisions of the Berlin and Brussels Acts. To these His Majesty's Government would add the provisions, so far as they are concerned, of the Anglo-Congolese Convention of 1884. His Majesty's Government have every confidence in the earnest desire of the Belgian Government to introduce thorough and far-reaching reforms into the present system of administration in the Congo, and they are therefore particularly anxious to maintain an attitude of strict forbearance, and to abstain from any act which might be construed as interfering with the complete liberty of action of the Belgian Government in the future management of the internal affairs of the Congo. His Majesty's Government fully recognize that the choice of the means by which the administration of the Congo may be brought into line by the Berlin Act rests exclusively with Belgium. Nevertheless, while disclaiming all idea of interference, His Majesty's Government feel that in fairness they should leave the Belgian Government in no doubt that in their opinion the existing administration of the Congo State has not fulfilled the objects for which the State was originally recognized, or the conditions of Treaties, and that changes are therefore required, which should effect the following objects:—

1. Relief of the natives from excessive taxation.
2. The grant to the natives of sufficient land to ensure their ability to obtain not only the food they require, but also sufficient produce of the soil to enable them to buy and sell as in other European Colonies.
3. The possibility for traders whatever their nationality may be to acquire plots of land of reasonable dimensions in any part of the Congo for the erection of factories so as to enable them to establish direct trade relations with the natives.

The accompanying Memorandum gives a résumé on the subject of taxation. It takes for its basis the conclusions of the Commission of Inquiry, as set out in their Report of the 30th October, 1905, dwells on the assurances given by the Secretaries-General in their Report to the King-Sovereign when submitting for His Majesty's approval the Reform Decrees of the 3rd June, 1906, and finally compares those assurances with the actual operation of the new Decrees, as reported by His Majesty's Consular officers. A perusal of that document cannot fail to make it clear that, although cases of actual cruelty have largely ceased, the burden of taxation remains as oppressive as ever. It amounts, in fact, to a system of forced labour differing in name only from slavery, and cannot, in the opinion of His Majesty's Government, be reconciled with Article VI of the Berlin Act.

As regards the second point, His Majesty's Government have learned with some apprehension the intention of the Belgian Government, as it appears from the Treaty of Annexation, to respect in their entirety the rights of the Concessionary Companies.

They assume that the entire "Domaine Privé," and the territory known as the "Domaine de la Couronne" will pass to the Belgian Government, and that the latter will be free in these territories to introduce whatever measures of reform they think necessary, not only for the protection of the natives, but for ensuring the freedom of trade—one of the objects for which the Act of Berlin was framed.

If the Concessions are to be maintained, it will probably be found more difficult to introduce adequate changes into the system of administration, because the reforms to be introduced must necessarily apply throughout the State, the whole territory being equally subject to the provisions of the Berlin Act.

The Concessionary Companies now cover, roughly speaking, three-fifths of the entire territory of the Congo State. The object of their Concessions is chiefly rubber, an article which represents on a yearly average 85 per cent. of the total exports of the country, and so long as the Concessions are worked upon the same conditions as at present, it is difficult to see how the complete freedom of trade, which is guaranteed under Article I of the Berlin Act, can possibly exist, for the condition of the native in those areas will be such as to preclude the possibility of his acquiring any material wealth beyond the minimum necessary for the bare support of life, since he will continue to be debarred from enjoyment of the fruits of the soil. Such conditions not only present an insuperable obstacle to any trade relations with the population of the larger portion of the Congo, but they fail to meet the requirements of Article VI of the Berlin Act, under which the Signatory Powers pledge themselves to provide for the improvement of the natives' moral and material well-being.

Moreover, the areas which were formerly comprised in the Concessions of the A.B.I.R. and Anversoise Companies must be treated as on the same footing as the areas in the Concessions of the existing Companies. Although those Companies have ceased to exploit their Concessions themselves according to the Conventions between them and the State (Annexes 13 and 14 to the Treaty of Cession), the latter bind themselves to hand over the produce in rubber to the former at Antwerp at a fixed rate. The produce of these areas may therefore be said to be already disposed of in advance. His Majesty's Government understand that, according to the Treaty of Cession the Belgian Government bind themselves to respect this arrangement, and they must therefore conclude that the condition of affairs within these areas will be similar to that in the other Concessions.

With so large an area of the Congo State subject to the Concession system His Majesty's Government cannot help feeling that no real improvement will be effected in the state of affairs, unless there is a radical alteration of the economic system of the territory.

His Majesty's Government can but repeat that they are well aware that it is outside their province to define the reforms that should be adopted in the Congo, but as they have good reason to believe that both Governments are, on this question, animated by the same spirit, they venture to suggest the following measures, as they believe that their adoption would effect a marked improvement in the conditions prevailing in the Congo. They trust that these suggestions will be welcomed by the Belgian Government in a friendly spirit and receive that measure of consideration which the gravity of the situation requires.

Taking the three points enumerated above in order, it appears to His Majesty's Government that—

1. As regards the question of taxation in labour, the abuses to which the system has given rise have only been rendered possible by the absence of a proper standard of value. They believe, therefore, that the only sure and efficacious means of precluding the existence of such abuses in the future is the introduction of currency throughout the State at the earliest possible date. Both the Reports of the Commission of Inquiry and the experience of His Majesty's Consular officers agree in the conclusion that the native has learnt the use of money, and that currency would be welcomed by all classes, native and European alike.

2. The natives in the concessionary areas should not be compelled, by either direct or indirect means, to render their labour to the Companies without remuneration. The introduction of currency should contribute greatly to the protection of the native against the illicit and excessive exactions on the part of private individuals. Such protection,

however, cannot be adequately secured unless the latter be compelled to pay the native in specie at a fair rate to be fixed by law.

3. They would urge that a large increase should be made in the land allotted to the natives.

In fixing the amount, due regard should be had to the system of land tenure in vogue among them. From the reports which I have received from the British Consular officers, it would appear that individual property can scarcely be said to exist, while collective property would seem to be the rule. The natives of the Congo are not precisely nomadic, and seldom migrate outside what may be called their tribal areas; but as the rotation of crops and the use of manure are unknown, the yield decreases after three or four years' cultivation, and the natives are obliged to shift the site of their villages and clear and plant new lands.

If allowance is to be made for these practices the allotment of land to the natives should be made on a liberal scale, and the natives should be allowed to keep for themselves all the products of their land, whether they are the result of cultivation or not. In the opinion of His Majesty's Government the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry on this point, to which practical effect is being given under the Decree of the 3rd June, 1906, entitled "Terres Indigènes," are insufficient for this purpose.

The joint effect of these three reforms would go far to ameliorate the condition of the natives in the Congo, but no such improvement can be looked for unless the introduction of all three is obtained. Little benefit would result from any one of them standing alone.

As already stated, His Majesty's Government merely submit these views for the friendly consideration of the Belgian Government, and if the latter have measures in view other than those above suggested His Majesty's Government would greatly appreciate any information which could be communicated to them on the subject.

They would also be glad to receive an assurance from the Belgian Government that British missionaries, land settlers, and merchants will be able in the future to acquire plots of land in reasonable quantities in any part of the State, so as to secure to them the advantages that were intended by Article 2 of the Anglo-Congolese Agreement of the 16th December, 1884.

It had been the intention of His Majesty's Government to claim, in accordance with the rights guaranteed to them under Article XII of the Berlin Act, that an arbitration should take place to determine whether the land and trade systems now in force in the Congo Free State are consistent with the 1st and 5th Articles of that instrument, which enact that trade is to be free and monopolies to be prohibited. As His Majesty's Government have now every reason to hope that the State will be annexed in the near future by Belgium, they prefer to postpone any question of arbitration, and to discuss the situation with the Belgian Government in a frank and friendly spirit.

You should read this despatch to M. Davignon, and leave a copy with his Excellency if he desires it.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. GREY.

Inclosure in No. 2.

Memorandum respecting Taxation and Currency in the Congo Free State.

General.

THE first and foremost subject of complaint under Article VI of the Berlin Act are the abuses resulting from the system of taxation in labour. His Majesty's Government do not for a moment maintain that the Treaty provisions of Article VI give them the right to demand the introduction of any particular system of taxation. They fully recognize that the Congo Government is at liberty to adopt any system which, in their opinion, the circumstances may demand. But His Majesty's Govern

ment must, nevertheless, contend that no system can be allowed to operate so as to interfere with Treaty obligations to the prejudice of the moral and material well-being of the natives.

It will be of interest to note briefly how the present system has sprung up. Like all the other questions affecting the Congo, that of taxation is intimately connected with the existence of the rubber monopolies. In fact, the prosperity of the latter are largely, if not entirely, dependent on the maintenance of the present system. The native has been excluded from participating in any share in the benefits accruing from the systematic exploitation of the soil. It is, of course, obvious that that very exploitation over such vast areas as the "Domaine de la Couronne," the "Domaine Privé," and the Concessionary Companies cannot possibly be effected without the assistance of native labour. No system of monopolies could possibly be effective without it. The manner in which this labour has been obtained evinces the same spirit which has characterized the commercial and financial policy of the State from 1891 onwards. Having by the partition of the soil and the general interdicts on trade of 1892 gradually deprived the native of all means of acquiring material wealth, and restricted him to the smallest possible area with the barest necessities of life, the State succeeded in arriving at a state of affairs in which labour was the only possible form of raising the taxes. Taxes in kind became impossible, for the produce of the soil was the property of the State and the Companies. Taxes in money became equally impossible, for apart from the desire, for obvious reasons, not to introduce specie, the circulation of coin in the given circumstances would have been impossible, seeing that the natives had no exchangeable values to trade in. Reduced to this condition, it was easy for the State to exact the labour it required for the exploitation of the land in the shape of taxation. In principle, of course, there is nothing wrong in taxation in labour any more than in any other particular form of taxation. It is of the abuses to which a tax in labour is liable to give rise, and which have actually arisen in the case of the Congo, that His Majesty's Government complain. Taxation in labour is an expedient to which His Majesty's Government, as well as other Powers possessing Colonies in Africa, have on occasions resorted when no other form of taxation was possible. There is, however, this difference in the application of the principle, that in the case of the British Colonies taxation in labour has never been regarded as more than a provisional and temporary expedient, to last only until such time as it might be possible to introduce a more satisfactory system.

Now, in the case of the Congo the converse is the case. For over twenty years has the Congo State been in existence, and no attempt has been made to introduce specie except on the Lower Congo, where there is no danger of interference with the great rubber monopoly. On the other hand, there is abundant proof to show that no efforts have been spared to render the only system of taxation possible, that of labour, and to perpetuate that system as long as possible.

Currency is so indissolubly connected with taxation that, before proceeding to deal with the effects of the labour tax in force in the Congo, it will be of great service to examine carefully the attitude of the Congo Government in regard to the introduction of currency. The question of currency lies so much at the root of all the evils arising from the tax in labour that a clear understanding of this point will assist very materially in rebutting the Congo Government's specious arguments on the subject of taxation.

Currency.

It is impossible to lay too much stress on the importance of the introduction of currency. There is probably no more potent means of putting a stop to the abuses in the Congo than the existence of a circulating medium in sufficient amount. It would, on the one hand, shield the native from the exorbitant exactions of the State, which the latter is only enabled to enforce in virtue of a system of taxation in labour; while, on the other, it would, if not entirely destroy, at any rate seriously diminish the enormous profits of the Trading Companies and of the State, in its capacity of a trader.

The Commission of Inquiry in their Report (p. 156) said:—

“Le commerce serait considérablement facilité par l'introduction, dans tout l'État, de la monnaie qui, actuellement, n'est réellement utilisée que dans le Bas-Congo. Cette mesure est réclamée par les Agents de l'État, les factoriens, les missionnaires, et même par les noirs qui ont appris à connaître l'argent.”

The Secretaries-General, in reporting to the King-Sovereign on the recommendation of the Commission of Inquiry, said that since the foundation of the State the Government had spared no efforts to set currency in circulation in the Congo. Money had passed rapidly into circulation among the population round the principal centres of the Lower Congo.

In the Upper Congo, where the natives came less in direct contact with the white man, the State had experienced greater difficulties in effecting payments in currency, and in certain centres such attempts had proved complete failures. For some time past these efforts had been renewed, and the Government, where possible, would continue to effect payment in specie, the only means by which the Commission of Inquiry held that currency could pass into circulation. The statements of the Secretaries-General are hardly borne out by the experience of Vice-Congo Michell when visiting the territory of the Lomami Company (proprietary) on the Upper Congo in February 1907. He reports in his despatch of the 1st March, 1907, as follows:—

“The territory exploited by the Lomami Company—a subsidiary undertaking of the ‘Comité Spécial du Katanga,’ and one of a group of Companies, including, I understand, the Kasai Trust and the ‘Société Anonyme Belge,’ financed by a Syndicate of Belgian banks—differs from the Concessions granted to other Societies in being a freehold property. The Company holds, therefore, a unique position in the Congo State, being free to deal with its products as it thinks fit. As the State claims all the ivory, rubber, minerals, and other riches as products of the soil, so the Company claims the same in its territory. The State, therefore, cannot demand the ivory and rubber of the Lomami in payment of taxes, but exacts the labour of the natives. Up to the end of the year 1905 the Company was authorized by the State to collect this tribute, with the result that the same abuses were liable to occur as in the A.B.I.R. and other Concessions, especially with the turbulent Lokele. After the affair at Yabohila, the Company renounced the right to impose taxation. It has taken some time to reform the system to which the agents had become accustomed, and more than one agent has been expelled for not obeying the new order. But it is now the strict rule throughout the territory that nothing can be demanded from the natives without their consent and without such payment as they agree to take. Doubtless the impression of the old régime still remains on the minds of the people, and to some extent they still feel compelled to satisfy the white man; but I can testify that I saw no signs of any pressure by the agents.

“On M. le Marinel's arrival as Director in July 1906, he introduced a system of absolutely free trade, and initiated a basis of currency. Preparatory to the use of silver he has cut down the usual brass rods to lengths, representing 10 centimes and 5 centimes. Every service rendered, and all rubber, ivory, fresh food, and other things bought from the natives is paid for on the spot in these brass rods. In each factory there is a shop where European goods are set out on a counter with the number of rods laid against them which represent their price. These counters are open day and night. It is absolutely forbidden to pay the people in goods. They must receive cash, and they are then free to buy the goods they desire, or to take their money away with them. The barter goods are sold at cost price, with nothing but transport, customs, &c., added. The natives have already a shrewd grasp of the cash system, and silver is to be introduced immediately.

“Since July also the price of rubber has been raised, so that now 1 fr. per kilogram is being paid to the producers, and 20 centimes per kilogram, in addition is paid to the Chief. M. le Marinel is contemplating raising it shortly to 1 fr. 50 c. per kilogram. At present the State is not levying taxation on the natives of the Lomami district, with the exception of the immediate neighbourhood of the police post of Opala and the two or three small posts in the interior. The State pays about 55 centimes per kilogram for rubber, of which about 25 centimes goes to the actual maker. The Lomami tribes now understand that if they make rubber for the Company they can easily earn very much more than the 2 fr. per month that the State may ask of them; whereas, if they refuse to work freely for the Company, they are liable to be compelled by the State to make rubber at 25 centimes per kilogram, with the alternative of the chain-gang.

“This experiment is the more interesting as it is the only example of genuine free trade in this country. Many say it will fail as the novelty wears off and as the natives' simple wants and fancies for European goods become satisfied. It remains to be seen whether the Company can keep up their interest and stimulate new wants. At present they present themselves readily for portage and other work in any number asked for.

“The production of rubber is also increasing rapidly. One post has risen to 2 tons (metric) during the month of February, and expects to make more this month. Most of the factories are sending down urgent requests for more goods on account of the increase of business.

“I regard the success of this new experiment as of the utmost importance to the Congo, both as demonstrating the possibility and the advantages of free trade, and as showing the falseness of the arguments hitherto urged by the State in favour of forced labour.”

The difficulty of introducing currency in the Upper Congo, upon which the Secretaries-General laid so much stress, no doubt exists, but the reason of its existence is that the native, being deprived of all exchangeable values owing to the monopolization of the land, money cannot pass into circulation, and in such circumstances the native is, in fact, better off with a commodity, however small in value, that will satisfy a human want than if he were in possession of coin.

The Secretaries-General in their Report briefly dismiss this all-important subject with these words:—

“Il n'est évidemment pas au pouvoir du Gouvernement d'imposer aux particuliers ou aux Sociétés l'emploi de l'argent dans leurs relations commerciales avec les indigènes; mais il importerait qu'elles secondassent à cet égard les efforts de l'État.”

The force of this argument is far from clear.

The Secretaries-General, nevertheless, recommended that 1,000,000 fr. should be struck and sent out to the Congo. The Decree, intitled “Frappe et Monnaie,” providing for this measure, received the Royal sanction on the 3rd June, 1906.

It should be sufficient evidence of the reluctance of the Government to introduce currency to mention the fact that up to the present time (January 1908) only 35,000 fr. have been struck, which it is proposed to set in circulation in the Katanga, that is to say, in that portion of the State where currency is the least likely to interfere with the profits on the rubber monopolies. This remark applies equally to the Lower Congo.

Of all the Reform Decrees the Decree “Frappe et Monnaie” was the one which could have been carried into effect with least difficulty and least delay. Surely, if the Congo Government had been in real earnest, they would have taken some steps to coin the money and send it out. Nearly two years have now elapsed since the publication of the Decree, and practically nothing has been done.

It is instructive to observe the spirit in which this Decree has been interpreted by Vice-Governor Lantomois in his general instructions of the 8th September, 1906. He says:—

“Ce serait, d'ailleurs, anticiper sur les événements que de décréter d'autorité l'emploi de la monnaie dans tout l'État. Le Gouvernement ne veut établir ce régime que par étapes prudentes et seulement chez les populations où il pourra répondre à un besoin ou à une utilité.”

As regards the sufficiency of the 1,000,000 fr. provided for under the new Decree, and the manner in which the promises of the Secretaries-General are being carried out, the following extract from a despatch from Consul Thesiger furnishes some instructive reading:—

“In the ‘Mouvement Géographique’ of the 22nd ultimo I noticed an unsigned letter bearing on the question of the introduction of money and the general payment of the natives in coin, in which the writer expresses surprise that the Missions, who are the most earnest advocates for the introduction of this system as a step towards reform, have not adopted it in all stations where they are in contact with the natives.

“As a good deal of stress appears to be laid on this point both here and in Belgium, I have the honour to point out various reasons why this course is impossible for the Missions before further action is taken by the State in the same direction.

“In the first place the Administration, which refuses to accept any coinage but that of the State, has hitherto neglected to furnish an adequate supply of this coinage. So much so is this the case that, even in the towns of the Lower Congo, business houses have great difficulty in always obtaining sufficient specie for their needs, and in Matadi at this moment there is a serious money crisis arising out of this shortage, and the State has been obliged to authorize their officials and the Railway Company to

accept 50 per cent. of all payments in French coinage, of which there is a plentiful supply in the neighbourhood of the Pool: but, even so, traders and others find a difficulty in obtaining the remaining portion in the Congo currency. Under these conditions, it is obviously impossible for the Missions to introduce the payment of the natives in coin into the districts of the Upper Congo.

“On Stanley Pool the Missions have for years paid their workpeople and paid for produce in cash, whereas the State, which has so often expressed its anxiety to see the native educated up to the point of understanding the use of money, and has for years asked the Missions to do all they could to introduce it into the country, has only lately followed suit, and now pays some of their workmen half in cash and half in cloth, but still refrains from paying for produce in money.

“Furthermore, in most of the upper districts, money, under the present régime, is useless to the native. Although the State is anxious to obtain the personal tax in money from such natives as are employed by the Missions, and so cannot supply a tax in labour or in kind, it is in no way desirous of introducing the payment of this tax in coin as a general rule. The present system is too profitable from the labour point of view and too economical when the tax is paid in food-stuffs at a fraction of their real value. I know on good authority of two cases where the native actually brought the money and offered it as payment of his tax, and it was refused by the State, who insisted on his supplying the so-called equivalent in produce. Thus, as regards his indebtedness to the State, money to any but the Mission-employed native is useless. From the personal point of view it would in too many cases be likewise worthless, as there are no magazines or stores where he could purchase cloth or goods.

“The power to introduce money and cash payments into the Upper Congo lies in the hands of the State alone, and it is only when they have done their share of the work that the Missions can carry it on.

“Before any improvement can be effected the State must issue at least twice or three times the amount of the currency at present in circulation, and give the native the possibility of purchasing what and where he will. As matters now stand, even at Leopoldville, the small trader cannot compete with the State owing to the heavy freights and the excessive taxation to which he is exposed, and further up country it would be absurd even to think of opening a store in districts where the native cannot pay in money and may not pay in produce, since the only articles which could profitably be accepted by a trader in exchange for goods of any kind are the private property of the State or of a Concessionary Company.

“The money question has a very important bearing on the condition of the native population and their relation to the Administration, and the State, while outwardly professing their anxiety to spread the use of coined money over the whole Congo, have neglected all steps which would render such a thing possible.”

Vice-Consul Michell says in his Report on the trade in Stanley Falls district during 1906:—

“Until the State introduces the use of money no amelioration can be expected. This it is not likely to do, as it makes an enormous profit on taxation in kind.”

Mr. Vice-Consul Beak says in his Report on his tour of the Katanga district, 6th September, 1907:—

“A money currency has not yet been introduced, although I cannot but emphasize in this particular the Report of the Commission d'Enquête that ‘cette mesure est réclamée par les Agents de l'État, les factoriens, les missionnaires, et même par les noirs qui ont appris à connaître l'argent.’ Owing to the absence of money and the absence of factories, the native does not really get what he is alleged to receive.”

Vice-Consul Armstrong says in his despatch of the 2nd August, 1907:—

“The fact that the new law provides for a system of taxation upon a monetary basis is of no value until a fair price is placed upon the rubber. There is no money in the Congo rubber-bearing districts.”

Mr. Armstrong says in his despatch of the 18th December, 1907:—

“The natives of the Stanley Pool district inhabiting the banks of the Congo River above Leopoldville and Kinchasa, extending over a distance of some 150 miles, have been refused the alternative of paying their tax in money. Similar conditions prevail

in other parts of this district below Leopoldville. The payment of the tax in money is the only means the native has of purchasing his freedom and procuring for himself the value of the produce which he now gives to the State."

Taxation.

After examining the attitude of the Congo Government on the subject of currency one cannot fail to be impressed with one salient fact, namely, a fixed determination to dispense with a proper standard of value, which alone can insure the perpetuation of the system of forced labour with all its profits to the State or the Companies."

Bearing in mind one dominant fact, we can now proceed with the inquiry into the question of taxation.

The Commission of Inquiry in their Report began by saying that the greater part of the criticisms levelled against the State more or less touched upon the question of taxation, more especially taxation in labour, the only tax which burdened the native.

This question was without doubt the most important and the most complex, and, in their opinion, on the solution of this problem depended the solution of almost all the rest.

They then proceeded to examine, first, the principle of taxation in labour, and, secondly, its effects when put into practice.

As regards the principle, they felt justified in defending the system of taxation in labour on the following grounds: They held that as the development of the country could only be effected with the assistance of native labour, and the wants of the native being easily satisfied he would, if he could, pass his existence in absolute leisure. As there were practically no inducements for the native to work, there was not only ample justification for the State policy, but, in their opinion, the State had acted wisely in making use of the only legal means of making work obligatory on the native population, viz., the levy of taxes in labour:—

“C'est précisément en considération de la nécessité d'assurer à l'État le concours indispensable de la main-d'œuvre indigène qu'un impôt en travail est justifié au Congo. Cet impôt, en outre, remplace, vis-à-vis de ces populations, la contrainte qui, dans les pays civilisés, est exercée par les nécessités mêmes de la vie.”

Again:—

“L'impôt en travail est d'ailleurs l'unique impôt possible actuellement au Congo, car l'indigène, en règle générale, ne possède rien au delà de sa hutte, de ses armes, et de quelques plantations strictement nécessaires à sa subsistance. Un impôt ayant pour base la richesse n'y serait pas possible. Si donc on reconnaît à l'État du Congo comme à tout autre État le droit de demander à ses populations les ressources nécessaires à son existence et à son développement, il faut évidemment lui reconnaître le droit de leur réclamer la seule chose que ces populations puissent donner, c'est-à-dire, une certaine somme de travail.”

His Majesty's Government will not attempt to deny that the resources of the Congo cannot be developed without native labour, but they do assert that this labour need not necessarily be exacted by the State in the shape of taxation. Assuming that specie can be put into circulation, if the tax is assessed and payable in specie, does it not follow, especially in the circumstances described by the Commission, that the natives would have to work to get the money to pay the taxes?

Unless the expression “certaine somme de travail” used by the Commissioners is to be taken to mean that because the native is reluctant to work of his own free will the State is justified in exacting from him in the shape of taxation in labour a sacrifice out of all proportion to what would be justifiable if they were assessed in specie, His Majesty's Government fail to see the force of the Commissioners' argument, for, as already stated, the native would still have to render the “certaine somme de travail” in order to get the money to pay the tax.

That such an arbitrary power of exacting labour from the natives should be vested in the State was clearly not what the Commissioners contemplated, for they go on to say:—

“Certes l'impôt en travail, comme tout impôt, ne doit absorber qu'une faible partie de l'activité individuelle; il doit servir uniquement aux besoins du Gouverne-

ment, être en rapports avec les bienfaits que les contribuables mêmes en retirent ; il doit enfin pouvoir se concilier, autant que possible, ainsi que nous le proposerons, avec le principe de la liberté individuelle, mais dans ces limites nous ne croyons pas qu'il puisse être critiqué.

“D'autre part, l'obligation du travail, si elle n'est pas excessive et si elle est appliquée d'une manière équitable et paternelle, en évitant autant que possible, ainsi que nous exposerons ci-après, l'emploi des moyens violents, aura le grand avantage d'être un des agents les plus efficaces de civilisation et de transformation de la population indigène.”

The words of the Commissioners must therefore be taken to be a justification of the principle of taxation in labour when exercised within certain limits and no more. His Majesty's Government have no objections to urge against the views of the Commissioners as thus understood. They will go as far as to maintain that if the principle of taxation in labour is applied with moderation, and every precaution taken against the abuses to which such a system is liable, its application is as unexceptionable as any other form of taxation ; indeed, in certain circumstances, it may be resorted to with mutual advantage to the State and the taxpayer.

But it is precisely these limits which constitute the crux of the matter. We shall presently see how far the taxation in labour in force in the Congo State has been, and is, kept within the limits in which alone the Commission of Inquiry hold such a system to be justified.

It will at first, however, be necessary to take some account of the legislation on the subject of taxation.

In the first year of the State's existence the Government Agents often stationed in unexplored and isolated parts of the country were allowed to requisition from the natives the necessary means of subsistence. The Decree of the 6th October provided for the contribution by the Chief recognized by the State. A Decree of the 28th November, 1893, empowered the Commander-in-chief of the State forces in the Manyema to raise some of the means necessary to cover the extraordinary expenses occasioned by the suppression of the Arab revolt, and determines the nature and the amount of the contributions to be furnished by each locality or native Chief. Article 7 of the Decree of the 30th October, 1892, imposes on the natives gathering rubber in the territories above Stanley Pool open to trade a tax in kind, the amount of which was to be determined by the Governor-General, but in no case exceeding one-fifth of the amount gathered. A further Decree of the 5th December, which was not published in the “Bulletin Officiel,” empowered the Secretary of State “de prendre toutes les mesures qu'il jugera utiles ou nécessaires pour assurer la mise en exploitation des biens du Domaine Privé.”

For a long time these enactments were considered sufficient to enable the Administration to exact from the natives contributions in labour, and to delegate that right to the Companies, without, however, ever determining the nature and the amount of such contributions, nor in any way limiting the amount of force to be employed in compelling the natives to pay the tax. When, however, in the cases of the Congo Government *v.* Kasfessa, the 29th August, 1899, and Congo Government *v.* Noketo and Olembo, the Court of Appeal at Boma gave judgment to the effect that, in the existing state of the law, no one had the right to compel the natives to work, the State saw the need of regularizing the position. The Decree of the 18th November, 1903, was issued, and this is the law which has remained in force until the Reform Decree of 1906 amended and amplified it.

Until latterly the levy of the taxes was more or less left to the discretion of the State or Company agents.

Each “chef de poste” or “de factorerie” demanded of the native, without inquiring too closely upon what authority, the most varied contributions in labour and in kind to meet the requirements of his particular case.

In later years the amount of contributions was fixed by the “Commissaire de District,” to whom great latitude was given, with the result that the assessments varied greatly according to local circumstances. Thus the amount of rubber demanded in the Mongala district was 9 kilog. in the A.B.I.R. 6, in the Eastern Provinces from 2 1/2, while in Lower Congo no taxes at all were levied.

As the agents thus enjoyed complete discretionary power, the natives were in some cases treated with leniency, whilst in others the demands made upon them were altogether excessive. In the “Domaine Privé” this abuse was greatly stimulated by the fact that the Government agents had a direct interest in the yield, for they received

bonuses in proportion to the amount of rubber collected. These bonuses were abolished some fourteen years ago.

The Decree of the 18th November, 1902, equalized (on paper) the taxes to be paid throughout the country.

Every adult and able-bodied native was to render a certain amount of labour to the State in the shape of taxation. The labour was to be remunerated, and was not to exceed forty hours a-month. Nothing could be more equitable than the provisions of this Decree as they read on paper, and no possible exception could be taken to the principle on which they are founded. But, and here is the gist of the whole matter, the "Commissaires de District" were empowered under the Decree to draw up so-called "lists of equivalents," showing the amount of produce which, in their discretion, was the equivalent of forty hours' labour. It is true that in assessing the amount the "Commissaires" were enjoined to have due regard to local circumstances, such as the richness of the forest, the distance to be traversed, the nature of the products, &c. They were empowered by Article 31 to insist on payment in kind instead of in labour to the amount fixed on the list. Article 51 empowers the authorities, in cases of refusal on the part of the natives to pay the taxes, and, in default of property which can be confiscated, to resort to forced labour.

As regards the actual operation of the law, it will be well to quote the words of the Commission of Inquiry:—

"Lors de l'inspection de la Commission, la loi n'était appliquée que dans quelques districts.

"Le Décret fixe à quarante heures par mois le travail que chaque indigène doit à l'Etat. Ce temps, considéré comme maximum, n'est certes pas exagéré, surtout si l'on tient compte du fait que le travail doit être rémunéré; mais comme dans l'immense majorité des cas, par application des Articles 31 et 34, ce n'est pas précisément le travail qui est réclaté à l'indigène, mais bien une quantité de produits équivalente à quarante heures de travail, le critérium du temps disparaît en réalité et est remplacé par une équation établie par les Commissaires de District d'après des méthodes diverses. Tantôt, on a tenté de calculer le temps moyen nécessaire pour obtenir certain produit, par exemple, le kilogramme de caoutchouc ou de chikwangue; tantôt, on s'est borné à fixer la valeur de l'heure de travail en prenant pour base le taux des salaires locaux; on a multiplié ce chiffre par quarante et l'on a exigé des indigènes la fourniture d'un produit d'une valeur équivalente à la somme ainsi obtenue.

"Le premier de ces calculs repose sur des appréciations arbitraires; le second donne des résultats qui peuvent varier à l'infini, selon l'évaluation du produit ou de la main-d'œuvre."

A Circular of the 29th February, 1904, addressed to the "Commissaires de District," ordered them to see that the results of the previous years' taxation should not only be maintained, but progressively improved upon.

The Secretaries-General, in their Report to the King-Sovereign, agreed with the Commission of Inquiry that the question of taxation was without doubt the most important, and that on the solution of this problem depended the solution of nearly all the rest.

The Decree of the 18th November, 1903, they said, subjected the natives to compulsory labour, and this tax was justified by the Report of the Commission of Inquiry.

There were other Legislatures who taxed the natives in specie, and theoretically there could be no difference of opinion as to the advantages of such a form of taxation. But in practice, and in the actual state of affairs in the Congo, where nearly the entire native population possessed no specie, to substitute a tax in money for a tax in labour had only the appearance of a modification in the law. If the law were to take as a basis of taxation a sum of money, it must, since it is demanding of the native what he does not possess, leave the latter the alternative of paying the tax in kind or in labour. This alternative was in the actual circumstances not an alternative at all, inasmuch as the native not possessing specie must of necessity avail himself of the right to pay the tax in kind or labour.

The system of taxation in specie, and the system enforced under the Decree of 1903, must both ultimately result in the present and general system, that is, to exact from the native labour of some kind. The possibility, however, that certain classes of

taxpayers would be able to acquit themselves of the tax in money had been sufficiently established to justify the law in sanctioning the principle.

This argument is of course extremely plausible. His Majesty's Government can have no objections to urge against the views thus expressed by the Secretaries-General, which must of necessity apply to every country in the earlier stages of its development. As already stated, taxation in labour and in kind has been resorted to by probably every European Power possessing Colonies in Africa. But such a form of taxation is only justifiable as a temporary or provisional measure until such time as the introduction of currency has become possible. The Secretaries-General said the native in the Congo had no specie. True, but why has he no specie? Because, as already explained, during the twenty-three years that the Congo State has been in existence no serious attempt, in spite of all assertions to the contrary, has ever been made by the State to introduce currency on a sufficiently large scale. In every other European Colony in Africa has the native come to learn the practical value of a medium of exchange. What are the reasons that the Congo State should stand in an exceptional position in this respect? They are unfortunately obvious enough. The truth is that it is precisely owing to the absence of a proper standard of value that the Congo Government and the Concessionary Companies have been able to abuse the system of taxation in labour, and realize enormous profits out of the incessant labour wrung from the population in the guise of taxation.

In the new Decree which the Secretaries-General were submitting for His Majesty's approval certain modifications of the Decree of the 18th November, 1903, had been effected in accordance with the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry, dealing more especially with—

1. The amount of the tax.
2. Its assessment ("fixité").

In deference to the wishes of the Commission of Inquiry, "de régler le taux de l'impôt d'après les conditions des différentes peuplades indigènes en tenant compte de leurs aptitudes au travail," the Decree did not make uniform the amount of the tax for all the territories of the State. Article 2, section 2, provided that the Governor-General should fix the amount of the tax proportionately to the resources of the various regions and populations, and according to the degree of the development of the natives. The decree laid down that the amount of the tax could not be less than 6 fr. nor more than 24 fr.

The Secretaries-General then significantly observed that the payment of the taxes in money would for a long time remain the exception, because the native, as a rule, possessed nothing beyond his hut, his arms, and a few plantations. Precisely so. The native has been systematically deprived of his interests in the soil, and thereby of his power to acquire wealth. He has, therefore, no exchangeable values to barter against money.

There is, however, another reason, to which the Secretaries-General, of course, do not allude, which will compel the native to pay the tax in labour and not in money, and that is, as we have already seen, the determination of the Government to postpone as long as possible the introduction of currency. In such circumstances the Secretaries-General may justly observe:—

"En pratique, par la force même des choses, l'impôt sera généralement payé en produits ou en travail."

"La force même des choses" being, in fact, the indirect compulsion exercised by the State. Therefore Article 2 *bis* provides:—

"Les indigènes peuvent s'acquitter de l'impôt soit en produits, soit en travail."

The law, they said, could not itself lay down the equivalents of either kind of labour in terms of money; that must necessarily vary according to the different regions. Foreign legislative enactments which had been consulted equally did not fix the equivalents. Following those examples, the Decree left that duty to the higher local administrative authorities—to the "Commissaires de District." Then they went on to remark that it was absolutely essential that the valuation should be so fixed (as recommended by the Commission of Inquiry) as to preclude all arbitrariness, and to fix in a definite manner the amount payable by each taxpayer. Directions would be given to the Governor-General that, while acting under the powers conferred upon him, he should take every precaution to attain that end. The

latest reports from the Congo showed that steps had been taken to fix the equivalent on a just and equitable basis.

The tax payable being thus definitely fixed, it would become impossible to impose excessive taxation on the natives. For this to happen it would be necessary to register the native on the lists for a sum in money or its equivalent in excess of the sum legally due from him. Such an hypothesis was inconceivable, since the lists, being submitted to the Governor-General, would not receive his sanction unless they were strictly in accordance with legality. If any agent charged with the collection of the tax were to exact from the native more than the amount fixed on the rolls, he would be punishable under Article 63 of the Decree for such an abuse of power.

It is scarcely necessary to observe that these tables of equivalents, unless drawn up in accordance with some proper standard of value, afford no guarantee whatsoever against excessive demands on the part of the State. If the value assigned to any particular product has been fixed without reference to the time, labour, skill, sacrifice, and the other numerous constituents which in a country where the laws of supply and demand are allowed free play go to make up values, then such a system must always be liable to abuse at the hands of those empowered to fix the valuation.

It is instructive to note the interpretation which Vice-Governor Lantonnais has placed on the Secretaries-General's reassuring utterances in his instructions to the local authorities of the 8th September, 1906. He says:—

“L'indigène qui remet à l'État des produits domaniaux ne fournit, en effet, à celui-ci que la valeur de sa main-d'œuvre, puisque le produit appartient à l'État. Vous devrez donc évaluer d'abord le nombre d'heures de travail nécessaires pour récolter une certaine quantité de produits, un kilogramme, par exemple, puis la rémunération due pour ce travail d'après les salaires locaux. Cette rémunération se calculera de la même manière que sous le régime antérieur et en tenant compte du même taux de salaires, mais elle devra désormais être exprimée en numéraire sur ces tableaux d'équivalences.”

Before proceeding to examine any particular form of taxation in labour, and the manner in which the Congo Government have succeeded in continuing the former abuses in spite of the assurances of the Secretaries-General, some explanation seems required of the system under which the native receives remuneration for the taxes paid by him.

Remuneration to Natives for Taxes levied.

The system of remuneration for taxes levied appears to be peculiar to the Congo State.

The first signs of the introduction of this system is to be found in the Government instructions which appeared in the “Bulletin Officiel” in 1896. These instructions laid down that remuneration (a notion not readily reconcilable with the idea of a tax) was to be given to the natives for their labour, which should be not less in value than the labour rendered. A tariff was to be drawn up by the “Commissaires de District,” and approved by the “Gouverneur-Général.” The only tariffs approved by the Governor-General, said the Commission of Inquiry, fixed the maximum which the “Commissaires de District” were authorized to pay, *but did not state the minimum*. Hence it came that the natives were often given insufficient remuneration, and sometimes they were paid goods of no value at all.

In their Report to the King-Sovereign the Secretaries-General said that the remuneration granted by the State for taxes levied in kind was an act of pure condescension. It was to be maintained with that character. The Commission of Inquiry had justly observed that the remuneration served as an effective encouragement to labour. The amount of this remuneration was not left to the discretion of the tax-gatherer; it was fixed by higher authority, and the amount inscribed on the rolls for each taxpayer. Besides, the necessary steps were being taken to multiply the State stores, where the native would be at liberty to choose the articles he requires up to the amount due to him as remuneration.

It must be observed that, since there is no currency in circulation over the greater part of the Congo, the remuneration of the natives, though fixed on a monetary basis, is paid in cloth or salt. In reporting on the tax in chickwangué round Leopoldville, Mr. Thesiger describes the result of this system as follows:—

“Were this 6 centimes paid in coin the injustice would still be evident, but it is

paid for in trade cloth of which the State has in Leopoldville a practical monopoly, at a value of 10 fr. a piece of 7 metres, or in other trade goods a similar valuation. These figures speak for themselves. It may be further noted that the natives, having no use for all the cloth so earned, are glad to sell it again at 8 fr. a piece, thus incurring a diminution of their wage. This is so generally the case that a regular trade is carried on in the cloth so retailed."

Whatever advantages may be claimed for such a system as an incentive to work when carried out with a genuine desire to benefit the native, His Majesty's Government contend that it must necessarily wholly fail in its object when the so-called remuneration is merely of nominal value. That this is the case the evidence which His Majesty's Government will adduce further on will leave but little doubt. As it is at present, such a system cannot fail to introduce confusion into the minds of the natives as to where taxation ends and remuneration begins. Indeed, it makes it extremely difficult to know where to draw the line between the tax-payer and the hired labourer. Both are compelled to render labour to the State, both receive a nominal remuneration in kind, so that in practice, if not in theory, both are the slaves of the State.

As regards the establishment of State stores alluded to by the Secretaries-General, one of the Reform Decrees provided that a supplementary credit of 800,000 fr. should be opened for the establishment of State stores stocked with objects responding to the taste of the natives, in order that they should obtain the articles they want either as remuneration for the tax levied or as payment for labour.

Mr. Thesiger, as we have already seen, in speaking of currency, says:—

"From the personal point of view it would in too many cases be likewise worthless, as there are no magazines or stores where the native could purchase cloth or goods."

Mr. Vice-Consul Beak, in his Report of the 6th September, 1907, says:—

"I did not in the whole course of my journey come across one of the 'Magasins d'Etat approvisionnés d'objets répondant aux goûts et aux besoins des indigènes' contemplated in one of the June Decrees."

Further on occurs this passage:—

"The Tanganyika Concessions (Limited) has established numerous stores at Kambové, Ruwé, and elsewhere, which offer a pleasant contrast to the 'Magasins d'Etat' and at which the native is afforded a large variety of choice and a real chance of meeting his requirements. The stock held by the Kambové store, for instance, was far superior both in quality and variety to anything I had seen in the course of my journey since leaving Sierra Leone."

Various Forms of Taxation.

It will now be necessary to examine carefully the effects of the different forms of taxation under the Decree of the 18th November, 1903, as found to be in existence by the Commission of Inquiry. We will then deal with the remedies suggested by the Commission and nominally adopted by the Congo Government in the Decree entitled "Impositions Directes et Personnelles" of the 3rd June, 1906, and finally the manner in which that Decree has been put into operation according to the information which His Majesty's Government have received from their Consular officers in the Congo State.

It will suffice, in order to show that no real reforms have so far been introduced, to take only the two principal forms of taxation in labour, viz., chickwangue and rubber.

Chickwangue.

Chickwangue (Kwanga) is bread made of manioc, and constitutes the staple food of the natives over the greater part of the Congo State. The preparation of this article necessitates many kinds of work, the clearing of the forest, planting of the manioc, extraction of the root to make the chickwangue, cleaning, boiling, and

packing, &c. Each of the processes, with the exception of the clearing, is the work of women. These chickwangues, when prepared, are taken by the natives to the nearest Government posts for the consumption of soldiers, workers, and Government officials.

The tax in chickwangué is, according to the statement of the Commission of Inquiry, paid with great facility. It is a work to which the native is accustomed. When the number of consumers at the Government stations are not too numerous, and the tax is equitably distributed among a sufficiently dense population, the tax need not give rise to any complaint.

But the matter is very different in the vicinity of the more important stations where the native population have to provide for a great number of labourers and soldiers. In the country immediately round the chief centre of administration and the military camps the supply of chickwangué becomes a tax involving considerable hardship. As the villages in the immediate neighbourhood are insufficient for the supply, the tax becomes more burdensome owing to the necessity of transport.

As an illustration, the Commission of Inquiry instanced the case of Leopoldville. This station, which is growing in importance from day to day, numbered in 1905 about 3,000 labourers and soldiers. The district on which the burden of supplying the station with provisions is far from thickly populated. The villages are few and far between, and the population is on the decline.

The necessity thus arose of having to enlarge to an abnormal extent the field of taxation from which the supply of chickwangués was to be drawn. A village 79 kilom. distant, to the south of Leopoldville, was assessed at 350 chickwangués.

To equalize as far as possible the burden of this tax, the region was divided into three more or less concentric zones. The most remote distance in the first zone was 30 kilom. from Leopoldville, the maximum distance in the second is 43 kilom., and in the third 79 kilom.

The inhabitants of the nearest zone supplied their chickwangués every four days, those of the second every eight days, those of the third every twelve days. As the making of the chickwangué devolves on the women, it is according to the number of the women in each village that the amount of the tax is fixed. The maximum fixed for each woman is chickwangués for four, eight, and twelve days, respectively.

All the witnesses before the Commission of Inquiry were unanimous in condemning the system. The assessments are exorbitant, and the labour is continuous owing to the long journeys which the natives have to make in order to supply the station.

From calculations made by the State officials it is estimated, having regard to all the preliminary processes, that the production of 1 kilog. of chickwangué involves one hour's work, of which four-fifths is rendered by women. The average loaf of chickwangué weighs $1\frac{2}{3}$ kilog.

It will be seen that the women of the first zone who supply chickwangué at intervals of four days render to the State 100 hours' work per month, those of the second about 50, and those of the third about 33.

The most burdensome side of this tax is the continuity of labour which it involves. As chickwangué can be preserved only a few days, the native, even by doubling his activity, cannot at one time discharge his obligations extending over a long period.

The imposition, even if it does not demand his entire time, loses a part of its real character as a tax, and besets him therefore continually, through the preoccupation of these approaching deliveries, which make the task lose its true character, and transforms it into incessant compulsory labour.

By far the greatest hardship lies in the obligation which rests on the native to bring in at a fixed interval his quota of chickwangué. The Commission declared as inadmissible a system which necessitates the native travelling 150 kilom. in order to bring in a tax representing a value of approximately 1.50 fr.

For the most part women, children, and domestic slaves are charged with the duty of transport. These constitute the working element of the village, and if the greater part of their time is absorbed in the payment of taxes and in their personal maintenance they have no opportunity, even if they so desired, to give their energies to other labours. Hence the destruction of the native industries and the unquestionable impoverishment of the villages. The evidence taken before the Commission of Inquiry was unanimous in testifying to the general misery which reigned in those parts. One witness went as far as to say:—

"If the system under which the natives are obliged to supply the 3,000 labourers at Leopoldville continues for another five years the population of the district will have disappeared."

Without entirely sharing this pessimistic view the Commission admitted that there was some truth in it.

The Commission of Inquiry suggested that the following remedies might be applied. There was, they said, urgent necessity for the establishment in the immediate vicinity of the great centre of population of "cultures vivrières," the size of which would depend on the number which had to be fed. The wives of soldiers might, to a certain extent, be employed upon such work as might be best suited to their special aptitudes. In the meantime, the Commission thought the Government might feed the labourers at certain stations partially on rice or dried fish, as the "Compagnie du Chemin de Fer du Bas-Congo" fed their coloured staff.

In any case, if it were impossible for the Government to reform the system radically all at once, and it were necessary for them to continue for some time to come to exact a supply of foodstuffs from the taxpayers living at great distances, they should take steps to relieve the heavy burden caused by the transport. This transport should, as far as possible, be performed by mechanical or animal power. Thus it would be desirable that in the region of Leopoldville, traversed by the railway, arrangements should be made for the transport by rail, on easy terms, of the chikwangués furnished by the extreme south of the district. If the experiment made at Leopoldville in 1904 to utilize camels should prove satisfactory, this mode of transport should be generalized.

The Secretaries-General, in their Report to the King, pointed out, with regard to the transport of chikwangué to Leopoldville in the south district, that since the 1st July, 1905, in consequence of an abatement in the tariff for certain categories of merchandize, the transport of chikwangué by rail had become possible, and that since that date the natives had been at liberty to deposit their chikwangués at appointed places along the line; but that it had been found that only on rare occasions did the natives avail themselves of this advantage, preferring to bring the tax in themselves to Leopoldville.

The State, they said, was becoming daily in a better position to relieve the taxpayers living at great distances from furnishing food-stuffs, thanks to the measures taken for feeding the native staff by establishing in the neighbourhood of the great centres of population of "cultures vivrières." Such plantations had been created in the neighbourhood of Leopoldville, Coquilhatville, and Stanleyville. Each plantation employed 300 workmen under the direction of an expert. The Government had besides ordered at stations of secondary importance, wherever the nature of the soil would permit, the creation of plantations of banana trees, arachides, maize, beans, potatoes, rice, manioc, &c.; forty-four posts already possessed such plantations. Rice was cultivated in large quantities at Kitobola, Gongola, and Roméc.

Mr. Vice-Consul Armstrong, in his despatch of the 2nd August, 1907, says:—

"At Leopoldville, the centre of the Congo State's greatest works, namely, the head of the Lower Congo Railway and the port for all the Upper Congo river steamers, some 2,000 natives are employed. These men are fed by the population of the Stanley Pool district, which is their tax to the State. The natives who are obliged to feed these workmen are called upon to travel in many instances very long distances to deliver their tax at Leopoldville; but the greatest evil arising from this form of taxation is that the natives are obliged to deliver this tax every four or five days, as the case may be, according to the distances they have to travel; but in any case it keeps the population continually on the road to Leopoldville, so that, practically speaking, they are never free to work for themselves. Although much more leniency is being shown the native now than heretofore, nevertheless this tax in no way fulfils the obligation of forty hours' labour per month. (*Vide* 'Bulletin Officiel,' June 1906. Article 2: 'Impositions directes et personnelles.')

Here is what Mr. Thesiger, His Majesty's Consul at Boma, says on the subject of the tax in chikwangué and fish:—

"From the administrative point of view the tax in chikwangué, the native bread-stuff, with which the native employés, labourers, and soldiers are fed in the Upper Congo districts, is one of the most important."

“In Leopoldville the State employs some 1,200 workmen, who, together with a detachment of 120 soldiers and their wives and children, number about 2,000 persons, for whom rations are found by imposing a tax in chikwangue on the women living in the surrounding villages. To obtain the necessary supply the tax is estimated at 400 kilog. per head yearly, for which, by ‘un acte de pure condescendance,’ the State pay 6 centimes a kilogramme in trade goods, thus apparently giving back in kind the full value of the tax of 24 fr. imposed.

“As a matter of fact, the local market of chikwangue is 10 centimes a kilogramme, and on the other side of the Stanley Pool 25 centimes per kilogramme can be obtained at Brazzaville in the French Congo. Thus, if the native were free to sell the produce of his own lands and of his own labour, each 100 kilog. would be worth at least 40 fr., leaving a profit of 16 fr. to the native even after the maximum tax had been paid.

“Were this 6 centimes paid in coin the injustice would still be evident, but it is paid for in trade cloth, of which the State has in Leopoldville a practical monopoly, at a value of 10 fr. a piece of 7 metres, or in other trade goods a similar valuation. These figures speak for themselves. It may be further noted that the natives, having no use for all the cloth so earned, are glad to sell it again at 8 fr. a piece, thus incurring a diminution of their wage. This is so generally the case that a regular trade is carried on in the cloth so retailed.

“As regards the time and labour necessary to produce these 100 kilog. of chikwangue, the Reports of Mr. Vice-Consul Armstrong and the missionaries all agree that to produce the amount necessary to free her of all obligations to the State, each woman has practically to work incessantly twelve months in the year. So much so is this the case that Mr. Armstrong reports ‘it is impossible for any of them to leave their villages at any time for fear of the consequences of a shortage in the supply, for which they are liable to punishment,’ while the Rev. Mr. Stonelake and the Rev. Mr. Hope-Morgan both testify that, in consequence of the incessant labour imposed by this tax, the women have practically ceased to bear children. Their work is further increased by the fact that the chikwangue has to be brought in every four, eight, or twelve days, and, although this is supposed to be the men’s work, as a matter of fact it is carried out to a very large extent by the women and children.

“Forced labour, such as this, differs only in name from slavery, and by it the Administration are enabled to feed their workmen at a merely nominal rate instead of having to buy chikwangue on the open market or of importing rice at a considerable cost to the State.

“A solution of this question would be the payment to the State workmen of what is known here as ‘chop-money,’ namely, a weekly sum for food, which each man then provides for himself. By this means the supply of local produce would be encouraged, the native producer would get a fair price, while the cost to the State would be small. It would, however, mean the introduction of a system of payment to the workmen in coin and indirectly facilitate the payment of the taxes in money, two things which the Administration have no wish to introduce into the Upper Congo.

“Mr. Armstrong’s Report, of the 17th December, 1907, shows that in the Lake Leopold II district the price paid for the chikwangue is 4 centimes a kilogramme, mentioning especially Moleke, where the village has to supply fifty bunches of chikwangue and fifty bunches of fish weekly, and the natives complain ‘that they received practically nothing for their tax, which occupies the greater portion of their day’s work.’ At N’celenge the tax is 200 chikwangues and 200 fish daily, and each woman having to deposit five chikwangues, weighing about half a kilogramme each, every morning on the beach, and this amount has to be taken across the lake to Inongo every day. Here, again, Mr. Armstrong notes that they complained ‘only of the remuneration, and not of the endless work imposed upon them.’

“These cases bear out what I have said in the introduction to this Memorandum as to the tax being limited only by the needs of the State on the working capacity of the native, as, round Leopoldville, where the soil is poor, 400 kilog. a-year is about the limit each woman can produce, while in the more productive forest land the quantity is about doubled and the remuneration decreased, so that the nominal money value of the tax remains unchanged.

“Mr. Consul-General Smith’s Report bears out these statements, and, talking of the Leopoldville district, he says: ‘In my visits to the surrounding villages I did not see a woman who was not busily engaged in making chikwangue for the State, from which they receive but a trifle more than half its market value at Leopoldville.’ In the same Report he mentions that ‘at Bolenge the tax in dried fish is four bunches

per week per man, weighing about 1 lb. to the bunch. The price paid is 1 mitako (small brass rods) per bunch, while the current value is ten to fifteen times this amount. The native fishermen complain of the difficulties of supplying the amount demanded and the inadequacy of the remuneration. In high water, when fish are scarce, they are obliged to go a distance of 80 miles to the Ubanghi River to secure them.' And again: 'At Lulanga similar conditions prevail; the remuneration for the kwanga (chikwangue) and fish is only one-tenth of its current value, and I learned on the best authority that the soldiers sold their rations exacted by the State as a tax at a price ten times in excess of the remuneration allowed the native.'

"These instances of the State's dealing with the native, which are examples of, and not exceptions to, the general rule, could be increased indefinitely, but are, I think, sufficient to prove that the Administration, under the present system of taxation, treat the actual produce and property of the native as their own, inexorably exacting what they need and paying for it what they choose.

"Under these circumstances the depopulation of these districts, to which Mr. Armstrong and Mr. Smith both bear witness, is scarcely surprising, and it is certain large numbers of the natives fly to the French side to escape the burdens put upon them by the State; while the incessant work and exposure, especially in the rubber-collecting districts, must encourage the ravages of small-pox and sleeping sickness among an under-fed and over-worked population."

Here is what Mr. Vice-Consul Armstrong says in the passages above referred to:—

"The taxation of women in money (and in kwanga) creates a precedent which does not exist in any West African Colony as far as I am aware, and it necessarily follows that women who cannot supply chikwangue are permitted to pay their tax in money where they are living with their countrymen outside their towns who are in the employment of the missions or the traders, &c., which means that married men are called upon to supply a double tax.

"The tax in chikwangue falls exceedingly hard upon the female population of this district. It is the women alone who supply this tax, which is imposed as follows:—

"The tax, when levied in chikwangue, is based upon a value of 24 fr. per annum. The market value at Leopoldville is 10 centimes per kilogramme. The State remunerates the native at the rate of 6 centimes per kilogramme, and the difference, viz., 4 centimes, is credited to him for the payment of his tax.

"It is impossible to fix this tax with regard to the law of forty hours' labour per month. The time which each native occupies in making gardens, clearing forest, cultivating the plants, transporting the root from garden to village, soaking in water previously to eventually pounding and boiling to render it the taxable produce, is impossible of calculation.

"The amount required of each woman is therefore 400 kilog. per annum, which is calculated by the State as follows:—

"400 kilog. at 10 centimes market value, 40 fr.

"400 kilog. at 6 centimes State valuation, 24 fr.

"The difference is therefore the amount of her tax, viz., 16 fr.

"The men, on the other hand, are taxed in labour, which is not supposed to exceed forty hours per month. Their duties consist in carrying the tax in chikwangue to the State, an obligation which they do not always carry out, as one frequently sees both women and children engaged in this work.

"For the convenience and equalization of portorage the district supplying chikwangue are divided into zones.

"In the first zone the villages range from one hour to a day's journey from the receiving station. The natives supply their tax every four days.

"In the second zone, from one to two days' distance, in which case the tax is supplied every eight days. The third zone has now been abolished, and the people take their tax to a post on the railway every four days, and are allowed 8 centimes per kilogramme instead of 6 centimes as in the first and second zones.

"To what extent they are subject to other 'corvées' depends entirely upon the demands of the State authorities in the district. The villagers are naturally dependent to a certain extent upon the men to carry the food tax to the State posts; but the law recognizes the right of the "Commissaire de District" to call upon the men

for purposes of portorage in the district. I am not aware that such portorage is demanded to any large extent, and, indeed, the needs of the chikwangue carrying almost precludes the State from levying anything but a very small percentage of the male population for portorage, as the food tax is required to be carried to the State posts every four or eight days according to the distance of the towns from the State receiving posts throughout the year.

“The natives complain very bitterly of the hardship of this tax. I am informed by the natives themselves, the missionaries, and from intelligent natives who have received good educations, and whose testimony I should accept without reserve, that the women are constantly at work to supply this tax. To such an extent is this true that it is impossible for any one of them to leave their towns at any time for fear of the consequences of a shortage in the supply, for which they are liable to punishment.

“I have received several complaints from the natives that no reduction was made to them for reason of sickness in their towns, and I am told by the authorities, to whom I mentioned this complaint, that the natives in many cases address such complaints only to the receivers of taxes, who are not authorized to grant reductions, and who it would appear take little or no interest in the natives, instead of to the “Commissaire de District,” or the judicial authorities. I was further informed that the competent authorities had received no complaints from the natives since the application of the June 1906 Decrees; and this statement would appear to confirm the opinion that the natives made their representations through the wrong channels.

“In summarizing the foregoing Report, the most important points are:—

“1. The severity of the tax upon the women, which I am told, on good authority, has seriously reduced the birth-rate in the towns.

“2. The constant work involved by making chikwangue almost every day, and which is required to be delivered every four or eight days.

“3. The frequency with which the taxes become due curtails the freedom of the native to such an extent as to preclude him from doing anything which would be of material benefit to himself or family.

“The reason for making the chikwangue tax payable in such a constant manner, and in such short intervals, is that it spoils in a few days, and unless quite fresh it is almost uneatable.

“With regard to the portorage of the food, which devolves upon the men, I would point out that it does not, as far as I am able to find out, require all the men in the town to carry the tax to the post on each market day, and the reason that women and children are often employed in carrying out this ‘corvée’ is that the men are to a large extent engaged in the making of new plantations, hunting for game, which forms a large portion of their customary food, &c. This would account for the misstatements so often made that the men do no work, and leave it all to the women. Native customs define clearly the duties of men and women, and do not differ widely in this respect with European customs, and although the duties of the former are perhaps more varied and thus less burdensome, the degree of those duties is none the less important to the welfare of the town.

“The men’s duties as applied to towns and districts paying taxes in chikwangue are, perhaps, at the present time of very small importance, but this is due to the fact that they have no business, having practically nothing left to them to trade with. A very important item in the native man’s duty is the construction and repairing of their houses, which, judging from the condition of the houses in every part of the State that I have visited—with the exception of the State camps, which are admirably built, and none more excellent from every point of view than those at Leopoldville—would go to prove that the extent of their duties to the State were exceedingly heavy.

“Since my arrival in Leopoldville in April last I have heard of no cases of imprisonment or restraint of any kind being imposed upon the natives for shortage in their taxes. Exceptional leniency in this respect would seem to prevail; nor do I believe that such punishments have been inflicted, and this consideration towards the native would be proved by the fact that I knew of a village close to Leopoldville that had failed to bring in its tax for several months.”

Further on Mr. Armstrong says:—

“In the adjoining French Colony the price of chikwangue is higher than in the

Congo Free State. This is due to the fact that in the French Colony the price of food-stuff is governed by the supply and demand of a free market."

Again :—

"A market has now been built at Leopoldville, and the natives who are free to dispose of their food-stuffs are gradually being brought to avail themselves of the benefits it affords.

"It is obvious that the Reform Decrees as applied to this district are quite inadequate."

Mr. Vice-Consul Armstrong reports in his despatch of the 17th December, 1907 :—

"From N'gongo I went to Lishoko, a small village near the State post of M'bongo. The people of this town make 250 chikwangues, which have to be taken to the State post, about 6 miles distant, every four days.

"The village and its dependencies number twenty-six working men. It formerly contained thirty, four having run away to Bolobo.

"The supply of chikwangué is the woman's tax, and the men have to supply palm leaves and string for roofing houses and large mats, which are eventually sent to the new State post at Inongo.

"The conditions of the people here are identical with those of other villages supplying chikwangué."

In his Report on his tour to the Lake Leopold II district in August 1907, Mr. Vice-Consul Armstrong reports as follows :—

"The length of the M'fimi River, *i.e.*, from Mushie to the entrance of Lake Leopold II, I should judge to be about 150 miles, and the inhabitants upon its banks belong to the Ba-boma tribe.

"The people of these river villages supply a chikwangué and fish tax to the State. I was unable to find out the amount in kilogrammes which the towns at which I stopped supplied, but I presume the tax is everywhere the same, and none the less burdensome than in other parts.

"At the village of Moleke, situated at a distance of about 40 miles from Mushie, the people supplied 50 'bunches' of chikwangué and 50 'bunches' of fish every week, which they have to deliver at Mushie by canoe. The 50 'bunches' of chikwangué I presume to mean 50 kilog.

"The State valuation of the kwanga is 4 centimes per kilogramme.

"The natives complained that they received practically nothing for their tax, which occupies the greater portion of their day's work.

"They are supposed to be paid at the rate of 4 centimes per kilogramme for their chikwangué, which if carried out, would mean that the village tax in money would amount to 104 fr. per annum and in return they would receive 104 fr. worth of merchandize; but the valuation is a purely arbitrary one, since, by the system of monopoly no competition exists, and therefore no relative value can be attached to the produce. No one but the State Agents visit this part of the country, with the exception of the Roman Catholic missionaries, who travel on State steamers, and who profit by the prices fixed by the State.

"The people are paid by the State in trade goods for their produce, and as the transport of merchandize upon the river steamers from Leopoldville to the Lake Leopold II costs 90 fr. (3*l.* 12*s.*) per ton, the prices of merchandize, which consists chiefly of cotton cloth and salt, are very high. I found that a yard of ordinary cotton cloth costs 1.62 fr. per fathom; whereas salt, which is of a very good quality, is valued at 2 fr. per kilogramme."

Further on in the same Report Mr. Armstrong says :—

"From Inongo I crossed the lake to N'celenge, a native village on the lake, about an hour's steam from Inongo, the place of delivery of the rubber tax of a group of villages. This village consists of about 100 people. Their tax to the State is 200 chikwangué and 200 fish, which has to be taken across the lake to Inongo in canoes every day. There are forty women in the town and each one has to deposit five chikwangas on the beach every morning, each weighing about half a kilogramme. This food-stuff is valued by the State at 4 centimes per kilogramme, and the natives are paid accordingly.

‘The native labour is valued at 8 centimes per day, or 2 fr. 10 c. (1s. 11d.) per month in addition to their food (chikwangue), which is supplied to them by the State, who in turn levy it as a tax upon the people, giving them a small remuneration of 4 centimes per kilogramme for their work.

“The natives of this village complained only of their remuneration, and not of the endless work imposed upon them, their reasons being that they worked rubber, to obtain which they had to go very long distances, there being none left in the forest surrounding their village.

“The State have appointed one of the villagers as capita, and his duty is to see that the taxes are duly paid. He informed me that it was very difficult to make the people supply the amount demanded by the State, and that they were often short in their deliveries, for which they receive no punishment, generally speaking; occasionally a messenger would be sent, who would chastise those who were short. It happened that after I had left this village on a visit to the interior towns one of these messengers was sent to N’eele, and the captain of my steamer, whom I had left at the village awaiting further instructions, tells me that this messenger caught several people, chastised them for not having brought over their daily tax to the State post of Inongo, commandeered two or three fowls for himself, and threatened them with imprisonment if they did not at once fulfil their obligations.

“It is most important that the State should receive their food-stuff regularly, otherwise their workmen would be short of food.

“The Chief of N’eele had no authority whatever over the people, being unable to relieve them of their work or benefit them in any way.”

Mr. Vice-Consul Michell says in his Report of the 23rd March, 1907:—

“With regard to women, the making of kwanga, &c., has always been in force, and many kinds of work have long been performed by women. But it has not been publicly understood that both husband and wife have to ‘pay taxes.’ This is frankly declared by M. Lantonnois (p. 366), ‘Ainsi que vous l’aurez remarqué, l’Article 2 du nouveau Décret pose le principe de l’impôt en général, sans faire de distinction entre les sexes.’”

Here is what Mr. Michell says in regard to the plantations instituted by the State, and the encouragement given to native agriculture:—

“The other wild fruits of the forest form the staple food of the natives, and their cultivation is a matter of perfect indifference to the State. It will be noticed that in the section on agriculture nearly the whole space is taken up with (1) india-rubber, (2) cocoa, (3) coffee, (4) spices, and other products purely for export. Such articles as do not pay for export, as, for instance, cocoa and coffee, are being abandoned, only sufficient being raised to supply the State Agents.

“All the efforts of the Botanical Gardens at Eala are directed to raising plants that will pay. Those which only serve for native consumption, such as bananas, manioc, sugar-cane, maize, rice, sesame, and monkey-nuts are left entirely to the natives to cultivate or degenerate as they will. The natives owe nothing that they eat to the Government; rice was introduced by the Arabs, and the State lays a very heavy tax on it. The paragraph on p. 139 seems to imply that the State plants rice; this is not the case. The Mohammedan population and time-expired soldiers and workmen are compelled by the State to plant rice, which the State buys from them at such a ridiculously low price that it amounts to a severe imposition upon these classes. The 1,000 tons of rice ‘negotiated on the market of Stanleyville’ has been one of the heaviest burdens that district has had to bear.

“Kwanga and smoked fish are native inventions and fabrications. The State, instead of favouring these products, nearly strangles them with incessant heavy impositions.

“The policy of the State is well illustrated in the case of cotton. Although there is no reason why the cultivation and manufacture of this fibre should not become an important industry, as in Northern Nigeria, the State does nothing to favour it, as it does not pay for export. The plant is widely distributed and grows freely, but the valuable oil to be extracted from its seeds seems to be entirely unknown. The natives are greedy of oil and use great quantities, which they extract laboriously from pea-nuts, sesame, and palm kernels. I have suggested the use of cotton-seed oil to many Chiefs, but they had never heard of it before. There are many other products which grow freely, such as fenugreek, chick-peas (‘garbanzos’),

ginger, cloves, onions, vetches, and all kinds of leguminous plants, which would be of immense value to the badly-fed natives and their flocks, but which would require the encouragement of the State. Needless to say, the Government does not give the subject a thought, but contents itself with saying, 'It is difficult to induce the native to undertake the cultivation of anything more than the needs of his own existence require.'

Products of the Domain.

Rubber.

The collecting of copal, whether as fossil or resin, involves no hardship, and the Commission of Inquiry received no complaints on the subject. His Majesty's Government need therefore not dwell on this point. It is, however, otherwise with rubber. The collection of rubber is by far the most important and the most oppressive tax in the Congo. It is the main subject of complaint as constituting a breach of Article VI of the Berlin Act. Rubber is obtained by means of incisions made in the bark of certain trees and vines, and collecting the rubber in special receptacles, into which the latex flows. After a few hours these cups are emptied, and the contents, allowed to coagulate, are brought to the Government station in different forms, varying according to the district. In spite of the regulations for the preservation of the vine, the native often cuts the vine instead of making the incision, in order to enable him to obtain the latex more rapidly. The Commission were entirely unable to estimate the wealth of rubber in the State. It is a much disputed point, but they expressed the opinion that an exploitation which has lasted a good number of years has caused the exhaustion of the supply in the immediate vicinity of the villages.

This is an important point, as the greater the distance which the native has to go to collect the rubber the greater becomes the hardship of the tax.

This fact, the Commission said, explains the repugnance of the native for collecting rubber, which in itself is not a peculiarly unpleasant task:—

“Dans la plupart des cas,” say the Commissioners, “en effet, il [l'indigène] doit, chaque quinzaine, faire une ou deux journées de marche, et parfois davantage, pour se rendre à l'endroit de la forêt où il peut trouver, en assez grande abondance, les lianes caoutchoutières. Là, le récolteur mène, pendant un certain nombre de jours, une existence misérable. Il doit se construire un abri improvisé, qui ne peut évidemment remplacer sa hutte, il n'a pas la nourriture à laquelle il est accoutumé, il est privé de sa femme, exposé aux intempéries de l'air et aux attaques des bêtes fauves. Sa récolte, il doit l'apporter au poste de l'État ou de la Compagnie, et ce n'est qu'après cela qu'il rentre dans son village, où il ne peut guère séjourner que deux ou trois jours, car l'échéance nouvelle le presse. Il en résulte que, quelle que soit son activité dans la forêt caoutchoutière, l'indigène, à raison des nombreux déplacements qui lui sont imposés voit la majeure partie de son temps absorbé par la récolte du caoutchouc.”

It was scarcely necessary to remark, said the Commission of Inquiry, that this state of affairs constituted a flagrant violation of the law of “40 hours.”

“Selon nous,” they said, “la seule manière de mettre les nécessités de l'impôt d'accord avec le texte et l'esprit de cette loi consisterait à espacer considérablement les échéances. De cette façon le temps absorbé par les déplacements imposés à l'indigène pour se rendre à la forêt et en revenir perdrait de son importance, et le Décret qui fixe à quarante heures par mois le travail réclamé du contribuable pourrait recevoir une équitable application, si la quantité de caoutchouc demandée est sagement fixée et cesse d'être, comme aujourd'hui, un maximum rarement atteinte, qu'il est permis de croire exagéré.* On objecte l'imprévoyance qui fait le fond du caractère indigène, et l'on croit qu'il serait toujours tenté de retarder le moment où il devrait se mettre en mesure de satisfaire à ses obligations. Toutefois, nous pensons qu'on pourrait, sans grand inconvénient, réclamer du contribuable l'acquiescement de sa dette

* La quantité de caoutchouc demandée à titre d'impôt varie généralement d'après les localités. Il serait impossible à la Commission d'indiquer, même approximativement, quelle est la quantité qu'un indigène, une fois arrivé sur le lieu de la récolte, peut obtenir en quarante heures de travail. Les opinions les plus diverses ont été émises à ce sujet. Tout dépend de la richesse de la forêt et parfois du hasard. Mais le fait constaté dans l'A.B.I.R. et signalé ailleurs en-ore, que l'indigène, après un long séjour dans la forêt, ne rapporte souvent qu'une quantité bien inférieure au taux de l'imposition, nous permet de croire que ce taux est, en général, exagéré.

tous les trois mois, par exemple, et alors, au moment voulu, le blanc rappellerait au nègre insouciant ses devoirs. Les séjours dans la forêt devant être plus longs, mais moins fréquents, le récolteur jugerait sans doute utile de s'y construire un abri plus commode et de s'y faire accompagner par sa femme, qui pourrait lui préparer sa nourriture accoutumée.

“ De plus, dans la pensée de la Commission, l'impôt devant nécessairement être collectif, à cause de la difficulté de dresser les rôles nominatifs, les inconvénients résultant de l'espacement des échéances seront sensiblement atténués, et, d'autre part, il pourra être tenu compte, dans une plus large mesure, des convenances personnelles des contribuables.

“ Il va de soi que si, dans certains cas, l'impôt collectif ayant comme corollaire l'espacement des échéances n'était pas établi, il faudrait dans le calcul des heures de travail, avoir égard au temps que prennent à l'indigène les déplacements inséparables de la récolte du caoutchouc.”

The Secretaries-General, in their Report, referring to the suggestion of the Commission of Inquiry that the intervals between the payments of the tax should be extended, said that the new Decree had taken it into account by laying down that in principle the tax was payable monthly (“ par douzième ”): it further empowered the “ Commissaires de District ” to fix the dates on which the tax should fall due at intervals of two or more months, according to local requirements and the needs of the population.

At every station would be publicly posted a copy of the list of the taxpayers of region; every taxpayer could there ascertain the amount of his tax, the mode of payment, and the date of collection.

Article 29 of the new Decree provided that the Governor-General, in exceptional circumstances, might by order remit the native tax either in whole or in part. Article 2 of the Law exempted the native, if physically unfit, from the payment of the tax, since the Article only applied to the able-bodied. The provisions of Article 29 contemplated cases of a more general remission, such as the case of a people stricken with disease—sleeping sickness, for instance—or afflicted by some calamity, who might be unable to fulfil their duty.

The law, said the Secretaries-General, could not do more than set up these general rules. It would be the duty of the higher local authorities to subject the agents intrusted with the collection of the tax to the continual and vigilant control which the former had been ordered to exercise. These agents—on whose decision did not depend the amount of the tax, since their powers were limited and defined; who were punishable for abuse of power; who were without direct interest in the yield of the tax—were called upon to discharge their functions in the Congo under the same conditions as those of the fiscal agents of any other Colony. If the provisions of the law were strictly applied, as should in future be the case, the criticisms which the Commission made when examining the different kinds of taxes could not be repeated, neither with regard to the amount of the tax, its continuity, nor the indiscriminate employment of force. The disadvantages arising from the necessity of the tax-payers having to travel great distances equally found their remedies in the greater intervals between the dates when the tax fell due. The Governor-General was already in a position to affirm that these intervals had been fixed in agreement with the native Chiefs, so as to obtain the desired result.

Now let us compare these reassuring statements of the Secretaries-General with the actual state of affairs at the present moment, as reported by His Majesty's Consular officers and the United States' Consul-General at Boma since the issue of the Reform Decrees.

Vice-Consul Michell says:—

“ The imposition of taxation on both men and women is not only a hardship but an unmitigated evil. In one case that I know of the whole population was constantly at work. At Liboko, on the Lindi, there are three large villages all the men of which are employed for about twenty-two days in every month making rubber, making baskets, and then carrying it to Bengamisa. The women accompany their husbands for a part of the time; the rest of the month is taken up by carrying loads for the State transport between Kaparata and Bengamisa. All the portering between the mouth of the Lindi and Banalya, on the Aruwimi, is to my knowledge done by the women. The children are not compelled to accompany their parents, but they generally do so, because if they stay in the village the sentry, or, as he is now

called, the 'messenger indigène,' finds work for them to do, carrying sticks, leaves, and other building materials. The consequence is that a school which was started in the triple village, with 100 names on the book, by a native teacher, at the urgent request of the Chiefs, dwindled away to nothing in a few days. The people made a great feast on the opening of the school, but the 'messengers' (there were four of them) reported that it would interfere with the collection of rubber, and it was suppressed by the agent at Bengamisa. On my reporting the case to the 'Chef de Province' the agent was removed, and the school was allowed to reopen. But this is only one village of which I happened to hear. The abuse is likely to occur, and doubtless exists, all along the Lindi, and probably in many other places.

"It is difficult to see what advantages such a system secures to these 'tax-payers.'"

Vice-Consul Beak says, reporting on his tour in the Katanga:—

"I am unable to quote figures, but, as in the case of the Lower Congo, every station between Ponthierville and Kabombo, where the rubber zone may be said practically to end, reports a decrease in the yield. The reports of Forest Inspectors, the most reliable informants, are most disheartening. They tell of the wholesale and wanton destruction of valuable vines by the native in order to comply with the Government's demands. These reports are confirmed in general by those received from native sources. The natives declare that 'rubber is no longer like the waters of the Congo, nor like the stones at Matadi,' and that they must 'go far' to find it."

In another Report Mr. Beak says:—

"The villages immediately to the south of the 5th parallel are taxed in rubber, which in this vicinity is, or rather has been, fairly plentiful, and for this purpose they again are grouped under local Chiefs. They take rubber to the post of Tshofa, on the Lomami. In this section I found dissatisfaction very general and complaints numerous. Although the information given is from purely native sources, I have adequate reasons in this particular case for believing it to be correct.

"Four instances will, I think, suffice:—

"1. Village of Manene Lubangi. Rubber tax, 210 kilog. every two months to be delivered at Tshofa, on the Lomami. Receipts for month of January 1907, 130 kilog. Rubber to be found four days distant from village, thence to Tshofa, a journey of ten days. Rubber scarce. Collection takes up whole time of all inhabitants. This village pays neighbouring Chief three goats a month for permission to cut rubber in his territory.

"2. Village of Bena Hamba. Tribe, Balubas. Tax, 12 kilog. of rubber every two months, for which natives pay 2 dotis (6s. 8d.). Rubber plentiful close to village, but few people to collect it because sleeping sickness has reduced population from 200 to 40.

"3. Village of Katangi. Chief, Wwana Kasongo. Tribe, Bena Kumbi. Under "Poste" of Tshofa, on Lomami. Population of Bena Kumbi group of villages, 392 men. Rubber tax, 351 kilog. every two months. Amount paid already: 15th January, 98 kilog.; 10th April, 70 kilog. In 1905 these villages furnished 2,797 kilog. of rubber to the 'Poste de Muebe.' Among them is one refractory village, Bena Missi, which refused to collect rubber. A month ago the Chief sent thither his brother, whom the inhabitants killed. This fact not yet reported to 'Chef de Poste' at Tshofa. Rubber used to be plentiful, but now scarce on account of white demand. Vine cut indiscriminately in spite of orders to the contrary. For this rubber collection whole village migrates temporarily to bush, where grass shelters are built. Women and children accompany men to assist and to prepare food.

"4. Village of Kassongo Kiboko. Head-quarters of Moima, Chief of Bena Kumbi, who is overlord of nine villages. Appointed or confirmed on the 8th June, 1902. Pays rubber monthly to Tshofa. Formerly paid six bags per mensem, but now only two, because sleeping sickness has killed more than half his people (this particular village fourteen deaths out of population of forty). Rubber four days distant from village; three days thence to Tshofa. Forty men working whole month can collect one bag, for which they receive 2 dotis (6s. 8d.). Grass huts in bush; whole village migrates, &c.

"So much has already been both said and written on the evils of the rubber tax that I refrain from making any comment on the instances quoted above."

Again:—

“The tax may assume various forms, professedly to suit the convenience of the natives, more really, I think, to answer the requirements of the Company. The local official decides what form the taxation of his district shall take, and if he has any regard for his own advancement he will exact rubber wherever it exists. The collection of rubber involves hardships in comparison with which those of the ‘*corvée*’ and transport are insignificant. The long list of taxation in kind serves, in some degree to conceal the rubber tax, which the native loathes more than anything else. The evils of this rubber tax have been too fully dealt with elsewhere to need recapitulation.”

Vice-Consul Michell, reporting on his tour in the Ubanghi district, says:—

“At Moenge I was kindly received by M. Redard, a Swiss, in sole charge of the post. Here a very interesting condition prevails. M. Redard told me that he had never been to any of the villages of his district with a single armed man, nor had he made any effort to compel the natives to bring in rubber. He explains to the Chiefs the necessity of paying the tax, and the advisability of doing so voluntarily, in order to avoid punitive expeditions, which would be conducted by military officers and not by himself. The consequence is that, without leaving his post, the monthly tale of rubber brought in has risen from 300 kilog. to 1,000 and 1,200 kilog. This, considering the poverty in rubber of the forests of the Itimbiri, he considers extremely satisfactory, and he informed me that he intended to quote his own experience to the authorities at Brussels as a proof that the natives are amenable to mild and reasonable treatment. In other posts on the Itimbiri M. Redard’s success was acknowledged, but it was attributed to the influx of tribes from other districts into his own, the population having thus largely increased.

“Doubtless M. Redard would reply that this also was due to the attraction of his treatment of them.

“From Moenge I proceeded to Mandungu, where a different method is in force. At several villages on the way I received complaints of the pressure put on the natives to bring in rubber, which, they said, was now nearly exhausted, while their natural employment was fishing and paddling. There is a sharp line of division in this country between river populations and bush folk, the two classes being usually on bad terms. Even between themselves the fishermen of one season do not combine with those of another season, and cultivators of fields are distinct from those who live by hunting, so that river people object to being taxed in rubber, and their presence in the forests is resented by the bushmen. The consequence is that M. Delforge, the ‘*Chef de Poste*’ at Mandungu, and M. Johansen, who is in charge of the detachment of ‘*Force Publique*,’ spend alternately most of their time in the district visiting villages with an armed escort in order to induce the people to bring in their rubber. I heard no complaints of ill-treatment, but at several villages the people were weary and depressed, affirming that the men and children had to work ‘every day’ for Bula Matadi.”

Mr. Vice-Consul Armstrong says, reporting on his tour in the Lake Leopold II district in August 1907:—

“I was informed by the ‘*Chef de Poste*’ at Nioki that the villages within his district were taxed in rubber. The amount of rubber required of each adult male native was 1 kilog. 200 grammes per month. This represents 14 kilog. 400 grammes per annum, or a tax of 7 fr. per head in money, the rubber being valued at 50 centimes (or 5*d.*) per kilogramme. For this each native receives a remuneration of 7 fr. 20 c. in trade goods, *i.e.*, the State valuation of his tax.

“This amount of 1 kilog. 200 grammes of rubber is calculated by the State as forty hours’ work.

“The natives in the district of Nioki formerly made 4 tons of rubber per month, but since the ‘*strict observance*’ (a statement which subsequent experience entirely refutes) of the law of forty hours’ labour this has been reduced to 1 ton 200 kilog. per month. The ‘*Chef de Poste*’ informed me that the natives in his district had refused to work rubber, and were paying nothing to the State as a tax. I was unable to visit these towns, being desirous of devoting my attention to the districts on the banks of the lake.

“At the next post, N’kutu, I found that practically the same conditions prevailed as at the former place.

‘No action had been taken by the State, up to the time I left, against these people who had paid no taxes.’

Again:—

“The village of M’pili consists of a few small huts, and contains a male population of ten adults. Their tax to the State is 1 kilog. of rubber per man per month, or 120 kilog. per annum for the whole village, which, calculated upon a money value of 50 centimes per kilogramme, the remuneration which the State allows them, amounts to 60 fr. (2l. 8s.) per annum for the whole village.

“This amount they are paid in trade goods, *i.e.*, cotton cloth or salt, in the following manner:—

“At the end of every thirty days, which is called market day, the tax is taken to N’celenge, a few hours distant from their village.

“The work of two men (called by the State a ‘Chef de groupe’) is put together, which should amount to fifteen strings (each man making seven and a-half strings).

“One man of each ‘Chef de groupe’ is deputed to carry this amount to N’celenge, so that five men only have to appear on market days. If the amount which each man brings is of good quality, and none but the best is accepted (all inferior being burnt), he receives in exchange 2 yards of cotton cloth (*i.e.*, 1 yard each). One string of rubber weighs when dry 170 grammes, so that on market day it is wet, and must weigh more than 170 grammes, as it takes about three months to dry, I am told.

“If the amount is less than that specified by the State the native receives payment in proportion to the amount which he brings.

“One of the natives of this village brought me a strip of common white domestic, about 2 yards long and 12 inches wide, which he stated he had received in payment of his rubber, complaining that he had not received his full payment, and adding that a piece of cloth of such dimensions was of no value to him.

“In answer to my questions, he stated that his rubber tax for the month had been completed.

“I mentioned this to the ‘Inspecteur d’État,’ whom I met afterwards in the lake, and he explained to me that he had received similar complaints, but that he had in each case proved to the native that the amount specified had not been brought in.

“He also stated that the native could allow his remuneration to accumulate if he so desired, but they were ‘so distrustful’ of the European that they preferred to take what they were given at the time it was due.

“I do not in the least doubt the absolute sincerity of the ‘Inspecteur d’État,’ whose statements I accept without hesitation; but in this case, from what I have seen and heard from others, I should be inclined to the opinion that the natives’ distrustfulness was due chiefly to fear of the European, for, in order to maintain the present system of rubber taxation, nothing but fear of the consequences of shortage in the supply could make them fulfil their obligations, and submit to a tax involving incessant labour.

“The natives assured me that they spent twenty days and nights in the forest in each month to collect the amount of their tax. They told me that they were not ill-treated by the officials; and that they were thankful the armed sentries have been withdrawn from their towns; their people were no longer killed, and that they were living in the hope that their taxes would be reduced.

“A capita resides in the village, and is chosen from among the inhabitants. His duty is to see that the taxes are duly carried to the State post when they become due at the end of the thirty days, and for this purpose he has a calendar made of thirty small sticks threaded on a string, one of which he moves every day. He receives no remuneration from the State, and therefore takes a share of his townsmen’s earnings.

“From M’pili I walked to N’gongo, which I believe to be the largest village on the west side of the lake.

“The village, together with a few small villages in the surrounding country, contained, according to the census made by the State, 120 adult men, seventeen of whom had recently run away to the mission station at Bolobo to escape the hardships of the rubber tax, and others, the Chief told me, were on the verge of departure, which I should think was highly probable.

“This village was once very large and influential, but the history of past years, which has been written by Mr. Consul Casement and Mr. Scrivener, of the Baptist Missionary Society, the information of the Chief and natives who survived the treatment, and the manifest evidences of these abuses which are still witness of past maladministration, convince me that the population must have formerly been very dense.

“A number of people have fled to the village nearer the main river, and have placed themselves under the protection of the respective Chiefs of the villages at which they reside.

“I refer to past abuses, not with the intention of hinting that such things are still in existence, but with a view of explaining the possibility of enforcing the payment of taxes which are such a burden to the people.

“This village (N’gongo) supplies 1,140 kilog. of rubber per annum. The tax is 6 fr. per head, payable in rubber at the rate of 50 centimes per kilogramme. Each man, therefore, has to supply 1 kilog. per month. The tax, therefore, amounts to 720 fr. per annum, for which they receive 720 fr. in trade goods as remuneration. The natives work from twenty to as much as twenty-five days in the forest collecting the tax.

“It takes them eight days to get from their town to that part of the forest where the rubber grows. The distance which they cover in the eight days must be nearly 200 miles. They tell me that they very often exhaust their supply of food, in which case they are either obliged to go without or beg from some village in the neighbourhood, to whom they give payment in the bows and arrows.

“The village is divided into forty ‘Chefs de groupe’ of three men each, one of each ‘Chef de groupe’ being responsible for the delivery of the tax at N’eelenge (30 miles distant) on the market day (the thirtieth day).

“I arrived in this village in time to see the arrangements that were made for taking the rubber to the market of N’eelenge. The capita and his retinue summoned the people to bring their rubber by blowing a horn. The tax-gatherers assembled at his compound with the rubber, where it was counted, and a representative of each ‘Chef de groupe’ was chosen. On the following morning they set out for N’eelenge accompanied by the capita.

“I then proceeded to the State post at M’bongo. The officer in charge had unfortunately left two days before my arrival, so that I had no opportunity of obtaining information as to the distances the natives went to gather rubber.

“The post had formerly been a very large one, but now shows signs of having been neglected.

“I was informed by my interpreters, one of whom was a native of the village of N’gongo, and the other who had made a journey through this country some two or three years previously, that this town of M’bongo was once very large. All that remains to-day is a population of perhaps twenty people, living in a state of filth it is difficult to describe.

“I returned to the lake via N’gongo to M’bali, an old State post on the lake.

“This town, or group of towns, comprises sixty adult men. Their individual tax to the State is 1 kilog. 200 grammes of rubber per month. These people are obliged to go the district in close proximity to the State instruction camp at Irebu on the main Congo River to find rubber. The people state that it takes them seven days’ walk to get into the rubber forest and six days’ actual work in the forest to make their tax.

“This is the more significant seeing that upon examination of their tax-paper I found that the average amount of rubber they had supplied to the State as a tax in the first half-year of 1907, viz., from January to May inclusive, averaged 25 kilog. per month, whereas the amount they should have supplied was nearly 60 kilog. per month. This bears out the statement that it is impossible to make the amount required in a month.

“The villagers complained that they receive no pay for their work, and seeing that they are paid in cloth at $7\frac{1}{2}d.$ per yard, or salt at $1s. 11d.$ per kilogramme, at the rate of 50 centimes per kilogramme of rubber, it was impossible that they could have received more than a very small payment. The capita told me that he had been often beaten and imprisoned for shortage in supplies.

“The rubber on the west side of the lake is practically worked out, and that which remains is scattered over the country which is at a distance of from 25 to 30 miles from the Congo River.

“I left M’bali and proceeded to the country at the extreme north-east and north-

west of the lake, visiting Lukanga, Lomi, and Bolia on its banks, and from Lomi went overland to Bolia, passing through the largest and most important town I have seen in the Congo Free State, viz., Ibeke.

“At Lukanga and its surrounding villages there are thirty-three ‘Chefs de groupe,’ that is, ninety-nine men, and the tax is 99 kilog. of rubber per month, or 1 kilog. per man monthly.

“The capita, who is an old employé of the State, stated that the people of this village went to Irebu and Lake Mantumba for their rubber.

“The men were absent when I arrived at the village, and the capita said they had been gone seven days when I arrived, and he further informed me that the taxes here were payable every fifteen days, and that the people went out for ten or twelve days twice monthly. I afterwards found out that the reason of this double tax was that they never brought sufficient in the first ten or twelve days, and consequently took them a further ten or twelve days to make up arrears.

“According to their tax-paper, they only supplied 596 kilog. of rubber during the whole of the year 1906, which would go to prove that the present tax is excessive.

“At Lomi the Chief told me that he had about forty men, and their tax-papers showed the number as forty-five, viz., fifteen ‘Chefs de groupe’ of three men each. Their tax was 45 kilog. per month.

“The village, he told me, was divided into two parts, taking their rubber alternately to the post every fifteen days. The people go to the borders of Lake Mantumba for the rubber and spend a great part of their time in the forest.

“They say they receive no pay, and the Chief tells me that he was recently imprisoned at Bolia for six weeks.

“At Boliabompeti there were thirty working men, *i.e.*, ten ‘Chefs de groupe,’ who should supply 30 kilog. of rubber per month. They stated that there was very little rubber in their district, and that they had to go to the Lake Mantumba country to find it. They spend from twenty to twenty-two days in the forest.

“I was informed that three men had been imprisoned two weeks before my arrival, but had been released shortly afterwards.

“They complained that they received little or no payment. Upon examination of their tax-papers I found that they had only supplied a fraction over 43 kilog. of rubber in the first six months of this year, *i.e.*, from January to June inclusively, whereas they should have supplied 180 kilog., or 30 kilog. monthly.

“Upon my arrival at Botuale, the next village, there was not a person in the village. It appeared to be quite new, and in two huts there were fires still burning. Soon after my arrival an old woman appeared, who told me that the Chief would return to the village on the following day.

“The men, with the exception of the Chief and capita, and two others, who had gone to the next town of Ibeke, to deliver their rubber, were in the forest collecting their tax.

“The Chief arrived in the night, and a few more women gradually returned to the town from their hiding places in the bush when they found that there was no danger.

“The town consisted of ten working men, a few women, and only two children, one a boy of about 12 years and the other a girl of 4 or 5 years.

“The capita had no tax-paper, as he told me that they were under the Chief of the village of Ibeke.

“Their tax was 1 kilog. of rubber per head.

“On the following day two men returned from taking their rubber to Bolia, about 35 miles distant. They had taken fifteen strings, about 22 kilog. 400 grammes, and had received in remuneration 1 yard of blue baft cotton cloth. They told me that their tax had been complete, and that the State officer had ordered them to return with more rubber in ten days’ time.

“They told me that they spent the greater part of their time in the forest surrounding Lake Mantumba, and complained of the hardships of travel and work in the forest, which, for the greater part of the year, was under water.

“I then went to Ibeke, the largest and most influential village in all the lake district.

“The village, together with small outlying villages, contains 981 adult men divided into 327 ‘Chefs de groupe,’ and they supply 3 kilog. of rubber per group, *i.e.*, 1 kilog. per head, or 981 kilog. per month.

“The capita of this town, who is a son of the Chief Hanga, is also responsible for

a further group of villages containing 135 men, who likewise supply 1 kilog. of rubber per head per month.

“According to tax-papers in possession of the capita of Ibeke village, the natives had only supplied 4 tons 412 kilog. of rubber for the first six months of this year (1907) instead of 5 tons 986 kilog., the amount assessed.

“The Chief, capita, and people were unanimous in declaring that they, the rubber gatherers, spent only four days per month in their village, the remainder of their time being spent in the forest making rubber.

“In confirmation of this, I repeat a statement made to me some days after having visited these towns by a native employé of the post of Bolia. This man appeared, from his statements, to be a messenger of the post, his duty being to carry letters for the State officers at Bolia to the State post at Bikoro on Lake Mantumba, and also on rare occasions to Coquilhatville. I questioned him as to the distances between Bolia to Bikoro and Coquilhatville, which, he said, were three and six days respectively. The ‘Chef de Poste’ at Bolia told me he thought it would take eight days to go from Bolia to Bikoro.

“The messenger told me that to make the afore-mentioned journey in three days required forced marches, and that the rubber gatherers would take four or five days. The roads, he said, were inundated with water at nearly all times of the year. In reply to inquiries as to the time the rubber gatherers spent in the forest collecting their tax, he informed me that they spent from ten to fifteen days actually in the forest. In explaining the hardships of their work he also told me that they very often exhausted their food supplies before their tax was complete, in which case they went to Ikoko, an American Mission station and native village on Lake Mantumba, to purchase food, and for which they had to pay very dearly to the natives. Having made inquiries from the Mission at Ikoko, I obtained confirmation of this statement.

“Between Ibeke and Bolia there is a series of small villages, and these, together with the other villages which I did not visit, form what is called the ‘Chefferie’ of Bolia. This group contains 1,695 working men, who are taxed 600 grammes of rubber per head per month, *i.e.*, 1 ton 17 kilog. per month.

“This part of the country seems to be still fairly thickly populated, and the State census for the Bolia ‘Chefferie’ for this year estimates the number of women and children at 4,030.

“I spoke with the capita of Ibeuga, who told me of the imprisonment of his people, as reported in the previous pages of this Report. He informs me that the distance from his village to the rubber forest was only two or three days, which proves that the task of these people is far easier than that of any village I visited.

“When I returned to Inongo I had an interview with the ‘Commissaire de District,’ and he asked me if I had heard of any abuses committed against the natives. I informed him that I had heard of only one case, in which a native had been killed by a sentry in the village of Bokoki. My informant insinuated that the ‘Chef de Poste’ at M’bongo had heard of the matter and inquired into it as soon as it had happened, and had tacitly agreed not to report it so long as he made the people work. I did not tell this to the ‘Commissaire de District,’ as when he asked me the question quoted above the matter had entirely escaped my mind, and as he read me a dispatch on the subject from the ‘Chef de Poste’ at M’bongo, which he seemed to have received soon after the complaint had been reported to me, stating that ‘the charge was quite untrue, for the reason that he (the ‘Chef de Poste’) had never heard anything about it.’ My informant might have been charged with maliciously calumniating a State officer, in which he would have been seriously handicapped, seeing that the ‘Commissaire de District’ had ordered the ‘Chef de Poste’ himself to immediately constitute an inquiry—he being an officer of the judicial police—pointing out to him that ‘his not having heard of the matter was no reason in support of his view that such an act had not been committed.’

“I then mentioned to him the conclusion I had formed as to the taxation, saying that the people worked from twenty to twenty-five days per month. He stated that he had received similar complaints of a sufficiently serious nature as to have inspired him to write to the ‘Inspecteur’ suggesting a revision in the tax with regard to its application being so modified as to conform with the fundamental principle of forty hours’ labour per month.

“There is not the slightest doubt in my mind that the average month’s work of every native is not less than twenty days.

“Mr. Murdoch, in his article which appears in the weekly edition of the ‘Times’ of the 1st November, states that the natives are required to bring in fifteen strips of rubber each. According to their tax-papers this is not the case, as fifteen strips of rubber would weigh, as Mr. Murdoch says, in giving the weight of a strip he purchased and which I saw weighed, 2 kilog. 550 grammes, whereas the individual tax is not calculated at more than 1 kilog. 200 grammes anywhere, as far as I know. The natives brought each thirty strips, he says, which being the case they brought more than their tax. These people were [evidently from the village of N’gongo, as this was the only village which supplied more than they were actually obliged to.

“He refers to the thirty strips of rubber being the work of two men, in which case their statements to him did not coincide with what they told me, or with the conditions of the tax-paper—which divided the village into ‘Chefs de groupe’ of three men—so that thirty strips of rubber represented the work of three men and not two. And even this would be more than the amount of their tax, as seven and a-half strips equal, roughly speaking, 1 kilog. 200 grammes. I also purchased a strip of rubber which, when weighed two months afterwards at Leopoldville, contained 170 grammes.

“This is a discrepancy of small moment, since the importance of the tax, whether it is of 1 kilog. or 10, rests upon the time taken to produce that amount. I accept absolutely the statements of Mr. Murdoch and the natives as to the distances the natives cover to obtain the amount of their tax.

“The people in the Yambata district complained that they spent the greater part of their time in the forest, and as their tax was 3 kilog. of rubber per month, as compared with the amount of 1 kilog. 200 grammes imposed in the Lake Leopold II district, it would appear that the amount of the tax was fixed more with a view to obtain as much rubber as possible than to adhere to the law of forty hours’ labour.

“The native is remunerated at the rate of 50 centimes per kilogramme for the rubber he produces, and despite their statements to the contrary, the tax-papers show that they receive this amount, and I believe they are paid, with the exception of one or two rare instances, and these are not paid probably by reason of their continual failure to adequately fulfil their obligation, which is in almost every case impossible.

“The following is an estimate of the profits of the State on their rubber tax. I take the village of N’gongo as being a large one, and one of the few villages that supply the amount actually assessed:—

Amount assessed yearly	..	..	..	..	1,110 kilog. of rubber.		
						£	s. d.
1,110 kilog. of rubber at 10 fr.	..	..	..	..	..	576	0 0
Amount paid to natives at 50 c. per kilogramme	..	..	..	..	..	28	16 0

“I calculate the rubber at 10 fr. per kilogramme, the value placed upon it by the State in the Commercial Report issued this year. The market value in Antwerp is from 12 fr. to 13 fr. per kilogramme. From this amount of 576*l.* must be deducted, the cost of transport which cannot be more than 2 fr. per kilogramme rendered at Antwerp, so that the net profits derived from this one village would be a little more than 156*l.* per annum. One hundred and twenty natives, together with their wives and children, which would bring the population of the town to about 400 souls, share this amount of 28*l.* 16*s.*, and as this is paid in cloth at 7½*d.* per yard and salt at 1*s.* 7½*d.* per kilogramme, it is evident that they cannot receive very much each, and that they complain of their remuneration. The cost of administration I have, of course, not taken into account. I hear on good authority that the cost of administration increases the value of the rubber to the State to not more than 1 fr. per kilogramme. The State could therefore well afford to be more generous in the respect of remuneration, seeing that nothing whatever is spent on the development of the country for the good of the natives. Even the State capita receives no wage, and, as I have said, participates in the remuneration given to the workmen.”

The interesting and valuable account given by Mr. Smith, the United States’ Consul-General at Boma, in his Report to his Government, bears testimony to the fact that little or nothing has been done to relieve the native of the burden of the rubber tax. He says:—

“At Yambata the opportunity for which I had been seeking, namely, to prove by a practical test the assertions of the natives as to the time necessary to gather

3 kilog. of rubber, presented itself. It was claimed by all the State Agents whom I had questioned upon the subject that the tax was not excessive, it being easily possible to gather the amount of the impost within the forty hours monthly prescribed by the law as the maximum of time the native must labour to fulfil his obligations to the State. It was contended that the native idled his time away in the forest in the search of game; that, in substance, he did not apply himself to his task. The 'Chef de Secteur' at Yambata was apparently so certain of this that I requested permission to take a number of natives into the forest, set them at work gathering rubber for a given time, and thus prove to my own satisfaction whether their complaints were or were not reasonable and just. The 'Chef de Secteur' willingly consented, apparently confident, from the State's standpoint, of the successful result. Accordingly five natives were chosen from one of the villages and placed in charge of one of the State capitas. It was arranged that these five men should work for four hours each, or a total of twenty hours' work, in which time, to correspond to the tax imposed and the maximum of forty hours, they were supposed to produce $1\frac{1}{2}$ kilog. (1,500 grammes) of rubber. The place selected for carrying out this experiment was at one hour's march through the forest from the post, and was chosen by the 'Chef de Secteur' as being especially rich in rubber vines. The men also were of his own choosing. I had nothing to do with this part of it. Arriving on the spot, two of the men were put at work under the surveillance of Mr. Memminger and Mr. Dodds, the other three under the 'Chef de Secteur' and myself. All the men had been promised an adequate remuneration and exemption from their taxes for the following month by the 'Chef de Secteur' as an incentive, and certainly not a slight one, to do their best. I can testify to the fact that these men did not lose a minute from the time we commenced work until the expiration of the four hours. The vines were numerous, and but little time was taken up in the search for another when one had been exhausted. The rubber was delivered to me and carefully weighed upon my return to the post, with the following result:—

	Grammes.
Two men gathered each 200 grammes	400
The other three	250
Total weight	650

“An analysis of the result works out as follows:—

“Collectively: Twenty hours' labour should have produced 1,500 grammes. Twenty hours' labour actually produced 650 grammes, or 43 per cent. of tax imposed. To gather the quantity required, these men would have been obliged to work an average of ninety-three hours each per month, or eleven days five hours at eight hours per day, 140 days each year.

“Individually: Four hours' labour should have produced 300 grammes. Two men actually produced in this time each 200 grammes, or 66 $\frac{2}{3}$ per cent. of tax imposed. To gather the quantity required these men would be obliged to work an average of sixty hours each per month, or seven and a-half days, ninety days each year.

“And again: Four hours' labour should have produced 300 grammes. Three men actually produced in this time an average of only 83 $\frac{1}{3}$ grammes, or about 28 per cent. of tax. To gather the quantity required, these men would be obliged to work an average of 144 hours each month, or eighteen days, 216 days each year.

“In considering the above, it must further be borne in mind that the time necessarily occupied in reaching the locality and returning is not calculated. This would, of course, relatively reduce the amount gathered within the given time, and increase the average time necessary to produce the quota demanded by the State. It must also be remembered that the element of chance enters largely into the question; the two men who secured 200 grammes each were fortunate in finding large vines immediately after entering the forest; the other three were not, and although they worked fully as hard, only succeeded in securing 83 $\frac{1}{3}$ grammes each. If, to be perfectly fair, we accept the average time employed by the five men as a basis, and add thereto eight days each month for the time necessary to reach the place and return (eight days is not excessive as an average of the time thus employed), we find that these men must labour nineteen days and five hours each month, or practically 236 days each year. During the month, if they produce 3 kilog. of rubber, it is

worth, according to the latest market value at Antwerp, 12 fr. 50 c. per kilogramme, or 37 fr. 50 c. They receive for this a machete, upon which the State places a valuation of 1 fr. 10 c. and a small handful of salt. I purchased at Leopoldville from an English trader two of the same machetes for 50 centimes each."

His Majesty's Government have carefully examined the other forms of taxation, such as portage, paddling, &c., and the evidence all tends to show that little or no amelioration has been effected as regards the burden which those taxes impose upon the native.

Conclusion.

One cannot rise from the examination of the subject of taxation, which has been dealt with in the foregoing pages at great length, though by no means exhaustively, without gaining the conviction that the remedies suggested by the Commission of Inquiry, and ostensibly adopted by the Congo Government when they published the Reform Decrees, have failed to introduce that large measure of reform so urgently needed in the interests of the native population.

Whatever improvements may have, and no doubt have, been effected in certain directions, the Reform Decrees have, according to all accounts, afforded the native but little, if any, relief in matters of taxation. We have seen that the tax in chickwangue and, above all, rubber, weighs as oppressively as ever upon the people of the Congo, and this in spite of all the solemn assurances and explicit declarations made by the Secretaries-General in their Report to the King-Sovereign when submitting the new Decrees for His Majesty's approval.

As was pointed out at the commencement of this discussion, the real solution of the question of taxation is to be found in the introduction of currency. It is a fact which cannot be too much emphasized that without a proper circulating medium the door is as wide open to abuses as it was before the issue of the Reform Decrees.

The Decree "Impositions Directes et Personnelles" adopts in theory a monetary and a time basis. The native is given the right to pay his taxes in money, but since as a rule he possesses no coin, the practical effect of the Decree is this, that in those parts, chiefly rubber districts, where the products of the soil are the property of the State or the Companies in virtue of the ownership of the land, the native is assessed on a time basis at the rate of forty hours a-month, and in those districts where the native is taxed in produce, of which he is recognized to be the owner, such as chickwangue, &c., he is assessed on the monetary basis at a rate varying from a minimum of 6 fr. to a maximum of 24 fr. a-year.

Now, to regulate taxation on a monetary or time basis, and to pretend to remedy this absence of a proper standard of value by adopting tables of equivalents is a mere blind, and can only deceive the uninitiated.

When the tax is measured by time equivalents the result is much the same. Assuming that a tax in labour is justifiable, forty hours a-month may not seem excessive, but in point of fact the State has never exacted a *bond fide* time tax, but *produce measured against time*. To assume that a kilogramme of chickwangue or of rubber represents either 10 or 100 hours' labour must be a purely arbitrary assessment. It may be less than one or more than the other, depending on conditions. It has been seen in the foregoing pages how largely chance enters into the question. Therefore, in practice, the evidence goes to show that it is very often impossible to arrive at any conclusion as to the monetary or time basis on which the tax in any district is fixed, as even, according to Mr. Theisiger, the statements of the local officials in the same district do not correspond.

In both cases, however, it has been proved time and again that the amount due, however valued, is invariably exceeded, and it seems to be indeed limited only by the needs of the State or the working capacity of the natives.

Let us take a few concrete instances.

Round Leopoldville, as we have seen, the tax is paid in chickwangue. The tax imposed is 24 fr., and its equivalent in kind is estimated at 400 kilog. of chickwangue per head per annum. As regards the time and labour necessary to produce these 400 kilog., the reports of Vice-Consul Armstrong and the missionaries all agree that each woman has practically to work incessantly twelve months in the year. What does this mean? Incessant labour is valued at 24 fr. a-year, and must be rendered as a tax.

The following is taken from Mr. Theisiger's Report:—

"In the Lake Leopold II district, visited by Mr. Armstrong, the time occupied in

collecting the rubber appears to be also twenty to twenty-five days. The rubber in the district west of the lake is practically worked out, which accounts for the average tax levied per man being only 1 kilog. per month. The State officials in this district evidently make some capital out of the reduction of the amount of rubber collected at present as compared with what was formerly brought in, and talk of the strict observance of the law of forty hours' labour. Mr. Armstrong's Report shows how utterly fallacious this argument is. At Nioki it was claimed that the natives formerly made four tons per month, but that this had now been reduced to 1 ton 200 kilog. per month, while at M'bali, where the tax is 60 kilog. per month, the average amount accepted was 25 kilog. Mr. Armstrong visited the latter place, and reports that the natives, owing to the exhaustion of the rubber, have to walk seven days to get to the vine-bearing forest, where they take six days to gather the required amount.

"Thus explained, the reduction amounts to nothing more than that, owing to the rubber vines being worked out in certain districts, a smaller quantity must necessarily be accepted, but to gather it the native must work for the same or a longer period than before when the vines were near at hand and plentiful, receiving for the same number of days a lesser remuneration.

"As I have already said, the regulation of this tax on a monetary or time basis is a mere farce, the only limits being fixed by the fertility of any given area and the collecting capacity of the native. In the rich Bengala district, visited by Mr. Smith, where rubber is plentiful, the tax is 3 kilog. per month; in the worked-out region near Lake Leopold II, where rubber is scarce, it is 1 kilog. In both instances the tax is assessed at forty hours' labour per month, and the natives work twenty to twenty-five days out of every thirty.

"A few examples of this may be quoted from Mr. Armstrong's Report:—

"At M'pili, numbering ten adults, the tax is 1 kilog. per man monthly. Time spent in the forest, twenty days. At N'gongo, 120 adult men, tax 1 kilog. per month; here they have to go eight days' journey to the forest, and it takes them in all twenty to twenty-five days to collect the rubber. At Lukanga and surrounding villages there are ninety-nine men; tax, 1 kilog. per month.

"Here the rubber is collected twice monthly, and the people are out for two periods of from ten to twelve days each month.

"Other instances might be given, but I think these are sufficient to show that a reduction of the amount of rubber to be handed in every month does not mean any diminution of the tax, but can usually be attributed to the growing scarcity of the rubber itself, and that the nominal forty hours' labour means incessant work and privation for twenty to twenty-five days each month."

Again, Mr. Thesiger says:—

"Forced labour, such as this, differs only in name from slavery, and by it the Administration are enabled to feed their workmen at a merely nominal rate instead of having to buy chickwangue on the open market, or of importing rice at a considerable cost to the State. A solution of this question would be the payment to the State workmen of what is known here as 'chop money,' namely, a weekly sum for food, which each man then provides for himself. By this means the supply of local produce would be encouraged, the native producer would get a fair price, while the cost to the State would be small. *It would, however, mean the introduction of a system of payment to the workmen in coin, and indirectly facilitates the payment of the taxes in money—two things which the Administration have no wish to introduce into the Upper Congo.*

"Mr. Armstrong's Report of the 17th December, 1907, shows that in the Lake Leopold II district the price paid for the chickwangue is 4 centimes a kilogramme, mentioning especially Moleke, where the village has to supply fifty bunches of chickwangue and fifty bunches of fish weekly, and the natives complain 'that they received practically nothing for their tax, which occupies the greater portion of their day's work.' At N'celenge the tax is 200 chickwangues and 200 fish daily, and each woman having to deposit 5 chickwangues, weighing about half a kilogramme each, every morning on the beach, and this amount has to be taken across the lake to Inongo every day. Here, again, Mr. Armstrong notes that they complained 'only of the remuneration, and not of the endless work imposed upon them.'

"These cases bear out what I have said in the introduction to this Memorandum as to the tax being limited only by the needs of the State on the working capacity of the native, as round Leopoldville, where the soil is poor, 400 kilog. a-year is about

the limit each woman can produce, while in the more productive forest land the quantity is about doubled and the remuneration decreased, so that the nominal money value of the tax remains unchanged."

Here, of course, we again strike at the root of the matter—currency—the introduction of which on a large scale, coupled with a freedom of trade, would almost infallibly deal a death-blow to the prosperity of the State, the Concessionary Companies, and their rubber monopolies.

Now, to take an instance of the rubber tax assessed on a time basis, the experiment made by the American Consul-General at Yambata, with the assistance of the State Agent, affords the best example. The result, as has been seen, showed that, under the most favourable conditions, it would take eighteen days a-month, or 216 days a-year, to collect the amount imposed as a tax, equivalent to forty hours' work a-month, and this without any allowance made for the time occupied in going to and returning from the rubber forests.

According to most accounts, the native is said to spend at least twenty days in the forest, without reckoning the time necessary to go and return. Here we have again practically incessant labour rendered to the State in the guise of a forty hours a-month labour tax.

There is no need to further multiply instances in order to show that the condition of the natives of the Congo is still one of veiled slavery, notwithstanding the assurances given by the Secretaries-General in their Report to the King-Sovereign, and of the Reform Decrees.

It is impossible to escape the suspicion that, while pretending to introduce real measures of reform by the Decrees of the 3rd June, 1906, every effort was made to render those Decrees illusory and to perpetuate the system of bondage and slavery in order to swell the profits of the monopoly system.

The interpretation, already quoted, which was placed on the Decrees "Frappe et Monnaie" and "Impositions Directes et Personnelles" by Vice-Governor Lantoumois, in his instructions of the 8th September, 1906, to the local authorities, clearly indicate that no real change was intended.

As regards the right of the native to pay the tax in money granted by the new Decree, Mr. Armstrong and Mr. Thesiger have reported instances in which the payment of taxes in money has actually been refused by the State authorities.

It seems tolerably clear that the Reform Decrees concerning taxation have been rendered entirely nugatory in their effect, owing to the determined resistance which the State offers to the introduction of currency. The ignorance of the use of money on the part of the natives, which the Congo Government have always alleged as the chief difficulty in the way of a circulating medium, has been practically disproved by the statements of the Commission of Inquiry, by the actual experience of Mr. Vice-Consul Michell in the Lomami Company's territory, by the system of "croisettes" adopted in the Kasai Company's territory, and finally by the fact that money circulates freely among the natives on the Lower Congo.

There is a point upon which His Majesty's Government wish in conclusion to lay particular emphasis. It is that the taxes in labour which have in the past been exacted from the natives by the Concessionary Companies have been largely devoted, not to objects of public utility, but to the furtherance of private interests. The amount of labour which has been, and in a certain measure still is, devoted to those ends, can, in the opinion of His Majesty's Government, only be expressed in unqualified terms as slavery pure and simple.

His Majesty's Government disclaim all right to prescribe to the Congo Government any particular system of taxation, but they hold that the one now actually in existence must be so modified as to insure its operating in harmony with, and not in defiance of, the provisions of Article VI of the Berlin Act.

No. 3.

Memorandum communicated by the Belgian Ministère. April 25, 1908.

DANS le Mémoire remis le 30 Mars, 1908, par Sir Arthur Hardinge au Ministre des Affaires Etrangères le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique, sans vouloir préciser les réformes à accomplir au Congo—ce qui ne rentrerait pas, comme il le déclare lui-même, dans ses attributions—émet cependant le vœu de voir la Belgique

améliorer, après l'annexion, le sort des populations indigènes, en s'abstenant de les charger d'impôts excessifs, en leur octroyant une étendue de terres suffisante pour qu'ils puissent trafiquer de leurs produits, et en leur permettant d'entrer en relations directes avec les commerçants étrangers, autorisés eux mêmes à acquérir des immeubles dans toutes les parties de la future Colonie.

Le Gouvernement du Roi prend acte volontiers de l'assurance donnée par le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique "d'éviter toute démarche susceptible d'être interprétée comme empiétant sur l'absolue liberté de la Belgique en ce qui concerne la gestion future des affaires intérieures du Congo." Cette assurance concorde avec le sentiment unanime du Gouvernement et des Chambres Belges de régler dans une complète liberté d'action et dans la plénitude de leur souveraineté intérieure la question de la reprise du Congo.

De son côté, le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique a certainement suivi les délibérations de la Commission de dix-sept membres, nommée par la Chambre des Représentants, pour l'examen des projets coloniaux, et il aura constaté l'importance que le Gouvernement Belge attache à conserver un contrôle absolu sur les affaires du Congo, devenu une Colonie.

Sous ce rapport le Projet de Loi Coloniale soumis aux délibérations du Parlement peut soutenir la comparaison avec les législations qui régissent les autres Colonies.

Sans doute cette loi délègue au pouvoir exécutif le droit d'arrêter par Décret des dispositions légales, mais il importe de remarquer que le Parlement conserve le pouvoir de légiférer, et que ses décisions devront toujours prévaloir. S'il est impossible de préciser dès maintenant dans le détail les mesures qui seront prises, il est hors de doute qu'elles seront inspirées par les idées les plus généreuses.

La question de l'amélioration du sort des indigènes Congolais n'excite pas en Belgique une moins grande sollicitude qu'en Angleterre. Elle est une des plus nobles préoccupations de notre pays, pénétré de la haute mission civilisatrice qui lui incombe en Afrique. Déjà le Gouvernement du Roi, fidèle interprète des sentiments de la nation, a saisi l'occasion de caractériser publiquement à la tribune la tâche qu'il entend remplir au Congo. Le Chef du Cabinet a dit récemment au Sénat qu'en attendant de pouvoir généraliser parmi les indigènes l'usage de la monnaie, qui commence à être connue de ces populations, l'État veillerait à ce que l'impôt fût modéré et le travail manuel équitablement rémunéré, qu'il chercherait à introduire dans toutes les parties du territoire des modes de culture perfectionnés, à établir les nègres, encore en partie nomades, sur un sol qui leur appartienne, où ils puissent fonder un foyer stable. Il a ajouté que leurs aptitudes commerciales seraient développées, et qu'on leur fournirait les moyens de les exercer par des rapports multiples avec ceux qui leur apportent les bienfaits de la civilisation.

Ces déclarations ont été confirmées par le Chef du Cabinet lui-même et par le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères dans les discours qu'ils ont prononcés, le 15 Avril, à la Chambre des Représentants.

M. Schollaert, revenant sur ce qu'il avait dit au Sénat, s'est exprimé notamment en ces termes :—

"Après avoir supprimé le jugement par le poison, la traite des esclaves, le cannibalisme, nous devons nous efforcer d'assurer aux populations indigènes plus de bien-être; nous devons répandre et généraliser l'usage de la monnaie; nous devons arriver à établir le paiement de l'impôt en argent; nous devons tendre à supprimer le travail forcé; nous devons continuer les efforts déjà tentés pour diminuer les corvées, surtout celle du portage; nous devons, par de très larges et très généreuses Concessions de terres, étendre les propriétés des indigènes. Nous devons leur assurer aussi une bonne et prompt justice, intègre, impartiale, éclairée, indépendante, et suffisamment nombreuse."

En ce qui concerne l'impôt indigène, le Gouvernement du Roi considère que son taux doit être proportionné aux facultés des contribuables, de façon à rester modéré. Il estime également que l'impôt en travail, à demander à l'indigène, incapable de se libérer en argent—mode de prestation dont la légitimité est reconnue par le mémoire annexé au Mémoire—n'est qu'une mesure temporaire et provisoire destinée à disparaître progressivement au fur et à mesure de l'introduction de la monnaie, introduction que le Gouvernement du Roi, comme l'a annoncé le Chef du Cabinet, est décidé à favoriser de tous ses efforts. C'est dire que le travail forcé—si par là l'on entend l'impôt payé sous cette forme—n'est appelé à se maintenir au Congo que dans les mêmes limites et les mêmes conditions de nécessité où il existe dans les Colonies étrangères.

En tous cas, le principe de la liberté individuelle, posé dans le Projet de Loi

Coloniale, est exclusif de toute contrainte autre ; les indigènes ne peuvent être forcés d'une manière directe ou indirecte, rémunérés ou non, à fournir leur travail aux Sociétés concessionnaires, pas plus qu'à toute autre entreprise privée ; la main-d'œuvre ne peut être que volontaire et à des conditions de salaire librement consenties.

Lorsqu'il a eu connaissance du langage tenu par MM. Schollaert et Davignon, le Gouvernement Britannique a pu se convaincre que dès le moment où il a décidé de soumettre aux Chambres le Projet de Reprise, le Gouvernement du Roi a pris la ferme résolution de n'épargner aucun sacrifice en vue d'atteindre le but éivilisateur qu'il a devant les yeux, et qui tend à développer la moralité des races primitives peuplant le Congo, aussi bien qu'à transformer les conditions matérielles de leur existence.

A l'étranger on ne peut manquer d'apprécier la valeur et la portée de ces déclarations répétées, faites devant les Chambres.

Faut-il ajouter que le Gouvernement du Roi s'appliquera à les mettre en pratique aussitôt que la reprise sera effectuée ? C'est après l'annexion seulement qu'il exercera sur l'Administration de l'État le contrôle et les pouvoirs déterminés par la Loi Coloniale, lui permettant d'arrêter avec la diligence requise, et dans l'esprit qu'il vient de rappeler, les réformes que la situation rendra opportunes ou indispensables. Il est certain, comme il a été dit plus haut, que l'appui de l'opinion publique et le concours du Parlement, dont la part d'intervention sera réglée par la Loi Coloniale, ne lui feront pas défaut pour suivre la voie qu'il s'est tracée.

Au désir d'assurer la protection des nègres, qui fait le principal objet de ses préoccupations humanitaires, le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique a rattaché celui de voir garantir au Congo la liberté du commerce, un des buts de l'Acte de Berlin.

Fidèle, selon ses traditions constantes, à observer les Traités qu'elle a signés, et se rendant un compte exact des obligations qu'elle a contractées aux Conférences de Berlin et de Bruxelles, la Belgique a la ferme intention qu'il y ait au Congo le régime économique le plus large, et que l'expansion du commerce et de l'industrie y soit favorisée dans la mesure la plus libérale sans distinguer entre les nationaux et les étrangers. Ainsi, elle fera en sorte, comme l'a encore déclaré à la Chambre le Chef du Cabinet, que les particuliers, à quelque nationalité qu'ils appartiennent, puissent acquérir les terrains qui leur sont nécessaires pour l'exercice de leur trafic et de leurs professions. Ces principes lui serviront de régulateur dans le gouvernement de sa future Colonie, et elle veillera à leur loyale et entière application.

En ce qui concerne l'existence des Compagnies concessionnaires, le Mémoire Anglais craint que leur conservation ne limite la liberté d'action du Gouvernement Belge dans les territoires qu'elles occupent.

Le système des Concessions, employé même dans certaines parties du bassin conventionnel relevant de la couronne Britannique, a créé dans l'État du Congo des droits aux concessionnaires. Il faut, notamment, tenir compte des intérêts étrangers engagés dans ces entreprises. Il est par contre à remarquer que le maintien des compagnies n'exclut pas la possibilité d'arrangements nouveaux.

D'un autre côté, les Actes de Concession ne mettent pas obstacle à ce que le Gouvernement, dans la sphère d'action des Compagnies, reconnaisse aux indigènes des droits d'occupation très étendus, comprenant la libre disposition des produits du sol, ni à ce qu'il puisse y concéder aux commerçants nationaux et étrangers des terrains pour l'établissement de factoreries.

Mais, avant de se mettre à la tâche, la Belgique aura à comparer ce qu'elle veut faire avec ce qui a été fait dans les Colonies voisines soumises également aux prescriptions de l'Acte de Berlin, à examiner comment y sont appliqués les principes qu'il a édictés, à voir comment on y concilie avec la pratique de la liberté commerciale les droits accordés à des Sociétés ou à des particuliers.

Le respect que le Gouvernement du Roi a toujours professé pour les engagements résultant des Traités pourrait le dispenser de répondre à la dernière question posée par le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique. Il n'éprouve aucune difficulté à reconnaître qu'une égale protection doit être acquise, sans distinction de culte, ainsi que le veut l'Acte de Berlin, aux institutions religieuses, scientifiques, et charitables ayant leur champ d'action au Congo, et que les sujets Britanniques doivent y jouir de tous les avantages prévus en leur faveur par la Convention Anglo-Congolaise antérieure à cet Acte diplomatique.

Tels sont les desseins que le Gouvernement du Roi mettra à exécution, en assumant devant le monde la responsabilité qu'entraîne l'administration de son futur domaine colonial. Ils se résument ainsi : amélioration immédiate des conditions d'existence morales et matérielles des habitants du Congo, extension aussi rapide que possible d'un régime de liberté économique aux différentes parties de ce vaste pays.

Le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique, dit le Mémorandum, avait eu l'intention de réclamer un arbitrage, pour faire décider si le régime foncier et commercial établi dans l'État Indépendant est conforme aux Articles I et V de l'Acte Général de Berlin. Nourrissant l'espoir que l'État Indépendant sera prochainement annexé à la Belgique, il a cru préférable de différer toute proposition en ce sens et de discuter la situation actuelle avec le Gouvernement Belge dans les intentions les plus amicales et les plus franches.

Le Gouvernement Belge partage cette opinion pour les motifs qu'indique le Mémorandum. Après avoir exposé les vues qu'il a l'intention de réaliser lorsque l'annexion du Congo, que l'on peut désormais envisager comme prochaine, sera effectuée, il se plaît à constater que ses intentions se rencontrent avec les désirs du Gouvernement Britannique de manière à rendre superflue une décision arbitrale portant sur les questions d'interprétation de l'Acte de Berlin qui ont été débattues entre l'État Indépendant et la Grande-Bretagne.

(Translation.)

IN the Memorandum which Sir A. Hardinge left at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the 30th March, 1908, the Government of His Britannic Majesty, without wishing to lay down definitely what reforms should be introduced in the Congo, which would not, as they admit themselves, come within their province, gave expression to the hope that, after the annexation of the country, Belgium would introduce ameliorations into the lot of the natives by refraining from loading them with excessive taxes, by granting them enough land to permit of their trading in its products, and by allowing them to enter into direct relations with foreign merchants, who would themselves be authorized to acquire real property in all parts of the future Colony.

The Government of the King are happy to take act of the assurance given by the Government of His Britannic Majesty "to abstain from any act which might be construed as interfering with the complete liberty of action of the Belgian Government in the future management of the internal affairs of the Congo." This assurance is in complete harmony with the unanimous sentiment of the Belgian Government and Chambers that they should have full liberty of action in the question of the annexation of the Congo, and that it should be settled by them in the fullness of their internal sovereign rights.

On their side the Government of His Britannic Majesty have without doubt followed the deliberations of the Commission of XVII, nominated by the Chamber of Representatives in order to study the proposed systems of colonial administration, and they will not have failed to recognize the importance which the Belgian Government attach to retaining full control over the affairs of the Congo when it shall have become a Colony.

In this connection, the draft Colonial Law submitted to Parliament can stand comparison with the systems under which other Colonies are governed.

It is true that under the provisions of this Law the Executive possesses the right of decreeing legal measures, but it must be remembered that Parliament reserves to itself the right of actual legislation and that its decisions have to prevail. If it is impossible as yet to state definitely and in detail the measures to be introduced, it is beyond doubt that they will be inspired by the most generous sentiments.

The question of improving the lot of the natives is not less a matter of solicitude in Belgium than it is in England. It is one of the loftiest preoccupations of our country, which is fully sensible of the importance of the civilizing mission which falls to its lot in Africa. Already the Government of the King, faithfully interpreting the national sentiment, have taken the opportunity of defining publicly in Parliament the task which they intend to carry out in the Congo. The Prime Minister ("Chef du Cabinet") stated recently in the Senate that, while waiting for the moment when it would be possible to make the employment of currency—the use of which is already beginning to be understood by the natives—general amongst them, the State would see that taxation was reduced and manual labour fairly recompensed, and that it would seek to introduce an improved method of cultivation into all parts of the territory and to establish the negroes, who are still in part nomadic, on soil which would belong to them and on which they could found permanent homes. He added that their aptitude for commerce would be developed, and that they would be furnished with means of exercising it by numerous facilities for intercourse with those who bring them the benefits of civilization.

These statements were confirmed by the Prime Minister himself and by the Minister for Foreign Affairs in the speeches delivered by them on the 15th April in the Chamber of Representatives.

M. Schollaert, notably, referring to what he had said in the Senate, expressed himself in the following terms :—

“ Having abolished trial by the ordeal of poison, and having suppressed the Slave Trade and cannibalism, we must endeavour to secure greater comfort for the native population; we must extend and make general the use of currency; we must aim at securing the payment of taxes in money; we must direct our efforts towards doing away with forced labour; we must continue the efforts which have already been made to diminish the amount of labour exacted from the natives, especially in connection with portage; we must increase the property of the natives by granting them very large and very generous concessions of land; we must secure to them sufficiently numerous facilities for obtaining a good and prompt system of justice, administered in a spirit of integrity, impartiality, enlightenment, and independence.”

As far as the taxation of the natives is concerned, the Government of the King consider that the amount should be proportioned to the circumstances of the tax-payer, so as to remain moderate. They also consider that the labour tax which would be required from natives unable to pay their taxes in money—a form of tax payment, the legality of which is recognized by the statement annexed to the Memorandum—is only a temporary and provisional measure which is destined gradually to disappear *pari passu* with the introduction of currency, which, as the Prime Minister has already announced, the Government of the King have decided to promote with all their might. This means that forced labour—if by that is understood the payment of taxes in that form—will only be maintained in the Congo subject to the same limits and the conditions of necessity in which it exists in the Colonies of other nations.

In any case the principle of individual liberty laid down in the draft Colonial Law is free from any further restrictions whatsoever; the natives cannot be forced, either directly or indirectly, with or without payment, to furnish their labour to concessionary Companies any more than to any other private enterprise; labour can only be voluntary, and on terms of payment agreed upon without the exercise of any pressure.

As soon as the Government of His Britannic Majesty were aware of the language held by MM. Schollaert and Davignon, they were able to convince themselves that, from the moment that the Government of the King decided to lay before the Chambers the annexation project, they were firmly resolved to spare no sacrifice for the purpose of attaining the end which they have set before themselves, an end which has for its object the civilization of the Congo, and which tends to develop the morality of the primitive races inhabiting that country, as well as to transform the material conditions of their existence.

The weight and scope of these repeated declarations before the Chambers cannot fail to be appreciated abroad.

Is it necessary to add that the Government of the King will set about putting them in practice as soon as the transfer is completed? It is only after annexation has taken place that they will exercise over the Administration of the State the control and the powers determined by the Colonial Law, which will permit them to draw up, with the necessary diligence and in the spirit already referred to, the reforms which the situation renders opportune or indispensable. It is certain, as has been said above, that the support of public opinion and the co-operation of Parliament, whose powers of intervention will be regulated by the Colonial Law, will not fail the Government when they commence to follow the path which they have traced out for themselves.

The desire to secure the protection of the negroes is the principal end of the humanitarian preoccupations of His Britannic Majesty's Government, but to this they also add the desire to see guaranteed in the Congo freedom of commerce one of the objects of the Berlin Act.

Faithful, according to her invariable custom, in the observance of the Treaties which she has signed, and fully recognizing the obligations which she has contracted at the Berlin and Brussels Conferences, Belgium is firmly resolved that there shall be in the Congo the widest economic system, and that the expansion of commerce and of industry shall be furthered in the most liberal manner without distinctions being made between Belgian subjects and foreigners. Thus she will so act that, as has already been stated by the Prime Minister in the Chambers, private people, to whatever nationality they may belong, will be able to acquire the lands necessary for the prosecution of their commerce and of their occupations. The govern-

ment of the future Colony will be regulated by these principles, and Belgium will see that they are loyally and fully applied.

With regard to the existence of concessionary Companies, the English Memorandum fears that their continuance will limit the liberty of action of the Belgian Government in the territories occupied by them.

Under the concessionary system, which is even in force in certain portions of the Conventional basin of the Congo under the British crown, the concessionnaires have acquired in the Free State certain vested interests. It is especially necessary that the foreign interests connected with these enterprises should be taken into account. It is, on the other hand, to be remarked that the maintenance of the Companies does not exclude the possibility of fresh arrangements being made.

Moreover, the acts of concession do not prevent the Government in the sphere of action of the Companies from recognizing that the natives have very extended rights of occupation, including the free disposal of the products of the soil, or from granting to Belgian and foreign traders land on which to establish factories.

But before beginning her task Belgium will have to compare what she proposes to do with what has been done in those of the neighbouring Colonies which are also subject to the stipulations of the Berlin Act, to examine how in those countries the principles there laid down are applied, and to see how the rights granted to Companies and individuals are brought into harmony with the practice of freedom of commerce.

The respect which the Government of the King have always shown for the obligations resulting from Treaties might well dispense them from answering the last question asked by the Government of His Britannic Majesty. The Belgian Government have no hesitation in recognizing that the religious, scientific, and charitable institutions whose field of action is the Congo should enjoy equal protection without distinction of religion, as was laid down in the Berlin Act, and that British subjects should have the benefit of all the advantages stipulated for in their favour by the Convention concluded between Great Britain and the Congo Free State prior to that diplomatic instrument.

Such are the plans which the Government of the King will carry out, when they assume before the world the responsibility which is involved in the administration of their future colonial possession. They can be summarized thus: an immediate amelioration in the moral and material conditions of existence of the inhabitants of the Congo, and the extension, as rapidly as possible, of a system of economic freedom to the different regions of that vast country.

The Government of His Britannic Majesty, says the Memorandum, had had the intention of demanding arbitration in order to decide whether the land and commercial systems established in the Free State were in conformity with Articles I and V of the General Act of Berlin. Entertaining the hope that the Free State will shortly be annexed by Belgium, they have thought it preferable to postpone any proposal in this sense and to discuss the present situation with the Belgian Government in the most open and friendly spirit.

The Belgian Government share this view for the reasons indicated in the Memorandum. After having set forth the plans which they have the intention of realizing when the annexation of the Congo has taken place—an eventuality which can now be considered imminent—they are glad to find that their intentions are so much in harmony with the wishes of the Government of His Britannic Majesty as to render superfluous an arbitral decision on the questions at issue between the Free State and Great Britain regarding the interpretation of the Berlin Act.

CORRESPONDENCE respecting the Taxation of
Natives, and other Questions, in the Congo
State.

*Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Com-
mand of His Majesty. June 1908.*

AFRICA. No. 4 (1908).

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING THE

TAXATION OF NATIVES, AND
OTHER QUESTIONS,

IN THE

CONGO STATE.

[In continuation of "Africa No. 3, 1908": Cd. 4135.]

*Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty,
August 1908.*

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Further Correspondence respecting the Taxation of Natives, and other Questions, in the Congo State.

[In continuation of "Africa No. 3, 1908". Cd. 4135.]

No. 1.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Hardinge.

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 23, 1908.

I GAVE the Belgian Minister to-day a Memorandum, of which a copy is inclosed herewith,* in reply to the last note of the Belgian Government about the Congo.

In giving it, I said I understood the difficulty in which the Belgian Government were placed with regard to stating, before the question of annexation was decided, the actual measures which they would take in the Congo. But if it was impossible to carry the discussion further at the present moment, the fact that it was not continued must not be regarded as committing us finally.

The Belgian Government would of course, in accordance with the provision of the Berlin Act which was binding upon all the Powers, notify us of the annexation, and we must reserve our liberty to discuss the actual measures to be applied in the Congo by the Belgian Government before committing ourselves in reply to that notification.

The Belgian Minister read the Memorandum, and said he would communicate it to his Government.

He then asked me to be a little more explicit as to the meaning of what I had said to him in giving him the Memorandum.

I repeated the substance of it, adding that we were quite ready to continue the discussion with the Belgian Government of the actual measures to be introduced into the Congo to give effect to the Treaty obligations which they had admitted and the intentions they had expressed. But if the Belgian Government found it difficult to carry the matter further while annexation was under discussion, we must reserve our liberty to raise more definite points later on. In other words, I was not prepared to announce at the present moment that the assurances which we had received from the Belgian Government were complete, and should be accepted in Parliament here as having disposed of the whole question.

I told Count de Lalaing, however, that in my opinion the publication of the documents which had passed hitherto had produced a good effect here. The tone of the controversy had been very much ameliorated by the nature of the replies which the Belgian Government had given. They were on quite a different footing from those of the Congo Government, which had excited such strong feelings of indignation here.

The Belgian Minister said that the effect had been good in Belgium also.

I am, &c.

(Signed) E. GREY.

No. 2.

Memorandum communicated to the Belgian Minister, June 23, 1908.

ON the 25th April the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had the honour to receive from the Belgian Minister a Memorandum† on the subject of the reforms to be introduced into the Independent State of the Congo in reply to a communication made to the Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs by His Majesty's Minister in Brussels.

From the contents of this Memorandum it appears that the Belgian Government are resolutely determined to retain complete control over the affairs of the Congo as soon as it shall have become a Colony, and that the measures of reform which, with the

* See No. 2.

† See No. 3, "Africa No. 3 (1908)."

sanction of Parliament, it may be necessary to introduce will be inspired by the most generous sentiments. The Belgian Government likewise declare that the question of improving the lot of the natives is one of great solicitude to them, and call attention to the recent speeches of the Prime Minister and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, in which they have announced the intention of the Government to develop the aptitude of the natives for commerce, and to furnish them with the means of exercising it by affording them numerous facilities for intercourse with those who bring them the benefits of civilization.

The Belgian Government also consider that the taxation of the natives of the Congo should be on a moderate scale, and in proportion to the circumstances of the taxpayers, and that the labour tax required from natives, who are unable to pay their taxes in money, is only a temporary and provisional measure, destined to disappear gradually with the introduction and increased circulation of currency, which they will make every effort to encourage.

In any case, the principle of individual liberty without constraint will be upheld, and the natives will not be compelled, either directly or indirectly, to furnish labour to the Concessionary Companies or to any other private enterprise. If they do voluntarily work for a private employer, it will be at a rate of wages to which the labourer has consented of his own free will.

The Belgian Government further declare that, in accordance with Treaty obligations contracted at the Conferences of Berlin and Brussels, commerce and industry in the Congo shall be developed in the most advanced and liberal manner, and without any distinctions being made between their own subjects and those of other nationalities.

With regard to the existence of Concessionary Companies, and the question whether their continuance in the Congo will in any way limit the liberty of action of the Belgian Government in the territories occupied by them, it is stated that the acts of concession to such Companies are not of such a nature as to prevent the Government in the sphere of action of those Companies from recognizing that the native population possesses very extended rights of occupation, together with the free disposal by them of the products of the soil.

It is also stated that the Belgian Government will not be precluded from granting to foreign as well as Belgian traders sites for factories within the areas assigned to the Concessionary Companies.

Before, however, carrying out these intentions, the Belgian Government will have to examine the principles applied in neighbouring Colonies similarly situated, and to see how freedom of commerce is there reconciled with privileges granted to Companies or private individuals.

Further, the Belgian Government declare that they have no hesitation in recognizing that the religious, scientific, and charitable institutions in the Congo shall enjoy equal protection without distinction of religion, as laid down in the Berlin Act, and that British subjects shall have the benefit of all the advantages stipulated for in their favour by the Convention concluded between Great Britain and the Congo Free State prior to the signature of that diplomatic instrument.

His Majesty's Government have taken note with the liveliest satisfaction of the assurances which have now been given to them of the intentions of the Belgian Government, in the future administration of the Congo, to obtain an immediate improvement in the moral and material conditions of existence of the natives, and as rapid an extension as possible of a system of economic liberty in the different portions of this vast territory, and they have learnt with much pleasure that the Belgian Government consider their interpretation of the commercial clauses of the Berlin Act to be so far in conformity with the views of His Majesty's Government as to render unnecessary any recourse to arbitration on the subject.

His Majesty's Government also take note of the opinion of the Belgian Government to the effect that it is only after the annexation of the Congo territories that they will be in a position to decide, without undue delay, upon the reforms rendered indispensable by the local situation.

His Majesty's Government have considered the advisability of asking that some engagement should be given on the part of the Belgian Government as to the total abolition of a labour tax in any form within a fixed period, and that all purely commercial questions arising out of the Treaty obligations of the Congo State should, if the two Governments failed to arrive at an agreement respecting them, be referred to arbitration.

His Majesty's Government are informed that a suggestion to this effect was made in the course of an informal conversation to the Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs by

His Majesty's Minister at Brussels, and that a Memorandum on the subject has been presented to his Excellency on behalf of the Government of the United States.

They recognize, after a full consideration of the Memorandum presented on the 25th April by Count de Lalaing, the difficulty of insisting upon the total abolition at a definite date of a labour tax in any form, and they do not desire to press for the fixing of such a date provided the measures necessary for remedying the abuses which still exist in the Congo State, more especially in respect of the treatment of the natives, are taken without delay, and that existing or future Concessions are interpreted in such a way as to recognize the extended rights of occupation of the native population and their freedom to dispose of the natural products of the soil already referred to.

They would, however, welcome a formal assurance that the Belgian Government will not refuse, if invited by them to do so, to refer in the last resort to arbitration any differences of view as to the meaning of those Articles in the Treaties binding the Congo State which bear on commercial questions, should an agreement between the two Governments respecting them be unattainable by ordinary diplomatic methods.

Throughout the whole course of the negotiations on the subject of the Congo, His Majesty's Government have been animated by the most friendly sentiments towards the Belgian Government and people, with whom they are united by so many ties. Confident that their sentiments of friendship are reciprocated by the Belgian Government, His Majesty's Government, as a neighbour in Africa of the Government of the Congo, and having important Treaty rights and interests in those territories, would urge upon them the desirability of affording at the earliest possible moment some definite statement, as distinct from general assurances, of the measures they propose to take to give effect to their intention to respect the Treaty rights as explained in the correspondence which has taken place between the two Governments. Such statements would have the advantage of placing His Majesty's Government in a position to satisfy public opinion in this country that their acquiescence in the transfer of the Congo State to Belgium will not be inconsistent with the duties and responsibilities assumed by Great Britain when first she recognized the International Association and subscribed to the Acts of Berlin and Brussels.

Foreign Office, June 23, 1908.

No. 3.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Hardinge.

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 13, 1908.

THE Belgian Minister handed me to-day a Memorandum, copy of which is inclosed herewith,* which he informed me was the reply of the Belgian Government to the Memorandum of the 23rd June, which I had given them.

After handing me this reply the Belgian Minister read to me the communication, of which a copy is also inclosed.†

I told him that I must study the reply of the Belgian Government, and that I would not attempt to read it on the spot. I should also need time to consider the points which he had raised in the communication he had been instructed to make to me. They referred to the wording of an Article in the Berlin Act, which I must look up. Certainly it had not occurred to me that the words of the Article might be so limited as not to apply to a transfer.

The Belgian Minister said that the Article applied to "taking possession," but in this case Belgium was simply "inheriting."

I told him it seemed to me that when one Government relinquished possession, and handed over territory to another Government, the latter Government must be regarded as taking possession of the territory.

I observed generally that what the Belgian Minister had read seemed to imply that it was a more simple matter for Belgium to take over the Congo than it would be if she had to take over something with which she had had no previous connection.

He remarked that he did not think "simple" was the word used.

I explained that what I meant was this: From our point of view the fact that we already had Treaty rights in the Congo State, and had been in acute disagreement with the Government of that State about those rights, complicated the matter, because

* Inclosure in No. 4.

† No. 4.

if one State was in acute disagreement with another about Treaty rights, and proposed to transfer its territory to a third State, then the State which considered itself aggrieved, as we considered ourselves aggrieved by the disagreement about our Treaty rights, would naturally be much more particular in making conditions with the third State, who was the transferee, than it would be if that State was taking over territory which had previously been vacant, or about which the aggrieved State had had no dispute.

I should, however, require time to study the Belgian reply, and to reflect at leisure upon what Count de Lalaing had said.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. GREY.

[24535]

No. 1.

M. Darignou to Count de Lalaing.—(Communicated to Sir E. Grey, July 13.)

*Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Bruxelles,
le 12 Juillet, 1908.*

M. le Comte,

J'AI l'honneur de vous prier de remettre au Sous-Secrétaire d'État de Sa Majesté pour les Affaires Étrangères le document que vous trouverez ci-inclus. C'est la réponse du Gouvernement du Roi au Mémoire, daté du 23 Juin, que Sir Edward Grey vous avait demandé de lui faire parvenir.

En vous le remettant son Excellence vous avait dit que si l'échange de vues entre les deux Gouvernements ne se poursuivait pas, quoique le Foreign Office fût tout disposé à le continuer dans le cas où nous en manifesterions le désir, il ne fallait pas en conclure que le Gouvernement Britannique se croirait tenu de reconnaître sans restriction le transfert du Congo à la Belgique, qui lui serait notifié par la suite. M. le Ministre avait ajouté que le Cabinet de Londres faisait sur ce point toutes ses réserves, et que sa réponse dépendrait des assurances ultérieures et plus détaillées que le Gouvernement du Roi jugerait bon de lui donner après l'annexion, si elle avait lieu.

La communication que vous a faite Sir Edward Grey appelle une réponse de notre part.

Nous ne voulons pas discuter ici la question de savoir si l'Article 34 de l'Acte de Berlin, qui fixe les conditions à remplir pour que des occupations nouvelles sur les côtes du continent Africain soient considérées comme effectives, est applicable à la Belgique dans le cas actuel. Le titre seul du Chapitre VI, dont fait partie l'Article 34, et le texte même de cet Article, indiquent bien qu'il ne s'agit que de prises de possession par la voie de l'occupation ou de l'établissement de Protectorats, et non pas du transfert d'un Gouvernement régulier exercé par des blancs à un autre Gouvernement sous le même Souverain, telle que se présente l'annexion de l'État du Congo à la Belgique. Le but de la Conférence de Berlin, en élaborant les Articles 34 et 35, qui composent à eux seuls le Chapitre VI, a été d'empêcher les annexions fictives et les causes de conflits qui en résulteraient, comme le prouvent les débats et les commentaires que la discussion de ces Articles a provoqués, et notamment le discours prononcé par le Prince de Bismarck dans la séance du 15 Novembre, 1884, de la Conférence.

Nous ne pensons pas, d'autre part, que les intérêts légitimes de l'Angleterre soient lésés en aucune façon par la reprise du Congo. Sans vouloir contester le moins du monde au Gouvernement Britannique le droit d'examiner cette question, nous attendons avec une pleine confiance les résultats de son examen. Les intérêts de la Grande-Bretagne au Congo se résument dans le respect des droits qu'elle tient des Traités. Sous ce rapport la longue expérience qu'elle a faite de la fidélité mise par la Belgique à remplir ses engagements doit lui inspirer une complète sécurité, puisque les obligations internationales contractées par l'État du Congo continueront à lier son successeur, signataire lui-même de l'Acte de Berlin. La réunion de l'État Indépendant à la Belgique a été envisagée dès le commencement de son existence, tant à l'étranger que dans notre pays, comme le terme final de son développement naturel. L'union personnelle, donnant aux deux États le même Souverain, a toujours fait considérer le Congo comme une future Colonie Belge, soumise, en attendant, à un régime d'autonomie particulière. En 1889 le Roi légua le Congo à la Belgique; dès l'année suivante, cinq ans à peine après la Conférence de Berlin, des liens conventionnels plus étroits ont été contractés par notre pays avec l'État Indépendant; ils devaient se transformer à bref délai en une union définitive, que des considérations de politique intérieure ont seules fait retarder jusqu'à aujourd'hui.

On chercherait en vain comment une annexion préparée d'aussi longue date sous l'œil bienveillant des Puissances pourrait contrarier les intérêts de l'Angleterre. Le Gouvernement Britannique lui-même n'a pas seulement reconnu par ses déclarations au Parlement que la Belgique avait sur le Congo des droits qu'aucune autre Puissance ne possède; il s'est plu en outre à constater, dès le début de cet échange de vues, dans la communication faite le 23 Janvier dernier au Cabinet de Bruxelles, que le transfert de l'Etat Indépendant à notre pays serait la meilleure solution des différends qui avaient surgi entre l'Angleterre et cet Etat. Les considérations qui précèdent et la conscience que le Gouvernement Belge a de pouvoir remplir dignement la haute mission civilisatrice qui lui incombe, lui inspirent la ferme confiance que le transfert du Congo à la Belgique sera accueilli par l'Angleterre sans aucune restriction. Si cet espoir ne se confirmait pas, le Gouvernement du Roi reste persuadé qu'en le voyant à l'œuvre, en appréciant les résultats obtenus par l'Administration Belge au Congo, le Gouvernement Britannique ne persisterait pas dans ses réserves.

Vous donnerez lecture à son Excellence de la présente dépêche et au besoin vous lui en laisserez copie. Vous préviendrez en même temps le Ministre que le Gouvernement Belge désirerait communiquer au Parlement la dernière partie de cette correspondance avant la fin des débats auxquels donne lieu la reprise du Congo. Cette publication se ferait dans peu de jours.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) DAVIGNON.

(Translation.)

Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Brussels.
July 12, 1908.

M. le Comte,

I HAVE the honour to request you to transmit to His Majesty's Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs the accompanying document, which is the reply of the King's Government to the Memorandum of the 23rd June which Sir E. Grey asked you to forward to it.

In handing you this Memorandum, his Excellency had informed you that if the exchange of views between the two Governments were not continued, although the Foreign Office was quite willing to continue it, should we desire it, it must not be inferred that the British Government would consider itself bound to recognize unconditionally the transfer of the Congo to Belgium, which would be notified to it subsequently. His Excellency had added that the British Government reserved entire freedom on this point, and that its answer would depend upon the further and more detailed assurances which the King's Government might think fit to give it after the annexation, should it take place.

The communication made to you by Sir E. Grey calls for a reply from us.

We do not here wish to discuss the question as to whether Article 34 of the Berlin Act, which fixes the conditions necessary for the recognition as effective of fresh occupations on the coasts of the African Continent applies to Belgium in this particular case. The very title of Chapter VI, of which Article 34 forms part, and the text of the Article itself, show clearly that they only deal with the taking possession by means of new occupation or of the establishment of Protectorates, and not with the transfer of one regular Government carried on by Whites to another Government under the same Sovereign, as in the case of the annexation of the Congo to Belgium. The object of the Berlin Conference in drawing up Articles 34 and 35, which together make up Chapter VI, was to prevent fictitious annexations and the causes of conflict which would result therefrom, as is proved by the debates and comments called forth by the discussion of these Articles, more especially the speech made by Prince Bismarck at the meeting of the Conference held on the 15th November, 1884.

Moreover, we do not consider that the legitimate interests of England would in any way be injured by the annexation of the Congo. Without in the least desiring to contest the right of the British Government to examine this question, we await with complete confidence the result of this examination. The interests of Great Britain in the Congo may be expressed as consisting in the observance of its Treaty rights. In this respect, it must derive a feeling of complete security from the long experience of the good faith shown by Belgium in fulfilling its engagements, for the international obligations of the Congo State will continue to bind its successor, itself a party to the Berlin Act. The incorporation of the Independent State with Belgium has from the very first been looked to, in other countries as well as in our own country, as the final stage of its natural development. The personal union which gave the same Sovereign

to the two States has always caused the Congo to be regarded as a future Belgian Colony, which received in the meantime a special form of autonomy. In 1889 the King bequeathed the Congo to Belgium; in the following year, scarcely five years after the Berlin Conference, closer conventional bonds were established by our country with the Independent State; it was intended that these bonds should shortly be converted into a definite union, which has only been hitherto delayed by considerations of internal policy.

It would be difficult to imagine how an annexation so long prepared with the goodwill of the Powers could interfere with British interests. Not only has the British Government recognized by its declarations in Parliament that Belgium had over the Congo rights which no other Power possesses, but it has been so good as to state, at the commencement of this exchange of views, in its communication of the 23rd January last to the Cabinet of Brussels, that the transfer of the Independent State to our country would be the best solution of the differences which had arisen between England and that State. The Belgian Government, bearing in mind the above considerations, and confident that it is capable of fulfilling worthily the great civilizing mission about to fall to it, feels convinced that the transfer of the Congo to Belgium will be accepted by England without any reservations. Even were this hope not realized, the King's Government, nevertheless, believes that when the British Government sees it at work it will not persist in its reservations when it has realized the results obtained by the Belgian Administration in the Congo.

You will read this despatch to his Excellency, and, if necessary, you will leave a copy of it with him. You will at the same time notify to his Excellency that the Belgian Government is anxious to communicate to Parliament the latter part of this correspondence before the close of the debates to which the annexation of the Congo has given rise. This publication will take place in a few days' time.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DAVIGNON.

Inclosure in No. 4.

Memorandum.

EN prenant connaissance du Mémorandum remis le 23 Juin au Comte de Lalaing par le Secrétaire d'État de Sa Majesté Britannique pour les Affaires Étrangères, le Gouvernement du Roi a constaté, avec une satisfaction égale à celle éprouvée par le Gouvernement Britannique, l'accord qui règne entre eux au sujet des points principaux visés dans le précédent Mémorandum Belge: amélioration immédiate des conditions morales et matérielles d'existence des indigènes du Congo, extension aussi rapide que possible à toutes les parties de la Colonie des progrès économiques déjà réalisés, application des clauses commerciales de l'Acte de Berlin dans leur teneur et leur portée.

Comme le fait connaître le Mémorandum du 23 Juin, qui nous est parvenu le 25, le Gouvernement Britannique avait envisagé l'opportunité de demander au Gouvernement Belge l'abolition totale de l'impôt en travail dans un délai déterminé, ainsi que le jugement par arbitrage des questions purement commerciales résultant des obligations internationales contractées par l'État du Congo. Dans les entretiens, dénués de caractère officiel, qui ont eu lieu entre le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères et Sir A. Hardinge, ces intentions avaient été indiquées sans qu'elles revêtissent toutefois la forme de propositions arrêtées. Après avoir pris connaissance du Mémorandum du 23 Avril, le Gouvernement Britannique s'est convaincu de la difficulté d'insister pour l'abolition totale à une date déterminée de l'impôt en travail. Il ne cherchera donc pas à obtenir la fixation de cette date, si les mesures destinées à réprimer les abus qui subsisteraient encore au Congo, particulièrement en ce qui regarde le traitement des indigènes, sont prises sans délai, et si les concessions, déjà existantes et ultérieurement accordées, sont interprétées de manière à reconnaître les droits étendus d'occupation des indigènes, et leur liberté de disposer des produits naturels du sol.

Ces mesures en faveur des indigènes, le Cabinet de Bruxelles, une fois la reprise du Congo et la Loi Coloniale votées par le Parlement, n'entend mettre aucun retard à les édicter et à les exécuter. Il l'a déclaré à diverses reprises à la Chambre des Représentants; il a confirmé ces déclarations par écrit au Gouvernement Britannique; il ne peut que les répéter aujourd'hui avec la même force et la même sincérité.

Il serait difficile, avant que les mandataires de la nation se soient prononcés sur la

question même de la reprise et aient approuvé le projet de Loi Coloniale, d'entrer dans les détails de l'exécution, comme le demande le Cabinet de Londres ; toutefois, le Gouvernement du Roi, voulant donner une nouvelle preuve de l'amitié traditionnelle qui unit la Belgique à la Grande-Bretagne, va chercher à indiquer ici avec toute la précision possible les mesures qu'il se propose de prendre, afin de réaliser le programme qu'il s'est tracé. Ces mesures seront arrêtées sous la forme de lois, de décrets, ou de dispositions administratives, lorsque le Gouvernement aura été investi par la Loi Coloniale des pouvoirs qui lui font encore défaut. Ayant la conscience de sa responsabilité et dans le plein exercice de sa souveraineté, il accomplira cette tâche avec toute la diligence que permettront la situation de fait et les considérations d'opportunité, dont tout État, en prenant possession d'une Colonie déjà organisée, ne saurait s'abstenir de tenir compte.

Dès maintenant le Gouvernement Belge peut affirmer qu'il tiendra la main à la prompte et large exécution du Décret Royal du 3 Juin, 1906, sur l'extension des terres à attribuer aux indigènes pour leurs cultures et leur trafic. Le même Décret prescrit une enquête dans tous les villages, dans le but de déterminer l'étendue des terrains qui doivent être réservés à leurs habitants. L'Administration nouvelle activera la marche de cette enquête, afin de lui faire produire le plus rapidement possible les résultats qu'on en attend. Les autorités coloniales établiront d'une manière complète et précise les règlements pour la mise en vente des terres domaniales, en vue de satisfaire, notamment, aux demandes des missionnaires et des commerçants. Le Gouvernement veillera scrupuleusement à ce que les compagnies concessionnaires n'enfreignent en rien les engagements qu'il a pris, et respectent la liberté du travail ainsi que le droit des indigènes de disposer des produits du sol qui leur sera attribué.

Faut-il, enfin, rappeler que les intentions du Gouvernement Belge se sont traduites par les déclarations qu'il a faites publiquement et dont la portée exacte n'a pas échappé au Gouvernement Britannique, puisqu'il les a accueillies avec la plus grande faveur ? Exposées aux Chambres Belges, elles ont acquis la valeur d'engagements, dont l'exécution se poursuivra sous leur contrôle et avec leur concours. La sollicitude du Parlement pour le sort des indigènes Congolais, égale à celle du Gouvernement lui-même, s'est déjà explicitement et énergiquement manifestée au cours des derniers débats.

Le Gouvernement Britannique, après avoir pris acte des affirmations réitérées du Cabinet Belge en ce qui concerne la loyale et entière exécution des engagements conventionnels contractés envers l'Angleterre, comme envers les autres Puissances qui ont signé les Actes des Conférences de Berlin et de Bruxelles, voudra bien constater qu'il possède, dès maintenant, toutes les garanties que la Belgique est en mesure de donner.

Le Mémoire du 23 Juin ajoute que le Gouvernement Britannique accueillerait volontiers l'assurance que le Gouvernement Belge ne se refuserait pas, s'il y était invité, à déférer en dernier ressort à un arbitrage toutes les divergences de vues relatives à l'interprétation des Traités qui lient l'État du Congo au sujet des questions commerciales, dans le cas où une entente n'aurait pu s'établir par les voies diplomatiques ordinaires.

Ainsi formulée, cette proposition a été examinée par le Gouvernement Belge avec une attention d'autant plus sérieuse qu'il a le désir sincère de dissiper les dernières appréhensions qui pourraient subsister encore, quant à l'observation dans l'avenir des clauses de l'Acte de Berlin.

Il lui paraît cependant difficile d'admettre que la Belgique, seule parmi les Puissances Signataires de cet Acte, prenne vis-à-vis de l'une d'elles un engagement général, différent en ce qui touche à l'arbitrage du principe consacré par l'Article 12.

Mais le Gouvernement du Roi tient à affirmer les sympathies qu'il conserve pour l'arbitrage, et qu'il a manifestées, en signant avec plusieurs États des Traités qui ont rencontré au Parlement et dans le pays le plus chaleureux accueil. C'est dans le même esprit que l'État du Congo a conclu, de son côté, avec l'Angleterre un Accord, en vue de soumettre à l'arbitrage du Tribunal de La Haye toute contestation qui pourrait naître au sujet des frontières de l'État. Le Gouvernement du Roi est donc disposé à déclarer que, s'il était sollicité après l'annexion de soumettre en dernier ressort au Tribunal Permanent de La Haye un différend provenant d'une divergence d'appréciation sur l'interprétation des Traités qui lient l'État du Congo, il examinerait cette proposition avec une bienveillance particulière, en s'inspirant des vues larges qui ont présidé à l'élaboration des Traités Généraux d'Arbitrage qu'il a déjà signés, sous la réserve, toutefois, admise par l'Angleterre elle-même dans des Traités analogues, que le différend ne touche ni à l'honneur ni à la souveraineté nationale, et en tenant

compte de l'application qu'il y a lieu de faire aux Traités collectifs de l'Article 84 de l'Acte de la Conférence de La Haye.

Cet Article est ainsi conçu : " Lorsqu'il s'agit de l'interprétation d'une Convention à laquelle ont participé d'autres Puissances que les parties en litige, celles-ci avertissent en temps utile toutes les Puissances Signataires. Chacune de ces Puissances a le droit d'intervenir au procès. Si une ou plusieurs d'entre elles ont profité de cette faculté, l'interprétation contenue dans la sentence est également obligatoire à leur égard."

L'Acte de Berlin étant un Traité collectif, le Gouvernement Britannique appréciera certainement les inconvénients et les difficultés qui résulteraient d'une application différente des clauses de ces Traités dans les divers territoires que comprend le bassin conventionnel du Congo.

Afin d'éviter ces inconvénients, il devrait être entendu que l'application de la décision arbitrale n'aurait lieu qu'après l'adhésion que les autres Puissances ayant des possessions dans le dit bassin seraient sollicitées d'y apporter.

Il faut mentionner d'autre part que l'Article 68 de la Constitution Belge subordonne l'emploi d'une pareille procédure au consentement du Parlement : " Les Traités de Commerce," y est-il dit, " et ceux qui pourraient grever l'État et lier individuellement des Belges, n'ont d'effet qu'après avoir reçu l'assentiment des Chambres." Pour adopter le Compromis déférant à un arbitrage une question de nature commerciale ou dont la solution engagerait soit les finances de l'État, soit les intérêts particuliers des sujets Belges, le Gouvernement a donc absolument besoin de l'approbation parlementaire.

Les considérations qui précèdent ne dispensent pas le Gouvernement du Roi de faire remarquer que le meilleur moyen, d'après lui, de résoudre les questions litigieuses qui s'élèveraient après l'annexion serait une entente directe entre toutes les Puissances ayant des possessions dans le bassin conventionnel.

Il ne cache pas ses préférences pour l'emploi de cette solution, qui assurerait une interprétation commune des clauses de l'Acte de Berlin, et il prie à son tour le Cabinet de Londres de vouloir bien l'examiner.

Le Gouvernement Britannique éprouve le besoin de convaincre l'opinion publique en Angleterre que la reconnaissance du transfert du Congo à la Belgique ne sera pas contraire aux devoirs et aux responsabilités assumés par la Grande-Bretagne lorsqu'elle a reconnu l'Association Internationale et signé les Actes de Berlin et de Bruxelles. Le Gouvernement du Roi ne doute pas que les explications contenues dans ce Mémoire ne mettent les Ministres de Sa Majesté Britannique à même d'atteindre pleinement ce résultat.

Il ne peut terminer le présent exposé sans exprimer la satisfaction qu'il a ressentie en apprenant que le Gouvernement Britannique attache le même prix que lui aux liens d'amitié qui unissent les deux pays depuis que la Belgique a pris place parmi les nations. Il est superflu d'ajouter que, ces sentiments amicaux, il n'a pas cessé d'en être animé lui-même au cours de cet échange de vues.

(Translation.)

AFTER a full consideration of the Memorandum handed to the Comte de Lalaing on the 23rd June by His Britannic Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, the King's Government notes with a satisfaction not less lively than that felt by the British Government the harmony which reigns between the two Governments with regard to the principal points mentioned in the last Belgian Memorandum, viz., the immediate improvement of the moral and material conditions of the existence of the Congo natives; as rapid an extension as possible to all parts of the Colony of such economic progress as has already been achieved; the application of the commercial clauses of the Berlin Act in their full meaning and scope.

As is shown by the Memorandum of the 23rd June, which reached us on the 25th, the British Government had considered the advisability of asking the Belgian Government to agree to the total abolition of the labour tax within a fixed period, and to the settlement by arbitration of all purely commercial questions arising out of the international obligations of the Congo State. Suggestions to this effect were made in the course of informal conversations which took place between the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Sir A. Hardinge, but did not, however, assume the shape of definite proposals. After a full consideration of the Memorandum of the 23rd April,* the British Government recognizes the difficulty of insisting upon the total abolition of the labour tax at a definite date. It will not therefore press for the fixing of such date, provided the measures necessary for remedying the abuses which still exist in the Congo,

* See No. 3, "Africa No. 3 (1908)."

more especially in respect of the treatment of natives, are taken without delay, and that existing or future concessions are interpreted in such a way as to admit the extended rights of occupation of the natives, and their freedom to dispose of the natural products of the soil.

The Cabinet of Brussels intends to issue and give effect to the said measures for improving the lot of the natives, as soon as ever the annexation of the Congo and the Colonial Law have been voted by Parliament. It has promised the Chamber of Representatives to do so on more than one occasion; it has confirmed this promise to the British Government in writing; it can only to-day repeat its promise with the same earnestness and sincerity as before.

It would be difficult to go into the details for giving effect thereto, as requested by the Cabinet of London, until the Representatives of the nation have come to a decision on the actual question of annexation and have approved the Colonial Bill; nevertheless, the King's Government, desirous of giving a fresh proof of the traditional friendship which unites Belgium to Great Britain, will endeavour to trace here, with as much precision as possible, the measures which it proposes to take in order to carry out the programme it has drawn up. The said measures will take the form of laws, decrees, or administrative provisions, as soon as the Government has been invested by the Colonial Law with the powers which it now lacks. Conscious of its responsibility, and in the full exercise of its sovereignty, it will accomplish this task as promptly as the existing state of affairs and considerations of expediency allow, considerations no State on taking possession of a Colony already organized can afford to ignore.

The Belgian Government is ready to affirm that it will at once give prompt and full effect to the Royal Decree of the 3rd June, 1906, with regard to the increased grant of land to the natives for cultivation and commerce. The same Decree provides that an inquiry be held in all villages with a view to fixing the extent of the sites which ought to be reserved to their inhabitants; the new administration will expedite the work of this inquiry so as to make it give the expected results as quickly as possible. The Colonial authorities will fix, fully and precisely, the regulations for the sale of the domain lands with a view to satisfy the requirements of the missionaries and traders more especially. The Government will take the greatest care that the concessionary companies do not in any way infringe its undertakings, and that they respect the liberty to work as well as the right of the natives to dispose of the products of the soil assigned to them.

Is it finally necessary to call to memory that the intentions of the Belgian Government find expression in its public declarations, the exact import of which has not escaped the British Government, for it received them most favourably? They have been submitted to the Belgian Chambers, and have thereby acquired the value of engagements, to which effect will be given under their control and with their assistance. The solicitude of Parliament for the lot of the Congolese natives equals that of the Government itself, and has been explicitly and energetically manifested during the recent debates.

The British Government, after having taken note of the repeated assurances of the Belgian Cabinet in regard to the loyal and entire execution of the Treaty engagements contracted with England and with the other Powers which signed the Acts of the Conferences of Berlin and Brussels, will surely admit that it now possesses all the guarantees which Belgium is in a position to give.

The Memorandum of the 23rd June adds that the British Government would welcome an assurance that the Belgian Government would not refuse, if invited to do so, to refer in the last resort to arbitration any differences of view as to the meaning of those Treaties binding the Congo State which bear on commercial questions, should an understanding be unattainable by ordinary diplomatic methods.

The above proposal, thus stated, has been examined by the Belgian Government all the more attentively, inasmuch as it is sincerely anxious to dispel the last remaining misgivings with regard to the observance in the future of the clauses of the Berlin Act.

It finds it difficult, however, to admit that Belgium, alone among the Powers which signed the said Act, should give to one of those Powers a general undertaking which differs as regards arbitration from the principle laid down in Article 12.

The King's Government, however, is anxious to affirm the sympathy which it has always felt for arbitration, a sympathy it gave expression to by signing with several States Treaties which have met with a most enthusiastic welcome both in Parliament and in the country. In a similar spirit the Congo State concluded an Agreement on its part with England with a view to submitting to the arbitration of the Tribunal of The Hague any

question which might arise regarding the frontiers of the Congo State. The King's Government is therefore disposed to state that, if it were invited, after annexation, to refer in the last resort to the Permanent Tribunal of The Hague any dispute arising from a divergence of opinion as to the interpretation of the Treaties binding the Congo State, it would give the proposal the most favourable consideration, being guided by the liberal views which inspired the preparation of the General Arbitration Treaties which it has already signed, subject to the reservation, however—a reservation recognized by England herself in analogous Treaties—that the dispute should touch neither the honour nor the national sovereignty, and not losing sight of the desirability of applying to collective Treaties Article 81st of the Act of the Conference of The Hague.

This Article runs as follows: "When there is a question as to the interpretation of a Convention of which other Powers are Signatories, the parties to the proceedings shall inform all the Signatory Powers in good time. Each of these Powers is entitled to intervene in the proceeding. If one or more avail themselves of the right, the interpretation given by the award is equally binding on them."

The Berlin Act being a collective Treaty, the British Government will not fail to realize the objections and the difficulties which would result from a differential application of the clauses of the said Treaties in the various territories comprised in the conventional basin of the Congo.

In order to remove these objections, it should be understood that the arbitral award would not be applied till the other Powers having possessions in the basin aforesaid shall, on being invited, have given their accession to it.

It must also be borne in mind that Article 68 of the Belgian Constitution renders recourse to such procedure subject to the consent of Parliament: "Commercial Treaties," says this Article, "and Treaties calculated to burden the Congo State and bind individual Belgian citizens, only take effect after receiving the assent of the Chambers." In order to adopt the compromise by which questions of a commercial character are submitted to arbitration as well as questions of which the settlement would affect either the finances of the Congo State or the particular interests of Belgian subjects, it is absolutely necessary that the Government should obtain the approval of Parliament.

The above considerations do not dispense the King's Government from pointing out that the best method, in its opinion, of settling the questions or disputes which might arise after annexation, would be a direct understanding between all the Powers having possessions in the conventional basin.

The Belgian Government frankly prefers this method of settlement, which would assure a common interpretation of the clauses of the Berlin Act, and it invites the Cabinet of London, in its turn, to be so good as to consider it.

The British Government realizes the necessity of convincing public opinion in England that the recognition of the transfer of the Congo to Belgium will not be contrary to the duties and responsibilities assumed by Great Britain when it recognized the International Association and signed the Berlin and Brussels Acts. The King's Government is convinced that the explanations contained in this Memorandum will enable His Britannic Majesty's Ministers to attain fully this result.

The Belgian Government cannot close this Memorandum without expressing the satisfaction which it felt on learning that the British Government attaches the same importance as itself to the bonds of friendship which unite the two countries since Belgium took its place among the nations. It is superfluous to add that it has itself been animated by the same friendly sentiments throughout the present exchange of views.

Further Correspondence respecting the Taxation
of Natives, and other Questions, in the Congo
State.

[In continuation of "Africa No. 3, 1908":
Cd. 4135.]

*Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Com-
mand of His Majesty August 1908.*

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING THE

TAXATION OF NATIVES, AND
OTHER QUESTIONS,

IN THE

CONGO STATE.

[In continuation of "Africa No. 4 (1908)": Cd. 4178.]

*Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty.
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Further Correspondence respecting the Taxation of Natives, and other Questions, in the Congo State.

[In continuation of "Africa No. 4 (1908)": Cd. 4178.]

No. 1.

Sir Edward Grey to Count de Lalaing.

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 4, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith the reply of His Majesty's Government to the Memorandum you were so good as to communicate to me on behalf of the Belgian Government on the 13th July last relative to the annexation of the Independent State of the Congo by Belgium.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. GREY.

Inclosure in No. 1.

Memorandum.

ON the 13th July last the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had the honour to receive from the Belgian Minister a Memorandum, containing the reply of the Belgian Government to the Memorandum communicated to the Comte de Lalaing on the 23rd June relative to the annexation of the Independent State of the Congo by Belgium. In handing this Memorandum to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, the Belgian Minister communicated at the same time a copy of the explanatory despatch addressed to him by M. Davignon, who called attention therein to the manner in which the union of the Congo State with Belgium under one Sovereign had always been in contemplation, and observed that the Belgian Government could not see how the legitimate interests of Great Britain could possibly be injured by the annexation of the Congo.

M. Davignon referred also to the question whether the Belgian Government are in reality bound by Treaty to notify the fact of annexation of the Congo to the other Signatory Powers of the Berlin Treaty, and to the right of His Majesty's Government to make reservations in regard to their acceptance of such annexation.

In the Memorandum itself the Belgian Government express their readiness, when annexation has actually taken place, to give prompt and full effect to the Decree of the 3rd June, 1906, with regard to increased grants of land to the natives for cultivation and trade purposes, and with regard to the holding of inquiries in the villages, in order to fix the extent of the lands to be reserved for the inhabitants. The Belgian Government go on to state that definite Regulations will be drawn up for the sale of domain lands for the use of missionaries and traders, and that the greatest care will be taken to make the Concessionary Companies respect the liberty of the natives to work, as well as their right to dispose of the products of the lands assigned to them.

With regard to arbitration, the Belgian Government undertake to give any proposals that may be made their most favourable consideration, subject, however, to the consent of the Belgian Chamber, and to the reservation that the points at issue do not concern the honour or national sovereignty of the country.

The Memorandum then proceeds to state that, having taken note of the repeated assurances of the Belgian Government in regard to their loyal and entire execution of their Treaty obligations, His Majesty's Government will surely admit that they are now in receipt of all the guarantees which the Belgian Government are in a position to afford, and it concludes by observing that, in the opinion of the Belgian Government, the best solution of all questions which may arise after annexation has taken place will be found in arriving at a direct understanding between all the Powers having possessions in the Conventional basin.

With regard to the first point, the right, namely, of His Majesty's Government to make stipulations before assenting to the annexation of the Independent State by

Belgium, His Majesty's Government observe that the Belgian Government, while stating that they do not wish to discuss the question whether Article 34 of the Berlin Act can be considered as being applicable in the present circumstances to Belgium, at the same time advance certain reasons, which, in their opinion militate against such applicability, and refer to the title given to Chapter VI of the Berlin Act, "Declaration relative to the essential conditions to be observed in order that new occupations on the coasts of the African Continent may be held to be effective," and the text of Article 34 which runs as follows:—

"Any Power which henceforth takes possession of a tract of land on the coasts of the African Continent outside of its present possessions, or which, being hitherto without such possessions, shall acquire them, as well as the Power which assumes a Protectorate there, shall accompany the respective act with a notification thereof, addressed to the other Signatory Powers of the present Act, in order to enable them, if need be, to make good any claims of their own."

His Majesty's Government, however, desire to draw the especial attention of the Belgian Government to the expressions "*new occupations*" and "any Power which *henceforth* takes possession of a tract of land . . . outside its present possessions." The reasonable interpretation of these provisions seemed to His Majesty's Government to be that the Belgian Government, which had not previously had any possessions in the African Continent, would, when acquiring such possessions, notify the fact to the other Powers concerned.

His Majesty's Government do not, however, wish to lay any undue stress upon the interpretation of any one particular Article in any particular Treaty. They desire rather to base on the more general grounds of international policy their claim to receive such information as will satisfy them that in the measures which are to follow the transfer to another Power of the vast territories of the Independent State full weight will be given to the representations which they have made, and which have throughout been conceived in the most friendly spirit.

The territories of the Independent State touch those of His Britannic Majesty at many points, and it cannot therefore be a matter of indifference to His Majesty's Government how they are governed, inasmuch as the maladministration of any one State cannot but react to the prejudice of its neighbours, more especially in a continent like Africa.

Now the manner in which the Independent State has hitherto been governed has been notoriously different from that obtaining in neighbouring territories, and has for many years past caused great anxiety to His Majesty's Government as bearing on the state of affairs on the Anglo-Congolese frontier, and as giving rise to well-grounded fears lest it should injuriously affect the kindred tribes living in British territory.

His Majesty's Government therefore consider that, if only on the ground of the manner in which the state of things prevailing in the Congo State reacts on the native tribes under British rule, they are amply justified, now that there is a question of that State passing under a new Government, in taking every possible precaution to secure that the new Administration shall not repeat the fatal errors of the old, and in requiring a specific undertaking that the grievances of which they have so often complained shall be remedied within a reasonable period of time.

But besides their right to secure the peace of their own borders, His Majesty's Government hold most strongly that the terms of the Declarations exchanged between the Government of her late Britannic Majesty and the International Association of the Congo on the 16th December, 1884, entitle them, when the territories of the Association are about to pass to a new owner, to satisfy themselves that the transfer will result in the introduction of a system of government which will correspond more nearly with the intentions of the signatories of those Declarations, and fulfil the conditions on which His Majesty's Government originally recognized the creation of the Congo State.

In the Declaration of the Association it is expressly laid down that it has been founded "for the purpose of promoting the civilization and commerce of Africa, and for other humane and benevolent purposes"; and in the Declaration of His Britannic Majesty's Government it is stated that they "declare their sympathy with, and approval of, the humane and benevolent purposes of the Association, and accordingly recognize its flag as the flag of a friendly Government."

It is thus obvious that the reason which chiefly determined the Government of her

late Majesty Queen Victoria to recognize the flag of the Association was the belief that the government of the Association would prove a blessing to the native and an encouragement to general commerce.

The whole tenour of the representations which His Majesty's Government have been making for the past few years to the Government of the Independent State, and within the last few months to the Belgian Government, will show sufficiently that they are very far from being able to think that either of the objects has been attained.

His Majesty's Government take note with satisfaction of the Declaration of the Belgian Government, now renewed, that the international obligations contracted by the Independent State will continue to bind its successor. In their opinion, however, these obligations have not so far been properly carried out, and in these circumstances it is not unreasonable that they should ask for some guarantee that the system of government of which they have constantly complained will be changed.

To pass now from the consideration of M. Davignon's despatch, which has so far formed the subject of the present *aide-mémoire*, to the study of the Memorandum inclosed therein, the following points appear to be those which are principally dealt with:—

(a.) The extension of the lands to be assigned to the natives for the purposes of trade and cultivation;

(b.) The respect of the freedom of labour, as also of the right of the natives to dispose of the produce of the lands assigned to them; and, lastly,

(c.) The question of arbitration in regard to "any differences of view as to the meaning of the Treaties which bind the Congo State in regard to commercial questions, should an understanding be unattainable by ordinary diplomatic methods."

With regard to (a) and (b) His Majesty's Government take note with great satisfaction of the assurances given by the Belgian Government, but while fully aware of the difficulty which must necessarily attend any immediate and violent change in the system hitherto pursued in regard to these points by the Congo Government, they must at the same time express their disappointment that no indication is given in regard to the introduction in the near future of improvements in the existing conditions.

His Majesty's Government have for a number of years past maintained that the practice pursued in these matters by the Independent State has been at variance with the spirit of the Berlin Act, and from that practice they believe it to be incontestable that the natives, not to mention traders and missionaries, have suffered severely.

While noting, therefore, with pleasure the intention which the Belgian Government express to put into force the Decree of the 3rd June, 1906, under which inquiries are to be instituted in the native villages, with a view to determine the extent of land to be allotted to the natives; and while admitting that it is at present impossible for the Belgian Government to fix a definite date within which satisfactory reforms on all these points can be completed, they feel bound to ask for more definite assurances than are furnished by the Memorandum now under reply.

They consider it, for instance, essential that some immediate amelioration should be introduced into the lot of the native population, which has for so long been suffering under the system of administration hitherto so unfortunately pursued by the authorities of the Independent State.

His Majesty's Government fully recognize the firm intention of the Belgian Government to lighten the burden of the natives, but they are anxious to make quite clear what is, in their opinion, the essential point. An increase in the area of each village will certainly enable the tribe to shift the site as sanitary or other reasons dictate; it will give space for new cultivation while the old fields lie fallow; it will prevent excessive wandering, and thereby lessen the risk of disputes with neighbouring communities; it will check wasteful destruction of the forest for purposes of cultivation; it will be, in short, an administrative measure which will facilitate the work of the Executive, but it will not assist the native to any appreciable extent in trading in the natural products of the soil. From the information in the possession of His Majesty's Government it would seem that in the majority of cases the rubber in the vicinity of the villages is exhausted, and the natives have to go many hours, and often many days, to find the vines. If, therefore, the natives are to have a possibility of trading in the natural products of their country, this condition of things calls for consideration, and it seems to His Majesty's Government that a means of meeting it already exists.

From trustworthy information in the possession of His Majesty's Government it

would appear that at the time when the present system of land tenure in the Congo was initiated, and all lands were declared State property regardless of native rights, tribal landmarks were set up by the natives themselves in order to prevent the frequent local feuds caused by the members of one tribe trespassing in search of rubber into the territory of another. These tribal landmarks are still in existence throughout the Congo territories, and are at the present time tenaciously adhered to by the native population; they would be at once available as indications of the lands within which the natives should be free to trade in all the natural products of the soil and to cultivate for their own use. Such a return to native communal tenure in land and produce, as it existed prior to 1891-2, would lead to a sensible and immediate alleviation of the unhappy condition in which at present the original inhabitants of the country find themselves, deprived, as they are, of all right to these same products of the soil, which are the only means by which they can earn more than a bare subsistence, and with no protection either from the Concessionary Companies or the State in the shape of a guaranteed fair minimum price for the rubber or other produce gathered. They would thus be enabled to await with some patience the results of the fuller investigation into their rights which the Belgian Government promise, and which, as it will necessarily have to be carried out by degrees in co-operation with the Chiefs and people, must take a considerable time. His Majesty's Government understand, of course, that this investigation will deal not only with the area allotted to the Concessionary Companies, but with the whole territory of the State.

His Majesty's Government have no wish to appear to dictate to the Belgian Government the exact lines on which that investigation should proceed. They believe, however, that it will not be found altogether useless if they summarize here the methods which have been employed by the different British Colonial Administrations in dealing with questions of a similar nature in British possessions.

These methods have naturally varied, but, so far as the colonial possessions under the control of the Colonial Office are concerned, the underlying principle has been that just, amounting in some cases to very liberal, treatment should be meted out to the natives.

On the *West Coast of Africa* fairly well defined tribal divisions have existed almost from time immemorial, and Government action has been generally confined to the maintenance of those divisions or to the adjustment of disputes when differences of opinion have arisen between tribes as to the actual position of their boundaries.

In the *East Africa Protectorate* the circumstances are different. The population consists partly of quasi-nomad tribes, who shift their ground for grazing purposes at different times of the year, and partly of tribes who have definitely settled in certain districts. There are also large tracts of land which are unoccupied. In the case of the tribes of the first class, the policy pursued by the British Colonial Office has been to leave them alone where they are not in proximity to the settled areas. When, as in the case of the Masai, their grazing grounds have been near the settled areas, and there was therefore a danger of friction between them and the white settlers, ample lands have, with their own concurrence, been given them elsewhere which are guaranteed to them and their descendants as inviolable reserves. In the case of the non-nomadic tribes, the tribal possessions are scrupulously respected, as on the West Coast of Africa. The Crown only deals with the unoccupied land outside the reserves and tribal possessions.

In *Uganda* the whole question has been dealt with by Agreement between the Government and the Kabaka, Chiefs, and people of Uganda.

Turning to *South Africa*, reserves have been assigned to the natives of Rhodesia for their exclusive use and occupation, and the Imperial Government have provided for a sufficiency of land although the country was acquired by conquest.

In *Basutoland* the natives are in entire possession of the whole of the land, with the exception of a few Government and mission sites. It is, in fact, a vast native reserve.

In *Bechuanaland*, where the natives were quasi-nomad, extensive reserves have been assigned to the leading Chiefs for the occupation of the Chiefs and their tribes. The land assigned is sufficient for all purposes, and there is no discontent.

Lastly, in the *Southern Pacific*, immediately on the annexation of Fiji, the British Government assured the natives of the possession of the full property in all the lands which they occupied, and reserved for itself only such lands as were not in the actual occupation of any tribe or required for their support. As a matter of fact, although the native population has largely decreased since the annexation, no diminution has been made in the extent of the lands held by the natives, who now own upwards of

4,000,000 acres, while their numbers do not exceed 100,000. All the boundaries were stated, at the time of taking over, to be known.

To come to point (c) of the Memorandum, the question, namely, of arbitration in regard to any divergence of views as to the meaning of the Treaties which bind the Congo State in regard to commercial questions in the event of its being impossible to arrive at an understanding by ordinary diplomatic methods.

The Memorandum states that, in the first place, the Belgian Government find it difficult to admit that Belgium alone among the Powers signatory of the Berlin Act is to give to one of those Powers a general undertaking which would differ as regards arbitration from the principle laid down in Article 12; further that if, after the annexation of the Congo, the Belgian Government were to be invited to refer to the Permanent Tribunal of The Hague any dispute arising from a divergence of opinion as to the interpretation of the Treaties binding the Congo State, they would give the proposal their most favourable consideration. The Memorandum states, lastly, that the Belgian Government hold that the Belgian Constitution would oblige the Belgian Government to submit for the approval of Parliament any proposal for arbitration in regard to questions of a commercial character, as well as those of which the settlement would affect either the finances of the State or the private interests of Belgian subjects.

From the remarks on the subject, of which the above is a summary, contained in the Memorandum under reply, His Majesty's Government fear that the paragraph of the British Memorandum of the 23rd June last, to which they are in reply, was not expressed as clearly as might have been desired.

It will be seen on reference to the Memorandum referred to that it may be divided into two parts; one dealing with the rights of the natives of the Independent State, and one which is concerned solely with such Articles of the Treaties binding the Congo State as bear on commercial questions. With regard to the first, the Memorandum clearly laid down that while His Majesty's Government were not disposed unduly to press the Belgian Government in connection with the settlement of questions of a highly complicated nature, they at the same time considered these questions to be of such a nature that they were unable to engage to recognize the transfer of the Independent State to Belgium until they had received an assurance that these questions would be settled in a manner satisfactory both to them and to public opinion in this country.

With regard to the second part of the Memorandum which dealt with the purely *commercial* obligations of the Congo State under its Treaties, His Majesty's Government merely asked that the Belgian Government would give a *formal* assurance that they would not refuse, if invited to do so, to refer to arbitration any differences of view as to the meaning of those Articles in the Treaties binding the Congo State which bear on commercial questions. His Majesty's Government take note with satisfaction of the desire of the Belgian Government to affirm the sympathy which it has always felt for arbitration; they would raise no objection to the method preferred by the Belgian Government of settling disputes by direct understanding between all the Powers having possessions in the conventional basin. But they observe that such a method of settling a dispute between any two Powers is not practicable except by the agreement of the other Powers in question; and in the event of the method proposed by the Belgian Government not proving practicable or conclusive within a reasonable time, His Majesty's Government must reserve their full liberty to press for arbitration.

Finally, His Majesty's Government trust that the Belgian Government will have no difficulty in giving an assurance that equal facilities will be given to Christian missionaries of all denominations for the prosecution of their work and the free exercise of their religion, both by themselves and their converts, in all parts of the Congo territory.

The friendship between the two nations, of which there has been constant evidence in the course of the present discussion, inspires His Majesty's Government with the hope that such assurances on all the points under discussion will be forthcoming as will still further increase and strengthen those ties of amity to whose continued existence His Majesty's Government attach so high a value.

Foreign Office, November 1, 1908.

Count de Lalaing to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 17.)

*Légation de Belgique, Londres,
le 16 Novembre, 1908.*

M. le Secrétaire d'État,

J'AI l'honneur d'accuser réception à votre Excellence de sa note du 11 Novembre, par laquelle elle a bien voulu m'informer de son intention de communiquer au Parlement le Mémoire du 1^{er} Novembre, contenant la réponse du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique au Mémoire du Gouvernement du Roi du 12 Juillet dernier.

Au cours des précédentes négociations les deux Gouvernements s'étaient entendus en vue de publier et de déposer simultanément aux Parlements des deux pays les Mémoires diplomatiques échangés entre Londres et Bruxelles au sujet de la reprise de l'État Indépendant du Congo par la Belgique.

Le Gouvernement du Roi se demande s'il n'eût pas été préférable de conserver la même procédure, pour éclairer en même temps les Chambres Belges et Britanniques, en plaçant, à la fois, sous leurs yeux les demandes et les réponses.

Mon Gouvernement ne manquera pas de faire parvenir à votre Excellence une réplique au Mémoire du Gouvernement Britannique du 1^{er} Novembre, dont il a apprécié, comme il le méritait, le ton très amical. Mais ce travail, déjà en préparation, exigera un certain temps, à cause de la transmission des pouvoirs qui s'est opérée entre les Gouvernements de l'État du Congo et de la Belgique, et de l'organisation non encore terminée du Ministère des Colonies, qui doit procurer au Département des Affaires Étrangères quelques-uns des éléments de cette réponse.

Je suis chargé de prier votre Excellence de vouloir bien, si elle le juge possible, publier la présente lettre à la suite du Mémoire du 1^{er} Novembre adressé au Gouvernement du Roi.

Je saisis, &c.
(Signé) LALAING.

(Translation.)

*Belgian Legation, London,
November 16, 1908.*

M. le Secrétaire d'État,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's note of the 11th November, in which you were good enough to inform me of your intention to communicate to Parliament the Memorandum of the 1st November containing the reply of His Britannic Majesty's Government to the Memorandum of the King's Government dated the 12th July last.

In the course of the preceding negotiations the two Governments had come to an agreement with a view to the simultaneous publication and submission to the Parliaments of the two countries of the diplomatic Memoranda exchanged between London and Brussels on the subject of the annexation of the Independent State of the Congo by Belgium.

It seems to the King's Government that it might have been preferable to follow the same procedure, and, in order to supply the Belgian and British Chambers with simultaneous information, to lay before the two Chambers both the requests put forward and the answers thereto.

My Government will not fail to communicate to your Excellency a reply to the British Government's Memorandum of the 1st November, the very friendly tone of which it deservedly appreciates. But time will be needed for the preparation of this reply, which has already been put in hand, owing to the transference of authority from the Government of the Congo State to the Belgian Government, and to the still incomplete organization of the Ministry for the Colonies, which has to furnish the Ministry for Foreign Affairs with some of the data required for the said reply.

I am instructed to request your Excellency to be so good as to publish, if you think it possible, the present letter at the same time as the Memorandum of the 1st November addressed to the King's Government.

I take, &c.
(Signed) LALAING.

FRUTHER CORRESPONDENCE RESPECTING THE TAXATION
OF NATIVES, AND OTHER QUESTIONS, IN THE CONGO
STATE.

[In continuation of "Africa No. 1 (1908)";
Cd. 4178.]

*Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command
of His Majesty, November 1908.*

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING THE

TAXATION OF NATIVES AND
OTHER QUESTIONS

IN THE

CONGO STATE.

[In continuation of "Africa No. 5 (1908)": Cd. 4396.]

*Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty.
June 1909.*

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Further Correspondence respecting the Taxation of Natives and other Questions in the Congo State.

[In continuation of "Africa No. 5 (1908)": Cd. E396.]

No. 1.

Memorandum communicated by the Belgian Minister, March 15, 1909.

DANS le mémorandum que le Secrétaire d'État de Sa Majesté britannique pour les Affaires Étrangères a remis le 4 novembre, 1908, au Comte de Lalaing, et qui est relatif à l'annexion de l'État Indépendant du Congo par la Belgique, l'attention du Gouvernement du Roi a été tout d'abord attirée par cette considération que fait valoir le Gouvernement britannique comme un des motifs de son intervention dans cette question: la contiguïté de ses possessions africaines avec les territoires de l'État Indépendant. En raison de ce voisinage, il paraît craindre que la façon dont l'État était administré, différente d'après lui de celle qui prévaut dans les pays limitrophes, n'exerce une influence fâcheuse sur les tribus de même race vivant en territoire britannique. C'est pourquoi il demande à connaître exactement les vues et les intentions de la nouvelle administration.

Afin de calmer ces appréhensions, le Gouvernement du Roi ne peut mieux faire que de rappeler à la mémoire du Cabinet de Londres que depuis vingt-cinq ans il ne s'est produit entre l'État Indépendant et les possessions anglaises aucun incident de frontière imputable au régime appliqué aux territoires qui avoisinent ces possessions. Le danger redouté par le Gouvernement britannique n'a pas existé pendant toute la durée de l'État; il n'existera pas davantage sous l'administration belge.

Le mémorandum britannique, outre le droit de l'Angleterre de sauvegarder la tranquillité de ses propres frontières, invoque les déclarations échangées avec l'association internationale africaine le 16 décembre, 1884, pour demander que le transfert de souveraineté introduise au Congo un système de gouvernement qui répondra mieux aux intentions des signataires de ces déclarations; il y est dit expressément que l'association internationale a été créée à l'effet de développer la civilisation et le commerce en Afrique, ainsi qu'à d'autres fins humanitaires et bienfaisantes.

N'est-il pas vraiment superflu aujourd'hui de montrer combien les préoccupations du Gouvernement britannique sont peu fondées? Est-il encore nécessaire de répéter qu'en se substituant en Afrique à l'État Indépendant, issu lui-même de l'association internationale, la Belgique a fait siennes les déclarations échangées par cette dernière avec l'Angleterre; qu'elle poursuivra donc avec persévérance le but civilisateur et humanitaire que les signataires de l'arrangement de 1884 avaient en vue? Cela résulte surabondamment des assurances formelles apportées à la tribune du parlement belge par les membres du Gouvernement dans les débats, auxquels la reprise de l'État du Congo a donné lieu.

Dans les déclarations qu'il a faites publiquement, aussi bien que dans les précédentes communications adressées au Gouvernement britannique, le Gouvernement belge, usant de la plénitude de ses droits, a affirmé sa volonté d'assurer le développement de la civilisation en Afrique en veillant à la fois à l'amélioration de sort des indigènes et à la sauvegarde des intérêts engagés dans la colonie.

"La Belgique," disait le Ministre de l'Intérieur le 2 juillet, 1908, à la Chambre des Représentants, "saura remplir sans faiblesses et largement les obligations de l'Acte de Berlin. C'est avec bonheur et fierté qu'elle joindra cette mission civilisatrice et cette tâche économique à d'autres qui lui ont valu depuis septante-sept ans l'éloge des Puissances. Mais elle le fera spontanément, appuyée sur son droit, résolue à maintenir son indépendance et sa souveraineté."

Ces déclarations ont été accueillies avec confiance par l'opinion publique en Belgique; le parlement, de son côté, a clairement montré sa volonté de soutenir et d'encourager le Cabinet dans l'accomplissement de la tâche considérable dont il s'est chargé. La valeur des engagements pris par le Gouvernement du Roi envers la nation au moment de l'annexion ne peut donc être discutée et mise en doute. Le Gouverne-

ment britannique ne peut certainement pas la méconnaître; toutefois, son dernier mémorandum exprime quelque désappointement parce qu'aucune indication n'a été donnée jusqu'à présent sur les détails et le moment de la mise à exécution des améliorations qui devront être apportées à la situation actuelle.

Cette insistance ne saurait être expliquée par le désir de recevoir communication du texte même des amendements à introduire dans les lois et décrets aujourd'hui en vigueur, avant que ces changements eussent été portés à la connaissance des pouvoirs publics, qui en Belgique seront appelés à en délibérer. Comment, en effet, attribuer au Gouvernement britannique l'intention de subordonner l'adoption des mesures législatives intéressant la colonie ainsi que les actes de son administration intérieure à une sorte d'approbation préalable d'un Gouvernement étranger?

D'autre part, quatre mois à peine se sont écoulés depuis que le transfert de l'administration du Congo à la Belgique a été opéré. Le Gouvernement britannique, dont l'expérience coloniale est si longue, appréciera mieux qu'aucun autre combien un aussi court espace de temps est insuffisant pour arrêter dans leur forme définitive de graves résolutions en matière coloniale, qui ne peuvent être prises sans avoir été soigneusement préparées et sans ménager les transitions nécessaires.

Les Chambres Belges, lors de la discussion du premier budget colonial, ont compris qu'une pareille œuvre ne pouvait s'improviser et qu'un Gouvernement soucieux de ses responsabilités ne saurait consentir à porter atteinte à une situation établie, sans être prêt à y substituer immédiatement des solutions nouvelles, car ce serait provoquer une perturbation dont la colonie tout entière aurait à souffrir.

L'unanimité avec laquelle, depuis l'annexion du Congo, le Cabinet belge, le parlement et tous les organes de l'opinion publique se sont exprimés en toute occasion sur la question coloniale atteste la conception élevée que se fait la Belgique de la mission qui lui est dévolue en Afrique ainsi que sa ferme volonté de développer son œuvre coloniale en harmonie avec les intérêts de la civilisation et conformément à ses obligations internationales.

Le Gouvernement belge saura traduire ces intentions par des actes qu'il entend arrêter dans la plénitude de son indépendance. C'est à la préparation de cette œuvre que la nouvelle administration a consacré ses premiers soins et son activité s'est déjà révélée par des mesures pratiques.

Le mémorandum britannique examine ensuite trois points qui ont déjà été traités dans les mémorandums précédents : —

(a.) Extension des terres à assigner aux indigènes dans un but de commerce et de culture ;

(b.) Respect du travail libre, ainsi que du droit des indigènes de disposer des terres qui leur seront assignées ;

(c.) Question de l'arbitrage pour l'interprétation des traités qui liaient l'État du Congo en matière commerciale.

En ce qui concerne les deux premiers points, le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique prend note avec satisfaction de l'intention exprimée par le Gouvernement belge d'appliquer le décret du Roi-Souverain du 3 juin, 1906, aux termes duquel il sera procédé à des enquêtes dans les villages indigènes à l'effet de déterminer l'étendue des terres qui leur seront allouées. Mais il juge que cette mesure est insuffisante pour aider les natifs dans le trafic des produits naturels du sol, qui, à son avis, est un point essentiel.

Il signale que des bornes qui existeraient encore dans tout l'État du Congo auraient été érigées naguère par les naturels dans le but de marquer le périmètre dans lequel chaque tribu pourrait se livrer à la recherche du caoutchouc, et il suggère que ces bornes pourraient dès à présent servir à délimiter les territoires sur lesquels les aborigènes seraient libres de faire le commerce de tous les produits naturels et de les cultiver pour leur propre usage.

Il est, en effet, à la connaissance du Gouvernement du Roi que la présence des bornes auxquelles fait allusion le mémorandum britannique a été constatée exceptionnellement en quelques endroits au Congo, mais il est hors de doute que leur édification par les natifs n'a eu d'autre objet que de fixer les limites du territoire politique des tribus et de mettre fin aux contestations qui surgissaient à ce sujet entre les indigènes dépendant de chefs différents.

A ce titre, ces bornes ont pu fournir des indications utiles lorsqu'il s'est agi de fixer, conformément au Décret du 3 juin, 1906, sur les chefferies indigènes, l'étendue du territoire sur lequel s'exerçait l'autorité des chefs de tribu, mais leur existence n'offre aucun intérêt au point de vue de la délimitation des terres indigènes.

Sans vouloir insister davantage sur les inconvénients d'une mesure dont la réalisation pratique serait impossible, l'existence de bornes semblables n'ayant été constatée que dans une très minime étendue du territoire congolais, le Gouvernement du Roi croit cependant devoir faire remarquer que l'adoption de cette mesure aurait pour effet de convertir en propriété commune indigène toute la surface du Congo belge, puisque le territoire politique de chaque tribu est contigu au territoire de la tribu voisine.

Parcille solution n'irait pas seulement à l'encontre de tous les principes du droit ; elle serait également en opposition avec la situation de fait existant dans toute l'Afrique équatoriale et consacrée, notamment dans les possessions britanniques du bassin conventionnel, par une législation appliquée à des populations de même race, parvenues au même état social que celles du Congo belge.

Le Gouvernement britannique veut bien indiquer les méthodes suivies par ses administrations coloniales pour traiter des questions analogues qui se sont posées dans les possessions britanniques. De son côté, le Gouvernement du Roi croit pouvoir rappeler que le partage du territoire en terres indigènes et terres vacantes se poursuit dans le Protectorat de l'Uganda suivant des procédés de délimitation analogues à ceux prescrits par le décret congolais de 1906. Il signale également que dans l'Est Africain britannique, l'administration, bien loin de constituer en propriété commune l'ensemble du territoire politique des tribus, n'a reconnu à l'indigène aucun titre à la propriété immobilière pour la raison qu'il ne possède pas la notion du droit de propriété. Ainsi que l'indique le rapport de la Commission des Terres qui a opéré dans cette colonie en 1904, le Gouvernement s'est proclamé propriétaire de toutes les terres non grevées d'un titre de propriété, qu'elles soient ou non occupées. C'est par application de ce principe qu'il a pu procéder à l'égard de certaines tribus comme il est dit dans le mémorandum.

Le Gouvernement du Roi a estimé que l'attribution des terres aux communautés indigènes doit s'inspirer à la fois des circonstances de fait actuelles et des nécessités d'avenir, c'est-à-dire, qu'il importe de tenir compte pour la fixation de l'étendue des terres attribuées à chaque tribu, du nombre d'individus qui la composent, des procédés de culture propres aux populations primitives et de la nécessité d'assurer dans la plus large mesure le développement futur des communautés indigènes. C'est en s'inspirant de cette règle que le Gouvernement du Roi poursuit, aussi bien dans les régions exploitées par les particuliers que dans le Domaine national, l'application du décret du 3 juin, 1906.

Il a pu se convaincre que ces principes, appliqués suivant une méthode identique à celle adoptée dans les autres possessions du bassin conventionnel du Congo, auront pour effet de résoudre la question des terres indigènes au Congo belge dans un sens plus favorable aux intérêts des natifs que dans la généralité des colonies de l'Afrique équatoriale.

D'autres mesures faisant partie du système, dont l'administration coloniale poursuit l'étude, auront pour résultat de faire bénéficier les indigènes, pour une plus large part encore, de la mise en valeur de la colonie.

Le mémorandum britannique revient dans sa dernière partie sur la demande adressée précédemment par le Cabinet de Londres au Gouvernement du Roi de recevoir une assurance formelle qu'il ne se refuserait pas, s'il y était invité, à soumettre à un arbitrage toute divergence d'opinion quant à la portée des articles des traités qui liaient l'État du Congo en matière commerciale. Les considérations qu'il développe pour motiver son insistance font craindre au Cabinet de Bruxelles de n'avoir pas expliqué assez clairement les conditions mises par lui à l'acceptation éventuelle de cette proposition.

On connaît les réelles sympathies qu'inspire au Gouvernement belge le recours à l'arbitrage pour la solution des conflits internationaux, mais il lui paraît impossible d'admettre que la Belgique seule parmi les Puissances ayant des possessions dans le bassin conventionnel du Congo prenne un engagement d'une nature aussi générale que celui de recourir obligatoirement à l'arbitrage, alors que pour les autres Puissances signataires de l'Acte de Berlin, d'après l'article 12 de cet Acte, l'arbitrage reste facultatif.

Mais le Gouvernement belge n'éprouve aucune difficulté à répéter que, si l'invitation lui était faite de soumettre en dernier ressort au Tribunal de La Haye un différend provenant d'une divergence d'appréciation sur l'interprétation des traités qui liaient l'État du Congo, il examinerait cette proposition avec une bienveillance toute particulière, en s'inspirant des vues larges qui ont présidé à l'élaboration des conventions d'arbitrage conclues par la Belgique et sous la réserve de l'approbation parle-

mentaire requise par l'article 68 de la Constitution, comme l'a déjà expliqué le mémorandum du 12 juillet dernier.

Toutefois, il devrait dans ce cas se préoccuper de mettre l'emploi de la procédure arbitrale en harmonie avec l'application de l'article 84 de la convention conclue à la Conférence de La Haye et dont il est un des signataires. Cet article prescrit aux parties en litige, lorsqu'il s'agit de l'interprétation d'un traité auquel ont participé d'autres Puissances, d'avertir en temps utile toutes les Puissances qui l'ont signé. Chacune d'elles a le droit d'intervenir au procès; si l'une ou plusieurs ont profité de cette faculté, l'interprétation contenue dans la sentence est également obligatoire à leur égard. Or, l'Acte de Berlin est un traité collectif. Afin de prévenir toutes les difficultés qui pourraient résulter d'une application différente des clauses de ce traité dans les divers territoires formant le bassin conventionnel du Congo, ce qui créerait contrairement à l'Acte de Berlin un traitement différentiel au préjudice de l'un de ces territoires, il va de soi que le recours à l'arbitrage n'aurait lieu que si les autres Puissances ayant des possessions dans ledit bassin, avaient consenti d'avance à intervenir au procès ou à accepter pour leurs possessions l'interprétation donnée par la sentence arbitrale.

Cette condition essentielle, le mémorandum britannique ne la mentionne pas.

Quant au Gouvernement belge, il doit s'en tenir dans la question de l'arbitrage à sa première réponse, le Parlement, lors de la discussion de la reprise du Congo, ayant approuvé son attitude et les motifs qu'il a exposés pour l'expliquer. Même parmi les orateurs de l'opposition la thèse du Gouvernement sur l'acceptation conditionnelle de l'arbitrage a rencontré des approbateurs, qui ne comprendraient pas qu'il s'en écartât aujourd'hui.

Le Cabinet de Bruxelles disait encore dans son mémorandum du 12 juillet qu'il est à ses yeux un moyen meilleur que l'arbitrage d'arriver à la solution des questions litigieuses dans le bassin conventionnel du Congo. Ce serait une entente directe entre les Puissances possédant des territoires dans cette région. Le Gouvernement belge persiste à penser que ce procédé aurait l'immense avantage, malgré la difficulté signalée par l'Angleterre d'obtenir l'adhésion des différents États intéressés, d'assurer l'observation générale des clauses de l'Acte de Berlin et leur interprétation uniforme.

Le mémorandum britannique exprime en terminant le désir que des facilités égales soient accordées aux missionnaires chrétiens de toute confession et à leurs catéchumènes pour l'accomplissement de leurs œuvres et le libre exercice de leur religion dans toutes les parties du territoire du Congo.

Le mémorandum du 12 juillet avait déjà annoncé la mise en vente de terres domaniales. Mais le Gouvernement du Roi entend donner aux missions religieuses des facilités pour l'acquisition des terrains nécessaires au développement des œuvres d'évangélisation, en évitant de les soumettre à l'adjudication publique prescrite par la législation actuelle pour la vente et la location des terres domaniales.

Dans cet esprit il a émis dès à présent un avis favorable pour une série de demandes formées par les missions protestantes. Ces décisions seront portées à la connaissance des intéressés aussitôt que les modifications qu'elles impliquent auront été apportées au décret du 3 juin, 1906.

Dans le choix de l'emplacement des lots ainsi cédés l'administration coloniale s'efforcera de réaliser les convenances des missions; elle se réserve naturellement d'apprécier dans chaque cas, suivant le droit qui appartient à tout Gouvernement, quels sont les terrains dont l'aliénation se concilie avec les intérêts généraux qu'elle représente.

Au moment où il proclame par un de ses premiers actes sa volonté de protéger sans distinction de nationalité ni de culte toutes les entreprises religieuses, le Gouvernement belge compte bien que, de leur côté, les missionnaires de toutes les confessions chrétiennes considèrent comme un devoir de respecter les lois et les autorités publiques du pays dont ils reçoivent l'hospitalité.

Le Gouvernement belge n'est pas resté insensible à l'évocation faite par le mémorandum britannique de l'amitié traditionnelle qui existe entre les deux nations. Cette amitié, à laquelle il attache autant de prix que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique lui-même, l'autorise à nourrir le ferme espoir que le Cabinet de Londres comprendra que ses indications ne pourraient être plus précises ni plus détaillées.

Il espère également qu'on comprendra en Angleterre combien il est pénible pour le peuple belge de voir ainsi ses intentions révoquées en doute après les preuves sans nombre qu'il a données de son amour de la civilisation, après les grands progrès qu'il a réalisés et qui lui ont acquis une situation si respectée. Les Belges ont la résolution de développer et de faire progresser l'œuvre considérable accomplie par le fondateur de

l'Etat Indépendant, malgré les faibles moyens dont il disposait. Aussi bien en Afrique qu'en Europe, ils ne failliront pas à leur devoir ni à ce que le monde civilisé attend d'eux.

Pour arriver à réussir dans son œuvre coloniale la Belgique a besoin de l'accomplir dans une atmosphère de calme, de sympathie, et de confiance. Au moment où elle vient d'assumer des responsabilités dont elle mesure l'étendue et la gravité, elle accueillerait comme un encouragement particulièrement précieux l'assurance que, dans la pensée du Gouvernement britannique, tout son passé est garant de la loyauté de ses intentions actuelles.

Bruxelles, le 12 mars, 1909.

(Translation.)

IN the memorandum which His Britannic Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs transmitted to the Count de Lalaing on the 4th November, 1908,* relative to the annexation of the Independent State of the Congo by Belgium, the attention of the Belgian Government was called in the first place to a point upon which His Britannic Majesty's Government lay stress as one of the motives of their intervention in this question, viz., the proximity of the British possessions in Africa to the territory of the Independent State of the Congo. In view of that proximity, His Britannic Majesty's Government appear anxious lest the manner in which the Independent State has been governed, and which in their eyes differs from that obtaining in neighbouring countries, should injuriously affect the kindred tribes living in British territory. They desire, therefore, to receive precise information as to the views and intentions of the new administration.

With a view to allaying the anxieties of His Majesty's Government, the Belgian Government cannot do better than remind them that, during the past twenty-five years, no frontier incident has occurred between the Independent State and British possessions, which could be ascribed to the administration of the territories bordering on those possessions. The danger apprehended by His Majesty's Government has not arisen during the whole existence of the Independent State; there is no reason to suppose that it will now arise under Belgian administration.

In addition to their right to secure the peace of their own borders, His Majesty's Government in their memorandum recall the declarations exchanged with the International Association of the Congo on the 16th December, 1884, in order to justify their demand that the transfer of sovereignty shall be accompanied by the introduction into the Congo of a system of government which will correspond more nearly with the intentions of the signatories of those declarations; it is expressly stated that the International Association was created for the purpose of promoting the civilization and commerce of Africa, and for other humane and benevolent purposes.

Is it not now really superfluous to prove how little foundation there is for the fears of His Majesty's Government? Is it necessary to repeat again that in taking the place in Africa of the Independent State, itself the outcome of the International Association, Belgium has adopted all the declarations exchanged by the Association with Great Britain, and that she will continue to carry out the civilizing and humane objects which the signatories of the 1884 arrangement had in view? Ample proof of this is forthcoming from the formal assurances given in the Belgian Parliament by members of the Government during the debates on the subject of the annexation of the Congo State.

In statements made in public, as well as in former communications addressed to the British Government, the Belgian Government in the full exercise of their rights, have confirmed their determination to ensure the promotion of civilization in Africa while giving their attention at the same time to ameliorating the lot of the native population, and to safeguarding the interests bound up in the colony.

"Belgium," said the Minister of the Interior on the 2nd July, 1908, in the Chamber, "will carry out without wavering and in a spirit of generosity her obligations under the Berlin Act. She will be happy and proud to add this mission of civilization and this economic task to those other undertakings which for seventy-seven years past have gained for her the commendation of the Powers. She will, however, act spontaneously, depending on her rights and determined to maintain her independence and her sovereignty."

These declarations were hopefully received by public opinion in Belgium; Parliament, on their side, clearly manifested a determination to uphold and support the Cabinet

* See "Africa No. 5 (1908)": [Cd. 4396].

in carrying out this great self-imposed undertaking. The value of obligations entered into by the Belgian Government with the nation at the time of the annexation cannot be discussed or called in question. The British Government can surely be under no misapprehension as to this; their last memorandum, however, evinces some disappointment because no indication has, up to the present, been afforded as to the details of the changes which will be made, in order to improve existing conditions nor as to the moment when such changes will be introduced.

To persist in putting forward such a request can scarcely be explained by a desire to be informed of the actual text of the amendments to be introduced into the laws and decrees in force at the present time, before such proposed amendments have been brought to the knowledge of the authorities in Belgium who will be called upon to consider them. How is it possible, in short, to ascribe to the British Government an intention to make the adoption of laws, which concern the colony and its internal administration, dependent upon a kind of preliminary approval of a foreign Government?

On the other hand, scarcely four months have passed since the transfer of the Congo administration to Belgium took place. The British Government, with their long colonial experience, will appreciate better than anybody else the inadequacy of such a short period for drawing up in their final form weighty resolutions on colonial matters, which can only be put forward after careful preparation, and with a due regard for the necessary intermediate stages.

The Belgian Chamber, during the discussion of the first colonial budget, realized that such a work could not be hastily completed, and that a Government, conscious of its responsibilities, could not permit existing arrangements to be changed without having some alternatives ready to put in their place; anxiety, which would be reflected throughout the entire colony, would otherwise be aroused.

The unanimity with which on every occasion, since the annexation of the Congo, the Belgian Cabinet, Parliament, and all organs of public opinion have expressed themselves on the colonial question, is a proof of the lofty conception which Belgium has formed of the mission conferred upon her in Africa, as well as of her fixed determination to develop her colonial enterprise in harmony with the interests of civilization and in conformity with her international obligations.

The Belgian Government will not fail to give effect to their intentions in the measures which, in the full enjoyment of their independence, they intend to draw up. The new administration have devoted their first efforts to the preparation of this work, and their activity has already been revealed in several practical measures.

The British memorandum goes on to examine three points which have already been dealt with in previous memoranda:—

(a.) The extension of the lands to be assigned to the natives for the purposes of trade and cultivation;

(b.) The respect of the freedom of labour, as also of the right of the natives to dispose of the produce of the lands assigned to them;

(c.) The question of arbitration as to the interpretation of the treaties which bind the Congo State in matters of commerce.

As regards the first two points, the British Government take note with satisfaction of the intention expressed by the Belgian Government to give effect to the decree of the King-Sovereign of the 3rd June, 1906, under which inquiries are to be instituted in the native villages with a view to determining the extent of land to be allotted to them. The British Government, however, do not consider such a measure adequate to help the natives in their traffic in the natural products of the soil, a point which, in their opinion, is essential.

They point out that the landmarks, which are said to be still in existence throughout the whole of the Congo State, were formerly set up by the natives with the object of marking the area within which each tribe was at liberty to search for rubber, and they suggest that these land-marks might at once be utilized to determine the boundaries of the lands on which the natives would be free to trade in all natural products, and which they could cultivate for their own uses.

The Belgian Government are, it is true, aware that the presence of landmarks alluded to in the British memorandum has been noted in some few parts of the Congo, but it is beyond question that the erection of such landmarks by the natives had no other object than to fix the political territorial limits of the tribes, and to put an end to the disputes which arose amongst natives owing allegiance to different chiefs.

In this way these landmarks may have provided useful indications when, in conformity with the decree of the 3rd June, 1906, on the subject of native districts

it was a question of fixing the extent of the territory over which the chiefs of the tribe should exercise authority : but their existence is of no interest from the point of view of a delimitation of native lands.

While not desirous of insisting further on the objections to a measure, the practical realization of which would be impossible, owing to the fact that the existence of such marks has only been established in a very limited area of Congolese territory, the Belgian Government feel compelled to observe that, as the political territory of each tribe is coterminous with the territory of the neighbouring tribe, the adoption of such a measure would have the effect of converting into common native property the whole extent of the Belgian Congo.

Such a solution would not only be opposed to every principle of law, it would be in opposition to the actual state of affairs existing throughout the whole of equatorial Africa, and confirmed, notably in the British possessions in the conventional basin, by legislation applied to populations of the same race and in the same state of civilization as those of the Belgian Congo.

The British Government have been good enough to indicate the methods employed by British colonial administrations for dealing with similar questions in British possessions. The Belgian Government, on their part, desire to recall the fact that in the Uganda Protectorate the division of territory into native lands and vacant lands is carried out by methods of delimitation analogous to those laid down in the Congolese decree of 1906. They desire further to point out that in British East Africa, far from recognising as common property all the political territory of the tribes, the administration has not granted to the native any right to real property for the reason that the native possesses no notion what the right to property means. As indicated in the report of the Land Commission which conducted operations in this colony in 1901, the Government proclaimed themselves proprietors of all lands unprovided with a proprietary title, whether occupied or not. By the application of this principle the Government has been enabled to deal with certain tribes in the manner set forth in the memorandum.

The Belgian Government have held that the grant of lands to native communities should be governed by a consideration of existing circumstances as well as of future requirements, that is to say, that in fixing the extent of lands granted to each tribe, account should be taken of the number of individuals comprising the tribe, the methods of cultivation peculiar to primitive populations, and of the necessity of ensuring as widely as possible the future development of the native communities. In carrying out the provisions of the decree of the 3rd June, 1906, the Belgian Government are acting in conformity with this principle both in those parts which are being developed by private parties as well as in the National Domain.

They are convinced that such principles applied in a manner identical with that adopted in other possessions in the conventional basin of the Congo will provide a solution of the question of native lands in the Belgian Congo more favourable to the interests of the natives than in the generality of colonies in equatorial Africa.

Other measures forming part of the system which is being studied by the colonial administration will result in the natives benefiting to a still greater extent from the development of the colony.

The latter portion of the British memorandum reverts to a request, already made by the Cabinet of London to the Belgian Government, to be furnished with a formal assurance that the latter will not, if invited, refuse to submit to arbitration any divergence of views as to the meaning of articles of treaties which bind the Congo State in regard to commercial questions. In view of the reasons advanced to justify a repetition of this request, the Belgian Government fear that they have not explained with sufficient clearness the conditions attached by them to their ultimate acceptance of this proposal.

The sympathy with which the Belgian Government regard a recourse to arbitration as a solution of international disputes is well known, but it appears to them impossible to admit that, amongst all the Powers having possessions in the conventional basin of the Congo, Belgium alone should enter into an engagement of such a general nature as to submit compulsorily to arbitration, whilst for the other Powers signatories of the Berlin Act arbitration, according to article 12 of that Act, remains optional.

The Belgian Government find, however, no difficulty in repeating that if they were invited to refer in the last resort to the Hague tribunal a dispute arising from a divergence of views as to the interpretation of treaties binding the Congo State, they would examine any such proposal with the utmost goodwill, animated by the liberal

views displayed in the preparation of the arbitration conventions concluded by Belgium, and reserving, as was explained in the memorandum of the 12th July last, the sanction of Parliament as required by article 68 of the Constitution.

In that event, however, they would be obliged to ensure that the arbitration procedure should be in harmony with the application of article 81 of the convention drawn up at The Hague Conference, of which they are one of the signatories. That article imposes on the parties to the dispute the obligation, when there is a question as to the interpretation of a treaty of which other Powers are signatories, of informing in good time all Powers who have signed such treaty. Each of these Powers is entitled to intervene in the proceedings: if one or more avail themselves of the right, the interpretation given by the award is equally binding on them. Now the Berlin Act is a collective treaty. In order to avoid all the difficulties which might result from a different application of the clauses of this treaty in the various territories which go to make up the conventional basin of the Congo, a result which, contrary to the spirit of the Berlin Act, would set up differential treatment to the disadvantage of one of these territories, it follows that recourse to arbitration could only take place if the other Powers having possessions in the conventional basin had consented beforehand to intervene in the proceedings or to accept for their possessions the interpretation given by the award.

The British memorandum makes no mention of this essential condition.

As regards the question of arbitration, the Belgian Government, on their side, must abide by their former reply, their attitude, and the reasons advanced in explanation of it, having been approved by Parliament at the time when the annexation of the Congo was discussed. Even amongst speakers of the opposition the contention of the Government as regards the conditional acceptance of arbitration found many supporters, who would not understand any departure from it now.

The Belgian Government in their memorandum of the 12th July* said that in their opinion there was a better method than arbitration for solving questions and disputes in the conventional basin of the Congo, and that was a direct understanding between the Powers having possessions in this region. The Belgian Government adhere to their belief that such a procedure would, despite the difficulty foreseen by England of obtaining the adhesion of the different States interested, have the immense advantage of ensuring the general observance of the clauses of the Berlin Act and their uniform interpretation.

The British memorandum expresses in conclusion the desire that equal facilities should be given in all parts of the Congo territory to Christian missionaries of all denominations, and to their converts, for the prosecution of their work and the free exercise of their religion.

The putting up for sale of the domain lands was duly announced in the memorandum of the 12th July. The Belgian Government intend, however, to give facilities to religious missions for the acquisition of the land necessary for the prosecution of their missionary work, whilst not submitting such land to public adjudication, as provided by the present laws for the sale and lease of the domain lands.

Favourable consideration has therefore now been given to a series of demands formulated by Protestant missions. The decisions arrived at will be brought to the knowledge of those interested as soon as the necessary alterations entailed by them in the decree of the 3rd June, 1906, have been made.

As regards the choice of sites thus granted, the colonial administration will endeavour to suit the convenience of the missions, reserving to themselves of course the right to decide in each case, according to the right of all Governments, which lands can best be alienated so as to coincide with the general interests represented by the administration.

Whilst proclaiming by one of their first acts their desire to protect all religious undertakings without distinction of nationality or creed, the Belgian Government rely upon the missionaries of all Christian denominations considering it their duty to respect the laws and public authorities of the country, the hospitality of which they enjoy.

The Belgian Government are not insensible to the reference in the British memorandum to the traditional friendship which exists between the two nations. This friendship, to which they on their side attach as much importance as His Majesty's Government, encourages them to cherish the hope that the Cabinet of London will understand that the explanations offered could not be more exact nor more detailed.

They also hope that it will be understood in England how painful it is for the Belgian people to see their intentions called in question, after the innumerable proofs

* See "Africa No. 4 (1908)," p. 10.

which have been given of their love of civilization and after the great progress which they have made and which has won for them a position of such respect. The Belgians are resolved to develop and to advance the great work accomplished by the founder of the Independent State, despite the slender means at his disposal. Neither in Africa nor in Europe will they fail in their duty, nor will they fall short of that which the civilized world expects of them.

To succeed in her colonial enterprise Belgium has need of an atmosphere of calm, of sympathy, and of confidence. At a time when she has assumed responsibilities, the gravity of which she fully realizes, she would welcome, as an especially valuable encouragement, an assurance that in the mind of the British Government her past history is a guarantee of her present loyal intentions.

Brussels, March 12, 1909.

No. 2.

Sir Edward Grey to Count de Lalaing.

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 11, 1909.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith the reply of His Majesty's Government to the memorandum regarding the Congo question which you were good enough to leave with me on the 15th March.

I have, &c.

E. GREY.

Inclosure in No. 2.

Aide-mémoire.

HIS Majesty's Government have given their earnest consideration to the memorandum communicated to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs by the Belgian Minister on the 15th March, and especially to the observations there made on three of the principal points raised in their memorandum of the 4th November last. Those points were briefly (1) the extension of the territory reserved for the natives; (2) free labour and the right of the native to dispose of the produce of the soil; (3) arbitration.

With regard to the first point, His Majesty's Government feel bound to state that, in their opinion, the Belgian Government have been misinformed as to the nature and extent of the native boundary divisions; equally, they feel bound to state that they can admit no analogy between the method of assigning territory to the natives which has been adopted in the British Protectorates and that adopted in the Congo Free State.

Writer after writer of published works on this region has given copious evidence regarding the native boundaries, and His Majesty's present vice-consul in the Katanga district, who has travelled across the whole country, states that they are "known and recognized to within a foot's breadth by the natives themselves," a fact which "is abundantly clear to any one travelling through the country, and it is corroborated by older residents." In their memorandum of the 4th November His Majesty's Government referred, it is true, to landmarks erected at a comparatively recent date to prevent disputes as to the collection of rubber, but they did not thereby commit themselves to the opinion that this was the only evidence of the rights of the various tribes in particular districts. On the contrary, they are satisfied that the country is divided up, to a much greater degree than the description in the Belgian note—"exceptionnellement en quelques endroits"—would imply, by perfectly well-defined boundaries indicating the extent of the tribal possessions. These boundaries sometimes follow natural features of the country and sometimes arbitrary lines, but they can always be ascertained.

His Majesty's Government do not suggest that in all cases these boundaries are still binding on the Belgian authorities. Tribes have in many cases shifted their quarters and emigrated to new districts, and the ravages of sickness and the results of the system of administration pursued by the authorities during the last twenty years have swept away altogether the population of some districts and greatly reduced that of others.

His Majesty's Government feel, however, that it would be undesirable to delay

their recognition of the annexation of the Congo by Belgium till an exact agreement has been reached on this question.

With regard to the second point, His Majesty's Government consider that the restriction or destruction of native rights has prevented those opportunities for trade in the produce of the soil which were expected to be available for British subjects under treaty, but they are much more concerned to see an end put to the system of forced labour and taxation in kind which accompanied the destruction of native rights. This question is one not of argument, but of fact. Under the previous Government of the Congo in large districts, if not in the greater part of the whole Congo State, the forced labour exacted from men, and in many cases from women, amounted to nearly, if not quite, the whole time of an adult year after year. In the Kasai district, under the guise of trade, taxation in rubber was exacted in open defiance of the laws of the Congo State. It was by such means that the greater part of the rubber exported from the Congo was obtained. The export of rubber has not fallen off, and no reports have reached His Majesty's Government to show that the amount of forced labour and illegal or excessive taxation exacted from the natives have diminished.

In the Leopoldville district, for instance, the taxation has quite recently been increased, in the case of men, from 9 fr. to 12 fr., which amounts to 40 per cent. of the earnings of a Government labourer, and in the case of women from 6 fr. to 12 fr., and this although the poverty of the country is very marked and the people have barely sufficient food for their own needs. The Belgian Government officials discourage in every possible way payment in cash, and take the chikwangue which is offered as payment in kind at 6 centimes worth of trade goods for a kilogramme, while 25 centimes is being paid in the native market.

Again, a letter of the 10th December last describes the visit of a Belgian official to the village of Mibenga, where, on the ground that the full tax had not been paid by the villagers, twenty-six men and boys, all of whom had paid their own share, were arrested, sent in chains carrying burdens a distance of twenty days' journey to a State station, and there kept in penal servitude for six weeks.

To this state of things, so amply described in the published reports of His Majesty's consuls, His Majesty's Government cannot give recognition and they are sure that the Belgian Government desire to put an end to it, for it is, in fact, indistinguishable from slavery. They are anxious to recognize the Belgian Government of the Congo, but they cannot do so until it is clear that the abuses of taxation and forced labour, including the system carried out by the Kasai company, have ceased, and that the treatment of the natives in these respects has been assimilated to that which is found in other European colonies. Meanwhile British subjects are unable to enter the Congo and to trade in the natural produce of the soil, and His Majesty's Government feel that they cannot withhold their support should complaints reach them from British subjects who may be prevented from trading, owing to the fact that the natives are deprived of the rights to sell the natural produce of the soil.

Whether the application of the decree of the 3rd June, 1906, will restore the freedom of trade, which His Majesty's Government believed to have been secured by the Act of Berlin and the convention of 1884 between Great Britain and the Congo, His Majesty's Government cannot foresee. They have already had the honour to point out in the memorandum of the 4th November that a delimitation of the land to be assigned to a native village in accordance with the decree of 1906 will not by itself provide a sufficient remedy for existing conditions if it is based solely upon the extent of land required for purposes of cultivation, and takes no account of the extent of land to which the natives, unless they are to be deprived of all right to trade in the produce of the soil, are clearly entitled.

Any differences of opinion with regard to commercial rights under treaties His Majesty's Government would desire to refer to arbitration, but it is obvious that arbitration cannot take place so long as one of the parties has not recognized the annexation of the Congo State by Belgium.

His Majesty's Government anxiously await reports from the Congo which will show that the Belgian Government have succeeded in stopping the system of forced labour which has hitherto prevailed, for His Majesty's Government are sure that the Belgian Government will agree that a system such as that described in British and American consular reports is indefensible.

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE RESPECTING THE TAXATION
OF NATIVES AND OTHER QUESTIONS IN THE CONGO
STATE.

[In continuation of "Africa No. 5 (1908)";
Cld. 4396.]

*Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command
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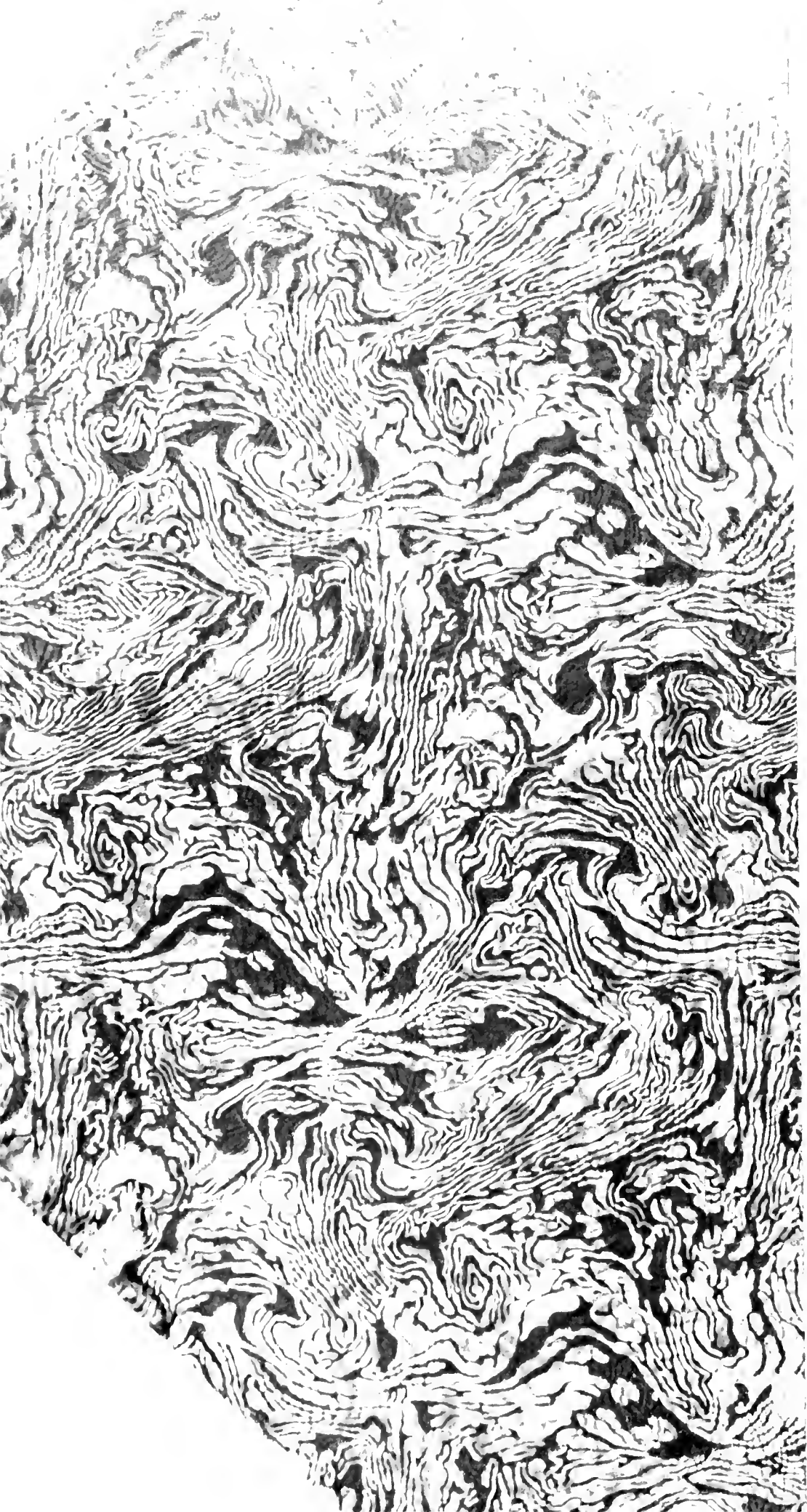
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