

1911

EAST AFR. PROT. UGANDA CONGO FREE STATE
26966

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REC 16 UC II

Foreign
Date
5th August
at previous Paper.

FLOGGING Powers GIVEN TO NATIVE COURTS

Trs revise of papers respecting the Congo State which are being prepared for Parliament. Calls attention to the correspondence on the subject of flogging and requests views as to publication.

Mr. Tudor,
Mr. ~~Boad~~ *Fiddes*.

Please see the marked passages on pages 25, 55, and 57 ^{and 58} of the enclosure.

I cannot quite make out whether Lawalis, Cadis, and Mudirs in the East Africa Protectorate have powers of flogging. It is provided in sections 36 and 37 of the Ordinance East Africa Protectorate Courts 1907 that ^{in criminal proceedings} Lawalis or Cadis shall have with respect to natives the same powers as a Court of the second class with respect to non-natives, and that Mudirs shall have the same powers as a Court of the third class with respect to non-natives. It would seem from Schedule II to the Ordinance that these powers do not include that of inflicting corporal punishment.

It is different, however, with Uganda. In that Protectorate it is clear that some native Courts do possess the

and 26 Aug

the power of inflicting corporal punishment, in some cases up to the legal maximum of twenty-four lashes. See the

Unyoro ^{Native} Courts Ordinance 1905, sections 9, 10, and 16; and the Native Courts Ordinance 1909, section 11; ^{the Proclamation} ~~the~~ ^{as to} ~~the~~ ^{of} ~~the~~ ^{similar} ~~the~~ ^{Proclamation of} ~~the~~ ¹⁹⁰⁹ ~~the~~ ^{of} ~~the~~ ¹⁹⁰⁹

We cannot, ver, well take the line that in our

Protectorates we keep an eye upon the exercise of these powers by native Courts and that the Belgians do not.

This is no doubt the case, but the statement of it would carry conviction to no interested party.

I think we had better send the Foreign Office, in reply to this letter, copies of the Uganda Laws ^{and Proclamations} specified above, and say that, in view of the powers enjoyed by native Courts under these laws to inflict corporal punishment, Mr Harcourt considers that the references to the powers of flogging given to native Chiefs in the Congo in Vice-Consul Armstrong's report, in Sir E. Grey's despatch to Sir A. Hardinge of the 3rd of March, and in Sir A. Hardinge's reply should be omitted.

HAB
Aug 27

In view of the fact that the STP 23^{min} 11
note to which HAB has called attention we had better send a copy of STP 23^{min} 11
in writing to the STP.

HAB
at once
LH 23. D
23/8

In any further communication
on this subject, please quote

No. 32163/11.

and address—

The Under-Secretary of State,
Foreign Office,
London.

FOREIGN OFFICE

August 15th, 1911.

26966

Sir:-

I am directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to transmit

to you the accompanying revise of papers respecting the
Congo State which are being prepared for Parliament.

Among these papers is a report (No. 6) by Vice Consul
Armstrong in the course of which he deprecates the
powers conferred by a recent Congo Law on native chiefs
and he mentions in particular the power of flogging.

In sending a copy of the report to His Majesty's
Minister at Brussels Sir E. Grey requested him to call
the special attention of the Belgian Government to this
point, but Sir A. Hardinge pointed out (No. 10) that
the powers given to the Congo Chiefs did not exceed
those given in some of our own Colonies and Protector-
ates, which he described at some length.

Before deciding whether or not to publish those
passages of these three despatches which relate to
flogging

Under Secretary of State,
Colonial Office.

Reverse

page 25

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(316/11)

logging, I am to ask whether the account given of our Colonial system by Sir A. Hardinge is correct, and if so whether Mr. Secretary Harcourt sees any objection to its publication. If Sir A. Hardinge's despatch is not given in full and if the system in force in the Congo closely resembles the system employed in British Colonies and Protectorates it would be only fair to the Belgian Government to omit the passage in Sir E. Grey's despatch, and perhaps those passages in Mr. Armstrong's report which relate to the Native Chieftainships.

I am,

Sir,

Your most obedient,

Humble Servant,

FIRST REVISION FOR PARLIAMENT.

July 1910.

Rough Reverse

25963
REC. 16 AUG 11

[34204]

No. 1.

Acting Consul Campbell to Sir Edward Grey. (Received September 22.)

(No. 71.)

Boma, August 25, 1910.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith copy of Vice-Consul Thurstan's despatch of the 22nd ultimo, reporting on the condition of affairs in the Bakuba country.

I have, &c.

GERALD CAMPBELL.

Enclosure in No. 1.

Vice-Consul Thurstan to Acting Consul Campbell.

(No. 38.)

Luebo, July 22, 1910

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 27 of the 1st ultimo, I have the honour to offer some further observations regarding the condition of affairs in the Bakuba country. Since writing that despatch I have traversed the territory of the Bakuba people on my journey to Butala, whither I proceeded to fetch a consignment of provisions and barter goods, as reported in my despatch No. 33 of the 11th instant. As I was not making a tour of inspection, and passed somewhat rapidly through the country, the information which I obtained is necessarily of a somewhat fragmentary nature. I do not think, however, that there is any doubt as to the accuracy of its main features.

In my despatch No. 27 of the 1st ultimo, I gave it as my opinion that "the tribes in the immediate neighbourhood of Luebo have little ground for complaint." This statement referred more particularly to the Bakuba, and I have still no reason to believe that it was anything but accurate. Since, however, I wrote that despatch, certain events have occurred which have caused a feeling of great unrest in the Bakuba country.

Early in June, very shortly, in fact, after I had written my previous despatch on this subject, the "chef de secteur" of the Belgian Government paid a visit to Luebo. In the course of this visit he summoned Lukengu, King of the Bakuba, to meet him. One of the subjects discussed between them was, I believe, the forthcoming introduction of coinage and the ultimate taxation of the Bakuba in coin. Lukengu subsequently returned to his village, Mushenge, followed some days later by his mother, who had also been to Luebo, and whose influence almost equals that of Lukengu himself; it was very shortly after this that I myself proceeded along the same route, passing through Mushenge on my way to Butala. I should mention that Lukengu had also visited Luebo at the instigation of the Belgian Government very shortly before this, apparently on that occasion to discuss the matter of coinage and taxation.

I found in the course of my journey that word had been spread that all the Bakuba were to make rubber, and that they were told so by order of the State. Lukengu and his mother had apparently sedulously spread this news along their path, and I found that it had also reached the villages on my route to Butala on the further side of Mushenge. Lukengu had, it is said, when passing through Kabao, near Ibanji, insisted on Kabao, chief of the village, accepting twenty pieces of cloth in advance, for which his village was to make rubber for the Kasai Company; the chief eventually accepted it reluctantly. However this may be, it is certain that Lukengu's mother, on passing through later, seized the chief and carried him as far as Kosh, within a few hours of Mushenge, when he was released by Lukengu's orders and allowed to go home. I saw him at his village on my return journey, and both he and the villagers insisted that Lukengu's mother arrested him because, as she said, he passed his time worshipping God instead of making rubber. I have no doubt but that some other excuse can be offered for this seizure of the chief Kabao, but I am equally sure that the real reason is as stated above.

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in the neighbourhood of the American Mission at Ibanj, namely Mushenge, and Ibanj were also threatened, and a punitive expedition was sent to the districts where had been a large crop of ivory in front of the mission, for the purpose of the villages, presumably on account of their proximity to the mission, were never allowed to live in peace, and even in the period immediately preceding Consul Thesiger's tour were never compelled to make rubber. Now they have been threatened with punishment if they do not make it a few days since and asked for advice, saying that Lukengu's capita was trying to force them to accept cloth. The missionaries told them that the State had said that they were entirely free to make rubber or not, as they liked, and I believe that they have for the present refused the cloth.

On his arrival at Mushenge, Lukengu summoned the capita from the various villages in his country and told them that the State officer had ordered them all to make rubber, and that they were to go back to their villages and tell all the people to begin work at once. I met several of these capita on the road.

Such is the situation as I found it. With the exception of a few minor points, I heard no general complaints as to ill-treatment in the past, but a very widespread uneasiness regarding the future was manifest.

I do not propose to enter here into a discussion as to the nature of the interviews which took place between Lukengu and the "chef de poste" and "chef de secteur" respectively. That the question of the introduction of coinage and taxation was considered on both these occasions I fully believe, but the details of the conversations that actually took place I have no means of knowing. It may or may not be that Lukengu was told that his people were shortly to be taxed, and would have to make rubber in order to procure their tax money. If it is so, and the rumour is correct that they are to pay 70,000 fr. per annum, they will have to produce about 31,000 kilogrammes a-year, at the rate at which they are now paid, in order to acquit themselves of their taxes. But supposing, as is possible, that Lukengu's version of his visits to Luebo is mentioned at these interviews, in the clearest possible manner how easily a people like the Bakuba can be compelled to make rubber against their will. One might go further and suppose, for the sake of argument, that Lukengu had never even seen the State officers; he could still apparently give out to the Bakuba that they were to make rubber, using Bala Matadi's name as a means wherewith to threaten them. There is no State officer in the whole of Lukengu's country to whom the natives can appeal for help. Since M. de Grunne's visit of nearly two years ago, no State officer has even to my knowledge passed through the country, with the exception of a former "chef de poste" of Luebo who did not know the country, and whose caravan deserted him on his way across.

Lukengu is in receipt of a monthly bonus from the Kasai Company, and so long as he receives that there is always a possibility and even a likelihood of his exercising pressure. It would appear, therefore, that it is only necessary for the officials of the Kasai Company to offer Lukengu a sufficient inducement in order to obtain rubber whenever they please, irrespective of the desire of the natives to make it. I have no doubt that these officials deny all responsibility for Lukengu's actions, but that is cold comfort to the natives. I do not think that Lukengu's intentions are altogether bad. He certainly cannot wish to drive his people to the point of rebellion against him; he is obviously anxious that his people should be properly paid for their work, and it is well known that he would like to see the danger of friction lessened by the removal of all the Bakuba capita and their replacement by Bakuba; yet unlimited champagne and cloth are strong inducements to a Central African chief.

I hope that there is a general apprehension as to the future prevalent in the Bakuba country through which I passed. It may be that this is unfounded, and that Lukengu's words are but idle threats. In any case, I am confident that if the Belgian Government is really anxious that the Bakuba shall be free to make rubber or not as they like, its only means of ensuring this is to station some competent officers permanently in the country to safeguard the natives' interests. This, at least, it can do, even if it is impossible to prevent the Kasai Company from exercising an indirect influence over the natives by subsidising Lukengu.

It may well be asked why the company, if it employs only the principle of "supply and demand," should find it necessary to pay this subsidy. As far as I can ascertain, the same price is being paid for rubber now as at the time of Consul Thesiger's tour. The natives are receiving one piece of cloth for 500 balls; reckoning a piece of cloth

as equal to 5,000 cowries, this is the same price as that mentioned by Consul Thesiger in his report, viz., ten balls for 100 cowries; 500 balls weigh about a kilogramme, so that the price paid by the company in Africa cannot be more than 2 fr. 55 c. if a piece of cloth may be considered to cost the company as much as 7 fr. 50 c. With the price of rubber in Europe nearing, I believe, 20 fr. a kilogramme it should not be difficult for the Kasai Company to increase its output in the Bakuba country by offering the natives a higher price. This method, while naturally more expensive than that of subsidising Lukengu, should at least recommend itself to the director of the company as embodying those principles of supply and demand for which they have so often expressed solicitude. Indeed, it seems curious that while the rubber production in the Bakuba country was reduced to about one-fifth or less of its former amount following on the visit of Mr. Thesiger, and the "chef de secteur" in 1908, the Kasai Company's officials have apparently made no attempt to increase the output by this means. It now remains to be seen whether, if they are anxious for such an increase of output, they will endeavour to obtain it, by the practice of the principles of supply and demand or by the methods reported on by Mr. Thesiger two years ago.

I expect to leave Luebo in a few days for a tour in another part of the country, but I hope to be able to obtain sufficient information on my return to enable me to make a further report on the state of affairs in the Bakuba territory.

I have, &c.

E. W. P. THURSTAN.

[34295]

No. 2.

Acting Consul Campbell to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 22.)

(No. 72.)

Sir,

Boma, August 25, 1910.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith copy of Mr. Thurstan's despatch No. 39 of the 23rd July last, reporting the payment in coin of the wages of the State workmen in certain parts of his district.

Recent news which I have received points to the fact that money has now been generally introduced along the principal rivers. The missionaries find that the natives are pleased with the new currency, and that they learn to calculate in francs and centimes without much difficulty. The missionaries pay in money or trade goods, according to the demands of the natives.

I have, &c.

GERALD CAMPBELL.

Enclosure in No. 2.

Vice-Consul Thurstan to Acting Consul Campbell.

(No. 39.)

Sir,

Luebo, July 23, 1910.

I HAVE the honour to report that the local Belgian authorities have, to the best of my knowledge, been paying their workmen in coin since the 1st July. I do not know whether this is the case in the "Domains," but I am under the impression that it is so at least in the remaining parts of this district. The Kasai Company, I think, continues its payments in coin to those who are actual workmen on the posts, while the American Presbyterian Mission is continuing, for the present, to make all payments by barter goods.

I have, &c.

E. W. P. THURSTAN.

in satisfying the demands of the State. Thus it was found necessary in many cases to appoint as chiefs upstarts who had no qualifications beyond the fact that their lack of sympathy with their vassals made them excellent collectors of rubber; nor were they reprimanded for their corrupt administration of justice, or for the frauds which they perpetrated on the natives, or even for their impudent and disrespectful behaviour towards the Europeans, since rubber has been the only cry of the last fifteen years, and the Congo existed for nothing else. I could, if necessary, give instances of the dealings of these chiefs, but this memorandum treats of the present and the future rather than the past. I could not avoid a reference to the subject, however, since the decree of the 2nd May, 1910, is a waste of time and paper if these bullies are retained in office or if more of the same type are appointed. The words of the Colonial Minister are reassuring: "le principe dont s'inspire le projet de décret est de faire administrer le nègre par son chef légitime et de respecter la coutume dans ce qu'elle a de conciliable avec l'intérêt public et avec le droit supérieur de la civilisation."

Briefly, the decree ordains that the natives are formed into groups under sub-chiefs and chiefs appointed in accordance with native custom, or by the district commissioner, who consults the wishes of the natives. Messengers are attached to each group who will act as "knissiers," to use the term employed by the Colonial Minister in his definition of their duties. They will be armed with cap guns, but I think that most of them are now aware that they must not abuse this privilege. The chiefs, sub-chiefs, and messengers will receive salaries from the Government. The chiefs will administer their circumscribed areas under the direction of the European officials, and the right of appeal to the State courts is allowed to the native against a sentence passed by the chief or sub-chief. They will help in the collection of taxes and in the levy of recruits for the army. The "chicotte" is allowed as punishment for men only, with a maximum of twelve strokes, and a prison as to be kept in the chief's village for those condemned to imprisonment or detention.

The native who wishes to migrate must obtain a passport from the "chef de poste," who consults the wishes of the chief or sub-chief before granting it. Refusal to grant a passport must be reported to the district commissioner. The members of a group must keep their villages clean, look after the roads and bridges, build a school and a house for the State official in the chief's village, &c. They will be paid for the latter services, on which they may not be employed for more than sixteen hours a month.

The decree has the merit of making clear what can and what cannot be done; but, as will be seen, much depends on the men who are selected as chiefs and sub-chiefs, and it is necessary to add, on the European to whom they are responsible. An upstart or outsider will abuse the power to "chicotte" and imprison (punishments which are not in accordance with the native custom on which so much stress is laid), and if he wants another man's wife he will merely shut him up in the local gaol. My experience has been that the natives are afraid to appeal to the officials against the actions of their chief, and they complained that if they did so the white man referred them back to the very chief whom they were accusing, and who was delighted to take his revenge.

Labour Contracts.

The decree of the 17th August, 1910, lays down the conditions to be observed in the recruiting of labour and in the contracts entered into between Congolese or natives of neighbouring colonies and employers other than Congolese. It is important to note that it embraces natives of neighbouring colonies, since coloured British subjects are not infrequently swindled by unscrupulous employers, and they have rarely obtained justice or redress in the past owing to the absence of a legal contract or from some other cause. All adults, whether they have attained their majority (16 years of age) or not, may be engaged, but a woman must have the expressed or tacit consent of her husband. Should he refuse, a magistrate or an official designated by the Governor-General can overrule his objection. The term of service may not exceed three years, whereas formerly the limit was seven years; wages must be paid weekly, and the labourer has the right to be repatriated in the district where the contract was made. The obligations of the master are clearly set forth, as are also the conditions under which the contract may be rescinded by either party before expiry of the term. Any contract for a term exceeding three months must be viséed, and the magistrate shall see that the workman understands the terms of his agreement. The visa costs 1 fr. per man, with a maximum of 10 fr. if several natives are included in one contract. The

workman who is not lodged and fed by the employer shall be paid weekly, and fines should not exceed one-quarter of the amount of the day's wages.

In order to recruit labour a permit is necessary. This is granted gratuitously, but it may be suspended or refused.

It is too early yet to form any idea of the working of either this decree or of the dealing with the native "chicottiers," and in the latter case no real opinion can be expressed until after a tour among the natives themselves.

No official statement has yet been publicly made, to my knowledge, as to the abolition of the system of recruiting labour by force for works of public utility. The decree of the 3rd June, 1906, on "louage de services" has been repealed, but not that of the same date concerning "travailleurs recrutés pour intérêts publics"; in fact, the terms of the latter decree were endorsed by that of the 16th February, 1910, reducing the time of service for such labourers to three years.

Land.

By the decree of the 22nd March, 1910, the "exploitation en régie" of the products of the domainial lands was to cease in a given area on the 1st July, 1910, in a further area on the 2nd July, 1911, and on the 1st July, 1912, the entire State, with the exception of the seven concessions granted by the Independent State, and of the five reserves of Nepoko, Belo, Loto, Dekese, and Lodja, will be open for trade to traders of all nationalities alike, provided that they have paid the taxes demanded of them. Those who wish to purchase rubber or copal must take out a "permis de récolte." Those who pay 500 fr. for a "patente des trafiquants," to which must be added the "permis de récolte," at 250 fr., if they trade in rubber or copal as well as ivory and other products. Those who have complied with these requirements may "soit récolter ou faire récolter les produits végétaux sur les terres domaniales non louées ou concédées, soit acquérir des indigènes lesdits produits." The natives may gather the products of the soil without a permit, unless they actually export direct. The Governor-General may suspend the right thus granted on account of the exhaustion of the products, or for any other reason. At the present time the first of the three areas has been opened, and traders are admitted into the districts of the Bas-Congo, Moyen-Congo, a part of the Kwango, the Kasai, and Katanga, the western portion of Lac Leopold II, a part of the Equator, Bangala, Aruwimi, and Stanleyville districts, Ubangi district, and the Gurla-Dungu zone, in the Cele district.

By an "arrêté" of the 13th April, 1910, applications for land in the different areas, not exceeding 10 hectares, may be granted after the 1st May, 1911, for the districts to be opened on the 1st July, 1911, and similarly in 1912. Under the old system lands were supposed to be put up for auction at certain intervals, and even if a trader applied for land he was told that the site would be included in the next list, when he could bid for it with his competitors. This system proved to be an utter farce, designed to keep traders out, and it is encouraging to be able to report its discontinuance. For lands of from 1 to 10 hectares in area application is made to the Governor-General, who is empowered by the "arrêté Royal" of the 23rd February, 1910, to sell or let lands, subject to the rights of third parties, in one or more plots up to a maximum 10 hectares; any lands granted to him since the time of annexation are included in calculating the area allotted, and as soon as any one person has reached this limit the local Government must refer all applications, to Brussels. Furthermore, those who demand plots exceeding 10 hectares will be granted a provisional occupation only for the first five years, during which time they will pay a rent equivalent to 5 per cent. of the price of the land. At the end of this time, in accordance with the conditions imposed with a view to increasing the value of the land, they must show one of the following:—

1. Buildings over at least one-tenth of the area.
2. Cultivation of at least one-tenth.
3. Pastures, with one head of large or four of small cattle per 10 hectares.
4. Plantations on the scale of fifteen trees per hectare.

These conditions cannot be called onerous. Leases are granted for a term of fifteen years: "à l'expiration de ce terme ils sont renouvelables au gré des locataires,

	Previous Years (Harr. Johnson's Table).	1910.
	Fr. c.	Fr. c.
4. Licence to cut Wood for Steamer.		
80-ton steamer at 7 knots ..	7,800 00	5,800 00
17 steamer of 8 knots extra tax ..	200 00	500 00
Total ..	8,000 00	6,300 00
5. Export Duties.		
Droit de sortie, 20,000 kilog. of rubber at 60 centimes ..	12,000 00	12,000 00
Taxe d'appointement ..	5,000 00	
Taxe domaniale ..		15,000 00
Remission of 10,000 trees, abolished in 1910 ..		4,000 00
Taxe de récolette ..		
Taxe de replantation ..		
Total ..	32,000 00	35,000 00
Recapitulation.		
Taxes on buildings and workmen ..	1,097 50	667 50
Taxes and licence, steamer ..	1,120 00	730 00
Licence wood-cutting ..	7,800 00	3,900 00
Total ..	10,017 50	5,357 50
Export duties on 20 metric tons of rubber ..	22,000 00	35,000 00
Grand total ..	32,017 50	40,357 50
Omitted from above recapitulation— Licence to collect and sell rubber, each factory ..	5,000 00	250 00 (per annum)

Further taxes comprise that of 10 fr. for the visa of each contract made with a workman, now reduced to 1 fr.; the tax of 2 per cent. on the profits of limited liability companies, which has not been abolished; the tax on canoes, which is now assessed at 20 fr. each canoe.

Thus the smaller taxes are reduced, but, owing to the increased duty on rubber, a trader who exports 20 metric tons in a year from one factory has to pay 40,357 fr. 50 c. plus 250 fr. = 40,607 fr. 50 c. of 1911. 6a.

The former "droit d'établissement" of 5,000 fr. has been replaced by an annual tax on each factory exporting rubber or copal of 250 fr. per annum. This is no change, 250 fr. representing a 5 per cent. yearly payment instead of the lump sum of 5,000 fr.

The taxes on rubber gathered and exported were formerly 1 fr. 10 c. per kilogramme for tree and vine rubber, and 85 centimes for grass rubber. They are now taxed as follows, by the decree of the 22nd March, 1910:—

	Tree and Vine Rubber.	Grass Rubber.
	Fr. c.	Fr. c.
Droit de sortie ..	60	0
Taxe de récolte, per kilogramme ..	75	0
Total ..	35	1 10

To this must be added the "taxe de replantation" of 40 centimes per kilogramme of tree and vine rubber, which makes a total export duty of 1 fr. 75 c., and 20 centimes per kilogramme of grass rubber, or a total of 1 fr. 30 c.

The "taxe de replantation" supersedes the obligation to plant a certain number of trees for every kilogramme exported and to tend them until they were ready to be tapped, i. e., after seven years, when the State appropriated them.

Freight.

A welcome reduction has lately taken place in the transport rates on the Chemin de Fer du Congo from Matadi to Leopoldville. The articles which have most benefited are, rice (76 per cent. reduction), salt meat, fish, and other native food-stuffs, materials for construction of houses and steamers, and agricultural materials; cloth, wines, &c., enjoy a rebate of 5 per cent. till the 1st July, 1911. Passenger and transport rates on the State steamers on the upper river have also been revised. The following is a short list showing the rates from Leopoldville to Stanleyville and vice versa:—

	1896-1910.	1910.	
	Fr. c.	Fr. c.	
Europeans ..	Up	225 00	135 00
	Down	110 00	66 00
Natives ..	Up	60 00	33 75
	Down	30 00	16 50
Cement, machinery, &c. ..	Up	400 00	200 00*
	Down	400 00	280 00*
Ordinary goods ..	Up	200 00	120 00*
	Down	500 00	250 00*
Ivory ..	Up	150 00	60 00*
	Down	150 00	60 00*

* Per metric ton.

A further advantage accrues from the fixing of reasonable intervals for intermediate rates. Thus a European wishing to travel from Stanleyville to Romée and back can now book for the actual journey at 12 fr. 80 c. Formerly he had to pay for a return ticket to Basoko, which cost 37 fr. 50 c.

Warehousing, handling, &c., is undertaken by the State, at Leopoldville, at the rate of 6 fr. a metric ton for ordinary goods, 12 fr. for rubber, and 25 fr. for ivory.

Products.

Rubber.—As stated above, the duty on tree and vine rubber is 1 fr. 75 c. a kilogramme, and on grass rubber 1 fr. 30 c., as against 1 fr. and 80 centimes respectively in the French Congo and 55 centimes (108 reis) in Portuguese Congo. Were it certain that the price of rubber would continue as high as it was at the time when this tax was assessed there would be but little ground for complaint, but in any case it would, in my humble opinion, have attracted more traders had a more moderate duty been imposed at the outset, taking into consideration the transport and management expenses, which are extremely heavy in this country. It is true that in addition to concessionary companies, there are a number of old-established firms in the country, but they are very few and far between, and their business is so small that it is unreasonable to place them in the same category as those who are going out for the first time. The Colonial Minister, judging from a statement which he made when he was out here in connection with the ivory question, considers that the incidence of the tax will be on the natives, who must be content with a lower price for their work. That is not the experience of those who have come to frequent contact with the natives. The price paid for vine rubber to-day at and near Leopoldville is 0 fr. 28 fr. a kilogramme. Farther inland the price is much lower, and at present it will rise considerably under competition. Grass rubber is sold for as low as 3 fr. a kilogramme at Matadi.

The expenses of management, salaries, taxes due to the State, including the stamp and other duties on rubber, warehousing, handling, insurance, freight on the river, railway and steamer to Antwerp work out approximately at 3 fr. 50 c. a kilogramme for vine rubber on the quay at Antwerp; to this must, of course, be added the original price paid to the native for the produce.

I have calculated it thus—

	Fr
Transport by State steamers say?	100
Transport by rail Leopoldville to Matadi	430
Handling at Leopoldville by State	12
Handling at Matadi by railway	15
Commission, freight insurance, Matadi to Antwerp, odd expenses, &c	600
Expenses of management, salaries, workmen's wages, &c	600
Taxes on buildings, employes, &c	60
Export and other duties on rubber	1,750
Total	3,567

= 3 fr. 57 c. per kilogramme

In reckoning the expenses of management, taxes on buildings, &c, I have taken the case of a company with three factories exporting 50 metric tons of rubber a year.

In Annex 2 the various quantities of rubber gathered in the different districts by the State and companies during the year 1909 are shown. The returns of ivory and copal during the same year are given in Annexes 3 and 4 respectively.

Without a doubt there exists a considerable quantity of vine rubber and when the whole country is open to traders they should find some rich districts. With the exception, however, of a few oases, which are frequent in the Kasai but rare elsewhere, the 1910 area is practically exhausted, and both the forest and the natives will require time to recover from the wholesale exploitation. Traders and State agents who have been in the neighbourhood of the Bekese, Lolo, and Lelja State reserves are in fact proclaiming the wealth of the forest, but a rumour is now spreading that the Government have been deceived by false reports that the reserves are in the poorest parts of the forest. Roughly speaking, to the east of longitude 21 east (Greenwich) and south of latitude 4 south the country is savannah, and of little value for vine rubber. From what I heard when I was in the vicinity, the Nepoko reserve is rich.

It is on plantations that the future of the country depends, and it is to be hoped that experienced men will be sent out. The problem of labour is likely to be too serious to admit of its being wasted, and it must be owned that much time has been spent in vain on the plantations which actually exist. Plantation rubber only pays the "droit de sortie" at 60 centimes per kilogramme.

There was an idea at one time of a future for grass rubber worked by machinery. The Kwango district is rich, but the transport is difficult and costly. I should have considered it possible to introduce it into the savannah country in the Ubangi and Uele districts, but the cost price on the quay at Antwerp would be at least 3 fr. a kilogramme, irrespective of the cost of working or the original price paid to the natives.

Ivory. Unfortunately the ivory laws have become more stringent than ever. Under the former regime seizures of ivory were frequent, and it was held by the Court of Appeal that in such cases, the onus of proof that the ivory had been acquired in an unlawful manner lay with the Government.

In the discussion of the Conseil colonial of the 26th February, 1910 ("Bulletin officiel" of the 25th March, p. 120), stress was laid on the above decision, and it was pointed out that it was impossible to put up and to the numerous traders which are being continually transported, and the authorities themselves must produce the proof of unlawful possession, since "cette preuve est rarement possible." Normally it is difficult to produce, since evidence as to the actual killer of the elephant is not to be obtained without making a protracted journey in a far distant village, which would entail much labour for each ton of ivory, with little chance of success. The laws have accordingly been altered.

(a) By the decree of the 15th March, 1910, and the "arrête" of the 25th April, 1910—

1. All ivory must be registered in the State registers, wherein are entered particulars as to weight, &c., and "la provenance de l'objet enregistré."

2. The registrar demands proof of "la provenance licite," and this the possessor is bound to give, failing proof the ivory is confiscated, and a penalty of one to seven days' penal servitude, or a fine of 100 fr. to 200 fr. is incurred.

3. If all is in order the ivory is stamped, if this has not been done previously, and a certificate is granted, which must be produced at the custom-house before the ivory can be exported.

(b) By the decree of the 26th July, 1910 ("droit de chasse et de pêche")—
"Article 11. Dans chaque région il est défendu d'exposer en vente, de vendre ou d'acheter, de céder ou de recevoir, à un titre quelconque, de transporter ou de colporter—

- "1. Les animaux sauvages dont la chasse n'y est pas permise.
- "2. Les dépouilles, c'est-à-dire des parties quelconques de ces animaux.
- "3. Les œufs dont l'éclosion est interdite.

"La défense est levée pour quiconque prouve que l'animal a été capturé ou que les produits ont été recueillis dans des conditions licites. Cette preuve peut être fournie par la production d'un certificat du chef du premier poste où le détenteur s'est présenté après la chasse ou la réception des produits."

Referring to the discussion of this decree, it appears that this article 11 was unanimously passed by the Conseil colonial without any observation ("Bulletin officiel" of the 29th July, p. 145). Thus the Conseil colonial pass an article, without making a single remark thereon, which practically closes the Congo to ivory traders, since no exchange of any nature may take place unless the trader himself can prove "la provenance licite," and "cette preuve est rarement possible." It will be further noted that no line is drawn now between ivory bought or exported in the open and close seasons, as all ivory is to be stamped before leaving the country.

It must be admitted that it is not without reason that traders state that the ivory trade is closed. I have discussed the matter with a high official who is interested in the question, and he informs me that the trade is by no means closed, since circulars have been sent to all the State agents instructing them to be generous in their interpretation of the decrees. With all due respect to the Government, trade cannot be conducted in this manner. If a zealous "chef de poste," wishing to show his authority, cares to disregard the circulars and confiscate a trader's ivory, the court, judging in accordance with decrees and not circulars, must uphold his action. The said official could not deny that there were agents who would act in this manner, and, although he added that the Government would be pleased to hear of any such cases, an agent cannot be blamed for carrying out what he can prove to be his duty. It will be dangerous for small traders to risk buying ivory, since it may be seized at any moment, and they cannot afford the expense and delay incurred in fighting the case. Large firms will also be shy. One of the principal ivory traders in Matadi has received news from his agent in the Uele of the seizure of 202 points within a few days of the entering into force of the new laws, and before he had had time to receive news of the change which had been made. Nor is stamped ivory safe until the steamer carrying it has left the river. One firm had fifty-five points seized at Matadi even after the export duty had been paid and a "permis d'exportation" had been granted, while two other firms have had stamped points seized on the ground that they were improperly weighed at the time of registration.

The above official affirmed that the new laws were more lenient because the State no longer requires the trader to give up half his ivory, but an examination of the question elicited the following facts: (1.) A trader can be furnished with a "permis de chasse," the cost of which is to be increased to 1,600 fr., allowing him to kill two elephants a year. He may keep the four tusks thus acquired at a cost of 161 each. (2.) Any native can be furnished gratuitously with an "autorisation de chasser," but in return he must, on having the ivory of elephants which he has killed, registered, give half to the State; and if he does not have them registered himself, then the trader who buys them must give up half when he takes them to the State post to be stamped. Thus it really works out that the man who is content with four tusks at 161 each is not required to surrender any ivory, but the trader who wishes to pay his way by buying from the natives is still required to give half to the State, unless the native has already done so. Experience shows that the natives will not bring in their ivory to the State post for stamping purposes, not only because they do not understand why they should promptly be relieved of half of it, but also because cases are not rare where the whole has been taken. Consequently they mistrust the regulations.

The Conseil colonial treat the matter as though there was very little, if any, honest dealing in ivory. In point of fact, as far as the traders are concerned, if they were left alone with a moderate export tax to pay they would be honest enough, but as it is, fraud is being encouraged and a stimulus has been given by these very regulations to the illicit trading which the Colonial Minister declares himself anxious to prevent. Instead of running the risk of having their ivory seized, traders now pass much of it through French and Portuguese territory, and, paying merely the export

demanded, they ship it at Matadi, and the freight on the Belgian steamers is the only money which goes into Belgian pockets as far as that ivory is concerned.

It is not the desire to protect game to which the traders object, nor is it altogether the idea of having to give up half the unstamped ivory which they buy to the State, but it is the uncertainty and the loss of time and money arising from the fact that any tusk bought and paid for may be confiscated, unless bearing the Government stamp, and there are hundreds of tusks in the country amongst the natives which are unstamped, each of which is liable to seizure because the proof of the "provenance loite" is "rarely possible."

It remains to add that the ivory of elephants killed in self-defence and of those found dead must be handed over to the State, who will make a return of one-quarter of the value. Nothing is said concerning fossil ivory, but any law on this point would require a committee of experts to interpret it fairly.

Natives will be granted an "autorisation de chasser" gratuitously, and the "permis de chasse" for Europeans will be raised from 500 fr. to 1,600 fr., with the right to shoot two elephants only.

An innovation is the public sale announced for the 6th November of ivory and rubber confiscated by the Customs. This will no doubt be welcomed by the Boma and Matadi traders and others.

The export tax remains at 2 fr. 10 c. per kilogramme for points over 6 kilog., and 1 fr. 60 c. for those under 6 kilog. in weight.

Other Products—No new regulations have been issued regarding products other than rubber and ivory, with the exception that the tax of 250 fr. per annum includes factories built by traders in copal as well as rubber.

As, excluding the Katanga, I would recommend the Kasai for rubber, and the Uele and Province Orientale for rubber, ivory, and minerals, so the Muyombe in the Bas-Congo (Boma district) should take first place as far as other products are concerned. The cocoa industry is well established, and substantial profits may be made. Rubber, palm oil and kernels, and other African products may be gathered or planted there in a district which has the great advantage of being comparatively near Boma and the mouth of the river, and the trade has not to bear the heavy transport expenses of the Leopoldville-Matadi Railway. A small 60-centim-gauge railway runs through the district, and it is hoped that branch lines will be constructed, as the population is small and portage difficult.

It will be interesting to watch the progress made in the interior in the development of new industries and the export of products hitherto not sufficiently profitable. The Belgians are enthusiastic in such matters, but they will need all the help they can obtain from the Government at the outset. With a little encouragement the Cataracts district between Matadi and Stanley Pool might prove a fruitful field for those who wish to establish new industries, but here, again, the great difficulty is, unfortunately, lack of population.

Imports

In three years' time imports will probably take their proper place in the trade of the country, and instead of their representing only about two-sevenths of the total trade, as in 1909, they will more nearly equal the exports which in time must considerably decrease. It is true that trade goods for the purposes of "remuneration" and provisions for the officials have been imported in considerable quantities in the past, but the absence of the former will be compensated by the need which will arise for goods of a greater and more expensive variety. The wholesale trade is already very different from what it was, and another trade which is benefiting from the new era is that in building materials.

The reduction in transport rates on the upper river steamers will facilitate the development of an internal trade. It is to be hoped that the Government will assist in every way the establishment of native markets. They have been conspicuous by their absence in the past, but they will prove most beneficial not only in helping the circulation of money but in creating wants among the natives. Furthermore, certainty of rice by natives and planters might be encouraged. There are thousands of acres of good rice-growing land, and though the export of the produce would not be large, it will always be a good demand in the country, especially in the Katanga, on the railways, and at the larger centres such as Leopoldville.

Two of the main accusations preferred against the State in respect of the non-observance of the Berlin Act in the matter of free trade were that the Government proved to be (1) an unfair confiscator, (2) an unfair competitor, and a brief examination of these points will serve to demonstrate the changes which have taken place under the reform scheme:

1. Formerly if any trader ventured into the Domaine national and bought rubber of a native the rubber was confiscated, and the native and trader were liable to severe penalties for theft and for receiving stolen property. A contemptibly small area where there was little chance of buying rubber was left open to independent traders, who were compelled to plant and tend for seven years a certain number of trees for each kilogramme exported. Now large zones are open, and the right to sell the rubber which they gather has been granted to the natives. An extra tax of 40 centimes a kilogramme has taken the place of the obligation to make and keep up plantations. In July 1911, a further area will be free, and by July 1912 practically the whole country will be open to traders, who can be more or less certain that the rubber which they purchase will not be seized. It is too early yet to be positive on this point, but the decrees must be taken in good faith, and I made special enquiries at Matadi to discover whether traders were having any difficulty in this respect; I heard of none.

Unfortunately the accusation of an unfair confiscator must still be upheld against the State in the matter of ivory. The feelings of the members of the Conseil colonial during an academic discussion of the matter in Brussels are evidently different from those of a trader who has marched several hundred miles with a caravan of porters carrying his stock of trade goods, and who suddenly finds the result of his exertions nullified by the action of a "chef de poste" in seizing all the ivory that he has bought. The seizure is only a step taken in the interests of justice, and he learns that his ivory may be restored to him if he can wait a year or more for it. In the case already referred to the trader asked for a document showing at least the number and nature of the 202 tusks seized for future reference, and all he obtained was a dirty piece of paper stating that the "chef de poste" had confiscated "ivory." I saw the paper myself, and there was no date, no number or weight of the tusks recorded, and yet the amount seized was between 800 and 900 kilog. If only the State would come into line with other countries in this matter the game could still be preserved, but the quantities of unregistered ivory, some of it fifty years old, now waiting to be sold would find ready purchasers, and Belgium would gain in the end by not handicapping unreasonably a perfectly legitimate trade.

2. So long as certain districts remain closed to traders the Government must be considered as an unfair competitor, but the important question is whether, judging from what is taking place in the area now open, it will cease to merit that imputation on the day when traders are free to enter the prohibited zones.

On the one side it may be argued that the rubber taxes are purposely high in order to dissuade traders from coming into the country, and that the ivory laws have rendered the trade impossible. Consequently the State, who have meanwhile intended to retain some of the richest rubber districts as reserves, will in a few years' time point to the failure of the free trade system as a reason for returning to the old régime. Such a step would assuredly raise an outcry in the Belgian Parliament and amongst the Belgian people, who would trace the true cause of the failure.

On the other side it may be held that the mere fact that the Government have wished to reserve five rich districts proves that they are willing to leave the rest of the country to independent traders. Moreover, a considerable amount of money has been introduced, and it is already in circulation in many new districts; the natives are to pay, and are paying in several cases, their tax in money instead of produce; the right has been granted to them to sell the produce of the forest hitherto claimed exclusively by the State; and sites for factories are being given without undue delay, many taxes have been abolished or reduced, transport rates by rail and steamer have decreased, and officials have been instructed by the Governor-General in a circular letter addressed to "tous les agents de la colonie" to help missionaries, traders, and soldiers in every way—a most important point so long as the old officials are retained. Attention may also be drawn to smaller matters, which are none the less capable of an interpretation favourable to the aims of the State, such as the building operations in progress in Boma and Leopoldville, the railway projects in the Muyombe, the Kasai, and Katanga, the construction of a good road between Stanleyville and Avakubi, the expedition

which is studying the Cataracts district with a view to generating electricity for the railway and district, and building hotels in, and improving the towns of Matadi, Thysville, and Kinshasa, the opening of a branch of the Matadi Bank at Kinshasa on the Stanley Pool, &c. All these matters point to the faith which others have in the Government, or which the Government have in their own designs, and, as far as private enterprise is concerned, the multiplication of such schemes serves to tighten the cord which binds the State to their promises to abandon the old monopolistic system.

Future Prospects.

The results of the past cannot be wiped out in a day, and an exhausted country must be given time to recover. I append herewith a list of the taxable adults, which includes both men and women from the age of 14 to 40. It will be seen that the total amounts to 1,616,693, or about 180 adults per 100 square miles. With the further opening up of the country a larger number of possible labourers may be discovered, but it must be remembered that women form a goodly proportion of the above total, and they may not be willing to work. In my tours I have seen an encouraging number of children, but the future is uncertain owing to the fact that the existing population is in many parts infected with sleeping sickness, and all sympathy must be extended to the Belgian Government in the renewed efforts made to combat this plague. The situation is in fact serious. With the influx of traders and miners, the projected railway construction, the establishment of rubber and other plantations and the gathering of the forest rubber, the demand for labour will be considerable. The future depends to a great extent on private initiative and were the Government by generous treatment to encourage companies and traders with a moderate capital, who will enrich the country instead of exhausting it, by the cultivation of rubber and other tropical products, the economical crisis through which the Congo must undoubtedly pass will not prove so acute for Belgium. So long as the high price of rubber is maintained in Europe smaller traders may hope for some substantial profits, but in normal circumstances conditions are chiefly favourable to the existing concessionary companies and to the Portuguese. The large companies have long been established in their own districts, where they are free to make their own price, and where competitors, if they are allowed to enter, can soon be persuaded to retreat; in their case it may be true that the incidence of the increased rubber duties will be on the natives. Moreover, with a sufficiently large export of rubber they do not feel the expenses and taxes so much as the smaller trader, who will find both heavy in a country where lengthy transport is necessary and costly; nor can new comers rely on a plentiful supply of forest produce during the first few years, in view not only of the scarcity of labour, but also of the fact that many of the natives are so tired of the white man and his demands that, if they can avoid it, they will not work for him for some time to come. On the other hand, the Portuguese, who are increasing in numbers here, are content with small profits, and, by their way of living and trading, they reduce to a minimum their expenses of management and personal taxes.

Any companies who contemplate trading in the Congo should first send out an experienced man to visit the various districts; otherwise they may find themselves installed in an exhausted region. There are some valuable tracts of forest even in the 1910 area, but I fully expect that they will be taken up by ex-officials who will benefit from their knowledge of the country.

If the surmise is correct that the future of the country depends mainly on the successful cultivation of rubber, it must be admitted that the land question is a problem of some difficulty. Unwilling to allow any further concessions, and wishing to prevent speculation in land, the Government refuse to make grants of land exceeding 25 hectares in area, whereas companies and traders intending to make rubber, rice, cotton, or any other plantations will naturally require from 200 to 300 hectares.

Annex 1.

Ordinance of the Governor-General, dated August 20, 1910, fixing the rate of the Tax in Money to be paid by the Natives in the Districts already open to Trade, during the year 1911.

Le taux de l'impôt principal, à prélever en numéraire, des indigènes soumis au compteur du 1^{er} janvier, 1911, au régime du décret du 2 mai, 1910, sur l'impôt indigène, est fixé comme suit:—

1. A 5 fr. dans les zones de la Gurba-Dungu, de la Rato-buru-Beni, d'Uvira, de la Mongala, de la Maringa-Lopori, dans les districts du Lac Léopold II et de l'Oubangui.
2. A 6 fr. dans le bloc de propriétés privées de l'Entre-Buzira-Loula-Salonga ainsi que dans la zone du Lomami (Comité spécial du Katanga).
3. A 8 fr. dans le bloc de propriété privée exploitée par la Compagnie du Lomami.
4. A 9 fr. dans le district de l'Équateur, dans les régions du district du Kasai situées à l'ouest et au sud de la ligne formée par le Kasai, à partir de Basongo, la Lulua, la Luébo et le septième parallèle vers l'est, les régions des anciens districts de Matadi et des Cataractes, ainsi que de celui du Moyen-Congo ne dépendant point de Matadi, ni de Léopoldville.
5. A 12 fr. dans tous les autres territoires dans lesquels le décret du 2 mai, 1910, a instauré l'impôt en argent, à compter du 1^{er} juillet, 1910.

Annex 2.

STATEMENT showing the amount of Rubber gathered as Tax in each District during 1909; also that exported by Companies during the same year.

District or zone—	Product of State Tax.
	Metric tons.
Province Orientale—	162
Zone des Stanley-Falls * †	205
" du Haut-Bari †	224
" de Pontherville †	191
" du Manoma *	80
Compagnie du Chemin de Fer aux Grands Lacs ..	862
Total ..	121
District de l'Éle ..	66
Zone du Rubi † ..	102
" de l'Ére-Bili † ..	9
" de Bomokandi † ..	298
" de la Gurba-Dungu * ..	78
Total ..	121
District de l'Oubangui *	50
District de l'Aruwimi * † ..	171
Compagnie du Lomami ..	99
Total ..	54
District des Bangala *	220
Compagnie congolaise ..	44
District de l'Équateur * † ..	80
A.B.L.R. ..	408
Société anonyme belge (Équateur and Bangala Districts)	120
Total ..	268
District du Lac Léopold II * † ..	1,160
District du Kasai * ..	1,428
Compagnie Kasai ..	21
Total ..	15
District de Stanley-Pool *	36
American Congo Company ..	280
Total ..	67
Comptoir commercial congolais (District du Kwango) ..	
Comité spécial du Katanga ..	

* 1910 area.

† 1911 area.

‡ 1912 area.

Note.—In the above returns the amounts assessed to the State represent fresh rubber as it is brought in by the natives; the returns of the various companies refer to the actual amounts exported, that is to say, that the rubber has received treatment at the various factories, and should be comparatively clear and dry.

Annex 3.

STATEMENT of the amounts of Ivory received by the Government during 1909, together with a List of the quantities exported by the Comité spécial du Katanga and certain Companies.

District or Zone—	Kilog.	Kilog.
Province Orientale—		
Zone des Stanley Falls	7,816	
de Haut-Iouri	8,742	
de Pontherville	5,068	
de Maniema	2,547	24,168
District de l'Uele—		
Zone du Bala	27,155	
de l'Uere-Bili	39,111	
de Bomokandi	2,142	
de la Gurba-Dungu	4,441	72,849*
District de l'Oubangui	14,845	
de l'Aruwimi	7,000	
des Bangala	3,428	
de l'Équateur	9,815	
du Lac Léopold II	2,112	
du Kasai	1,485	
du Stanley Pool	1,141	39,821
Total		136,838
Comité spécial du Katanga		8,001
Compagnie Kasai		2,512
" anversoise (Bangala District)		4,326
" Chemin de Fer aux Grands Lacs (Province Orientale)		1,474
Société anonyme belge (Province Orientale, Equator, and Bangala Districts)		1,947
Belgika (Province Orientale, Uele, &c.)		5,178
Nieuwe Afrikaansche Handels-Vereeniging (Province Orientale, Bas-Congo, &c.)		18,547

* Of this amount 29,500 kilog. are the product of the tax in ivory imposed on the natives in certain districts in the Province Orientale.

Annex 4.

STATE RETURNS for Gum Copal in 1909, together with the Exports of the Société anonyme belge and various Companies.

District or zone—	Kilog.
District de l'Oubangui	83,682
de l'Équateur	42,224
Total, State Return	75,826
Société anonyme belge (principally Equator and Bangala Districts)	153,631
Various exports of copal	203,000

Annex 5.

CONGO BELGE.

POPULATION des différents Districts d'après les Rôles des Prestations de l'Exercice 1909.

Districts et Zones.	Hommes.	Hommes et Femmes.	Femmes.
Banana	1,519		891
Boma	38,963		34,657
Matadi Cataractes	28,148		30,816
Moyen-Congo	28,188		25,585
Kwango	20,180		3,409*
Kasai		152,121	
Lomami		43,820	
Haut-Luapula	17,692		18,870
Tanganyika-Moero		36,193	
Haut-Iouri		55,559	
Pontherville		56,818	
Stanley Falls		54,869	
Maniema		48,546	
Uvira	27,833		29,308
Kutchuru Beni		28,121	
Gurba-Dungu		37,859	
Uere-Bili		42,708	
Bomokandi		61,175	
Rubi		85,986	
Oubangui		34,495	
Aruwimi		42,835	
Équateur		150,067	
Maringa-Lopori		62,040	
Bangala		162,567	
Mongala	36,287		41,932
Lac Léopold II	36,895		41,421
Totals	235,600	1,154,769	226,324

Grand total—1,616,693.

* Ce nombre représente des femmes imposables, c'est-à-dire, celles mariées à des polygames.

Note.—It is reckoned that a proportion of the natives escaped the observation of the officials who took the census, while it must also be remembered that some districts are not completely occupied. Hence it is counted necessary to add 20 per cent. to the population given above, and in the Kasai and Kwango districts, the Gurba-Dungu zone, and the sultanates of Sana and Sasa in the Uele, as much as 50 percent. may be added. Thus:—

Kasai, Kwango, Gurba-Dungu zone, and sultanates—	
Taxable population as per census	228,519
Plus 50 per cent.	111,759
Estimated total	365,278
Other districts	
Taxable population as per census	393,174
Plus 20 per cent.	78,635
Estimated total	1,671,609
Estimated total of taxable population in 1909-10	2,036,887
Female* adults between the ages of 14 and 40	2,000,000

* By the decree of May 2, 1910, women are exempt from taxation in the future.

A rough idea of the total population—men, women, and children of all ages—may be gained from the following list. The calculations have been made in accordance with directions given by a State official:—

Districts—	Population, in thousands.
Bas-Congo	411
Moyen-Congo	168
Kwango	150
Kasai	912
Lae Leopold II	227
Oubangui	359
Equateur	1,017
Bangala	997
Aruwimi	413
Province Orientale	1,335
Katanga	269
Uele	1,189
Total, in thousands	7,248

Estimated total population of the Congo State—7,248,000.

[43093] No. 4
Sir A. Hardinge to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 28.)

(No. 191. Africa. Confidential.) Brussels, November 24, 1910.
Sir,

IN the course of the conversation with M. Renkin reported in my despatch No. 188 of the 23rd November, I asked his Excellency whether he was satisfied with the result of the reforms inaugurated by him in August last, and whether he thought that their success would warrant a shortening of the three stages to be traversed before complete freedom of trade was established throughout the Congo colony.

He said that the first stage seemed to be proceeding satisfactorily, and without any economic disturbance, but he still considered it more prudent to adhere to the present to his original programme. He thought, however, that there had been some misunderstanding about the effects of that programme in the regions to be opened seven and nine months hence respectively. It appeared to be supposed that in those regions (zones 2 and 3) the Leopoldian system was to be maintained till July 1911 in the one and July 1912 in the other. This was only the case with regard to two principal products; rubber and copal. With the exception (a very important one) of these two articles, trade was now free throughout the Congo, and even in the remotest districts in which the natives were not yet able themselves to pay their taxes in money, the Government were now paying them a regular cash wage, out of which they themselves paid their tax, for picking rubber in the domain lands as free labourers in lieu of the old service or tax in kind. This experiment, he said, had been attended with great success in the Uelle districts, where the natives were apparently glad to collect rubber in return for a regular cash payment; and many of them were building villages in the forests so as to be nearer their work.

On my observing that the delay in abolishing the State monopoly of certain important products of the "Domaine national" was adversely criticised in England on the ground that such a monopoly was in itself contrary to treaty, and should never have been established, his Excellency replied, that even if this were granted, the system existed, and had taken so deep a root in the economic institutions of the Congo, that it could not throughout so vast a country be destroyed at a single blow. He has evidently in his mind the idea that in the easternmost parts of the Congo, such as the Uelle and Aruwimi districts, the natives will not be able, till cash is more diffused than it is in regions closer to the Congo and Kasai Rivers, or in districts like Katanga, where there are many Europeans, to pay with any certainty their taxation in money, and that the State must therefore continue there to derive its main revenue for another year, or year and a half, by trading itself in the rubber and copal of the domain, and still treating these products as its monopolies. He admitted that in the Uelle district the greater part of the land was domain, i.e., owned under the Leopoldian and held under the present Belgian colonial theory, in virtue of a kind of *dominium eminens*, by the Crown; but I understand from him that considerable estates were practically in the hands of native Sultans, sometimes very ferocious rulers, with whom

the Belgians often thought it more prudent not to interfere too actively, but over whom they were gradually consolidating their authority.

With regard to the concessionary companies, M. Renkin expressed absolute confidence that he would overcome the resistance which the Government had experienced at the hands of the Kasai management. He had made it quite clear to the Kasai directors that the letter of their charter, whatever might have been the interpretation placed on it by long practice, gave them no monopoly, and that although he had been (as reported in my despatch No. 155 of the 10th September) overruled at the shareholders' meeting, he was determined to vindicate, if necessary, at law the rights of the Colonial Office as the holder of the majority of shares. The result of this attitude had been that the Kasai directors had abandoned their original combative policy, and that negotiations with a view to a compromise had been begun. Its basis—but this information must be added, be treated by me as confidential—was that the Government should indemnify the Kasai Company for the losses entailed upon it owing to the reintroduction of free trade by selling to it the shares which it had given to King Leopold in consideration of his monopoly which it erroneously believed itself to have acquired from him. The question, I understand, is now merely one of price; the Kasai directors want to buy these shares cheap; M. Renkin, on his side, while willing to part with them below their market value, which has naturally itself fallen since the company's monopoly is threatened, is standing out for higher figures. Some middle term between the two proposals will, I imagine, eventually be found.

Some of the other companies, whose monopoly rights are not so easily assailable, may prove rather less amenable to harsh direct pressure. As, however, they are now precluded from employing forced labour, whilst the Government can within the region still worked by it on commercial lines, compete with them as a more attractive employer of free labour by cash payments, out of which the native can pay his tax, M. Renkin evidently hopes that he may get them to come to terms on lines similar to those on which he is compromising with the Kasai, though in proportion their legal claims are stronger, he will presumably get less value for his shares.

I have, &c.
ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

[43098] No. 5
Sir A. Hardinge to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 28.)

(No. 196. Africa.) Brussels, November 25, 1910.
Sir,

I HAVE the honour to state that M. Renkin laid a Bill yesterday before Parliament modifying the existing text of the Colonial Law, so as to enable not merely the Governor-General of the Congo, but any Vice-Governor-General, to exercise, by making ordinances, such powers as the King may delegate to him. The object of this decree is to facilitate the work of decentralisation, and the creation, in addition to that of the Katanga, of other vice-governor-generalships if necessary, independent of Boma, and corresponding direct with the Colonial Office at Brussels. M. Renkin holds that it is impossible that the Governor-General at Boma, residing as he does in a corner of the colony, can efficiently supervise so vast an extent of territory.

I have, &c.
ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

[2447] No. 6
Acting Consul Armstrong to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received January 21, 1911.)

Gondokoro, Uganda Protectorate, November 3, 1910.
Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith a report on the condition of the natives in the Uelle district of the Congo State.

I have, &c.
JACK P. ARMSTRONG.

Enclosure No. 6.

Report by Acting Consul Armstrong on the Condition of the Natives in the Uele District.

THE Uele district is divided into four zones: the Rubi, the Uere-Bili, the Bomakandi, and the Gurba-Dungu. The Rubi zone is populated chiefly by Ababuas and Azande; the Uere-Bili almost exclusively by the Azande; the Bomakandi by Azande, Mangbetu, Mangwele, Bangba, Aharamis, Amadis, Mamvu, and a part of the pigmy tribe of Akha; the Gurba-Dungu by Azande and Makrakra. The Bakango tribe is found on either bank of the Uele River, and is of small importance in regard to numbers.

I left Boma on the 9th May, and took steamer at Leopoldville for Bumba, at the mouth of the Itimbiri River, on the 23rd May, arriving there on the 7th June. From Bumba I took steamer for Gô, and thence by canoe up the Likati River to Enguetra, stopping at the post of Likati on the way in order to recruit porters for the overland journey from Enguetra to Djarbir, or Bondo, as it is now called officially. From this point I took canoe up the Uele River to Angu, and crossing the river at that post, I proceeded overland to Bina and Angoula. From there I returned down stream by canoe to Bazouli, and thence overland to the posts of Api, Uere, and eventually came to Bambilé—the head-quarters of the district—where I arrived on the 1st August. From Bambilé I went overland to Niangara—the future head-quarters of the General Commission of the district—via the posts of Amadis and Suronga. From Niangara I took a south-easterly direction to Gombari, in the Bomakandi zone, visiting the posts of Dingu, Feradijé, and Aba.

At Aba I was sent carriers by the Soudanese authorities, and proceeded to Gondokoro to await steamer for Khartoum. The Uele is a densely populated country. Sleeping-sickness is practically unknown, and the few cases which exist have been introduced from the outside, and every precaution is taken to prevent the spread of the disease by the establishment of lazarets at Ibenbo, on the Itimbiri River, and Aba, on the Soudanese frontier.

The various tribes in this district are remarkable for their superior intelligence, and of these the Mangbetu, with its sub-divisions of Mangwele and Bangba, is the most noteworthy.

The Azande is a warlike tribe, and consequently less to be trusted than the others. In numbers they represent more than half the population of the entire district. They are, however, none the less serviceable, and like all natives are willing to work when offered an inducement, and when justly and firmly dealt with are on friendly and loyal terms with the Government. But while the Azande as a tribe is less intelligent than another, their sultans or chiefs, known as the Arungura—a name given to the ruling tribe as distinct from the ordinary Azande—are incomparably superior in every way to the ordinary native. These sultans have shown remarkable skill and astuteness in dealing with the Europeans, and some of them, even up till now, have maintained a sort of semi-independence. The point of dispute between these sultans and the Government has always been taxation. They submitted in the past to the old régime of constant work with little or no remuneration, but as the pressure for rubber became more acute they were obliged to relax their authority over their tribesmen—an authority which included the use of all sorts of barbarous methods of punishment—in order to preserve their own lives. Thus these chiefs or sultans have had the very difficult task to perform of satisfying the demands of the Government for an ever increasing rubber tax, and at the same time to keep their tribesmen from open revolt against the hardships and vexatious exactions which are an integral part of that tax. The balance has been maintained up to the present by the inherent respect which the natives have for their sultans, and this has been manipulated by the presence of the Government. At present some of them are in great difficulty. The Government insists upon the payment of a rubber tax, and the tribesmen refuse any longer to submit to it. The sultans, then, are completely in the hands of their people. They are quite aware that any attempt to compromise the present situation (which is one of passive resistance to all Government demands) by submitting to any Government proposals to supply food or porters in lieu of rubber would mean their immediate assassination. The natives regard any such proposals as mere tricks to enforce the rubber tax.

Such then is the situation of some of these Azande sultans such as Mopoie, Sasa,

and Semio, to mention a few. The latter, however, has just escaped to French territory as the result of an expedition which the Government sent against him early in the year. It is said that the Government had no intention of making war against him and advised him beforehand to this effect, but the sultan was not apparently prepared to allow himself to fall into the hands of the officials, who were supported by some 200 soldiers, and for this reason he fled the country. A Government post is now established on the old site of his town.

Other Azande sultans occupy territory where there is little or no rubber and are, consequently, on good terms with the Government in spite of the fact that they are called upon to furnish incessant ever-increasing and poorly remunerated labour both for the supply of carriers and food. But of this matter I shall have occasion to speak further on in this report and also of the Chief Gouga at Bondo—or Djarbir as it is better known—who was appointed chief by the Government of a part of the Azande tribe, after the defeat of the old Sultan Djarbir, although he is not an Azande and still less an Arungura, nor has he any title whatever to the sultanship unless that of being a mere bully and instrument in the hands of the Government for the purpose of imposing the rubber-tax.

Of the other tribes the Ababuas in the Rubi Zone and the Mamvu in the Bomakandi zone are, perhaps, the most primitive. The Government has in the case of the former tribe imposed upon them as their chief an ex-external of the public force. This man being of another tribe (Amadis) is maintained in his authority by the Government who permits him to keep a small body of armed men to protect his person and in return for the perquisites of chieftainship he forces the people to work for the Government.

The Mamvu tribe is completely enslaved in a similar manner by Mangbetu and Mangwele chiefs. And I shall deal with this latter further on as it furnishes the most striking evidence in support of the charge that rubber cannot be obtained without abuse, or force as Government officials call it.

These various tribes can be considered as more energetic and business like than the average African native. And although opinions differ among officials on this point I have observed that those who complain are officials in rubber bearing areas. Those, however, whose good-fortune it is to be outside such areas never complain. They are, without exception, on the best of terms with the native, and obtain from him whatever they like such as porters, labourers, and food. No soldiers are needed to scour the villages as in rubber-areas in order to make the people work. A messenger carrying a flag (instead of a gun as in other posts) is sent to the villages, and workmen, porters, and food are brought without any fuss or threats of imprisonment.

Before entering into details of the various forms of taxation, it is necessary to explain briefly and for the sake of clearness the chief features of the Uele district in regard to its resources. Also the law which governs the tribal questions known as "chiefties indigènes." Of the four zones which compose the Uele district, the Rubi, and the Bomakandi are the richest in rubber. The whole of the former is dense equatorial forest, while the latter is forest intersected with grass plains and the southwestern parts form the fringe of the great forests of the Arunguri, Ituri, and Itimbiri Basins. All the northern part of the Bomakandi zone is now rubber-bearing.

The Uere-Bili is chiefly grass-land, but strips of rubber-bearing forests are to be found along the numerous water-courses which intersect the country. The Gurba-Dungu zone has few resources and in this respect resembles the Upper Nile country. In the western part, and especially near the post of Sili, there is a little rubber. This is nominally a part of the above zone, but since free trade has been discontinued here it has been included in the Uere-Bili zone, and thus reserved to the Government, thereby furnishing further evidence of the policy of the Government to open nothing to free trade that was of any possible value.

Thus the rubber-bearing areas are clearly defined, and in no case have I heard of any chief whose territory was outside the rubber-bearing areas being at variance with the Government.

With the exception of the Gurba-Dungu zone the Uere-Bili and Uele districts are exceptionally rich, and rarely in Africa does one see so much food and of such great variety. Besides the ordinary African food such as bananas, plantain, manioc, palm oil, &c., maize, rice, pea-nuts, millet, sorghum, potatoes, sesame oil, &c. grow in abundance. The quality of the maize where the seed is carefully selected is as good as the best that America can produce. Almost every kind of European vegetable grows with luxuriance. And the plains in areas where there is no tsetse fly afford good grazing lands for cattle. Nothing has yet been done in the way of agricultural

experiment with the exception of rubber, but there is no doubt that grain, such as oats and wheat, would grow if carefully tended.

Rubber has been planted, and abandoned in nearly every instance, in all the posts. Unfortunately, manihotte is the predominating species, and this is now found to be entirely worthless.

It is hoped that the ireh will prove of value, and in future this species will be planted.

Forest rubber is fast disappearing, and by the time the Government surrenders its monopoly on this produce (in 1912) there will be none left. The natives complain that even now it is very difficult to obtain rubber. And in areas where a few years ago as much as 2 to 3 kilos per head per month were made, to-day the natives find it difficult to produce 1 kilo per month. And even in some parts of the country only 1 kilo can be obtained in three months' time.

The Government hopes to be able to replace the wasted rubber forests with plantations. But this sort of colonisation would not seem to benefit the natives because at most only a very restricted proportion of the population will be able to obtain work on these plantations.

There are plenty of resources to be developed in the Uele where there is a vast and intelligent population. But the Government must take the lead. Rubber and ivory which would have been an inducement and a help to capitalists to tide over the experimental period have been drained by the Government.

It may therefore be concluded that the Government intends to devote its entire attention to rubber to the exclusion of everything else. This policy would appear to resemble the very dangerous one of putting all one's eggs in one basket.

Native Chieftainship.

It is now necessary to give at some length details of the law regarding the duties and obligations of native chiefs towards the Government and their tribesmen and *vice versa*. In order to make clear the position of native chiefs in the Uele district it is necessary to explain that these are of two kinds—

1. Hereditary.
2. Those selected by Government from other tribes.

Up to the present the chief has been responsible to the Government for the payment of the taxes of all his people and for the supply of food and labour. In theory he has had no definite authority over them, but nevertheless he has been permitted tacitly to use the "chicotte" and to imprison those who refused to obey him.

These powers have been used by all and abused by many, and more especially by chiefs such as Gonga, at D'Jarbir, who with a great many others belong to the second category of native chiefs, viz., those selected by the Government from other tribes who are therefore mere tools in the hands of the officials for the extortion of rubber and labour for Government and incidentally riches for themselves.

Gonga, I am told, has seventy or more natives, armed with guns, to protect him from the vengeance of his adopted tribesmen, whom he has abused to the utmost, and at the very door of the Government post of D'Jarbir. His zanbe, or compound, is surrounded by a thick hedge, and no one is allowed inside it without his permission, such is the fear lest his system should become public knowledge.

This man has been chief for some five years, and during this time he has amassed considerable wealth in wives and slaves. Hence a chief who lives in his harem, a number which an ordinary chief acquires in a lifetime, and as a woman can only be obtained by payment of large sums there is little doubt that his seventy armed men have played no small part in acquiring his fortune. And it is common knowledge that to give such a man authority, who has no sympathy whatever with the people, and who is fearless of the native customs which hold ordinary men to respect the rights and property of others, is to invite them to allow him to abuse, therefore to abuse, with impunity. And there are many of his type in the Uele, such as Almasi, and others, who thrust upon the people—such as Almasi, Almasi, and others, and perhaps others. There is the class of chief such as Mopone, Sasa, and others, who, perhaps others. These are men who have abused their authority in their efforts to please the Government, and who, in order to preserve their lives, have been obliged now to defy the Government or to be killed instantly by their people.

Sasa, I am told on good authority, being a very old man and thus unable to fly the country at a moment's notice, is constantly sending messages to the Government

assuming them of his loyalty, but he is unable to put his assurances into practical form by making his people work. In reply, the Government lately sent a quick-firing (Maxim) gun into the neighbourhood of his village, to impress him with its strength or otherwise to play upon his superstitions.

He thereupon sent the Government a present of several tusks of ivory. He is *always* informed periodically that soldiers will be sent to fight him. And all this is done to no purpose; the Government does not or will not realise that his authority is gone. His people refuse to work rubber. All the horrors of the old régime are fresh in their memories, and very naturally they do not realise that a change has come. They fear that if they place themselves in the hands of the Government by agreeing to do transport or other work they will fall into a trap and be made to work rubber again, and the chiefs are just as anxious as the natives to avoid such a recurrence. If the Government really intends to take these people seriously, and not send threats which they do not intend to carry out—and which only makes the natives more convinced of their strength to the point of almost making war upon the Government—and assure them of fair treatment and an adequate reward for their services, there should be no difficulty in restoring order.

And, lastly, there is the class of chief such as Manziga (Azaude) and Okundu (Bangba), only to mention two of a great number of loyal chiefs who are on excellent terms with the Government because there is no rubber in their territory. These are hereditary chiefs. They manage their people well, and when one sees the enormous amount of labour they supply to Government for a very small remuneration, and without the use of force or abuse, it is conclusive evidence that the rubber tax is supremely abusive. The demands made upon this class of chief are incessant. Almost daily are porters requisitioned. Rations are supplied weekly for some five hundred people; these are brought to the post freely. They are paid their small remuneration in brass rods, and are allowed to buy in the Government stores salt and other things. They are never abused, and the soldiers and workmen are not allowed to steal from them. And this is one of the most striking features which distinguishes the officials of this district from those of others that I have visited. Where in the Equator and Lake Leopold II districts the natives were only brought to the posts through fear, and not infrequently to be bullied, in the Uele they come and go as they please. There is no sign of fear. Their disputes are listened to and settled.

I make all reservations for natives in rubber-bearing areas, and, while I do not wish to insinuate that all the officials in these posts abuse the people themselves, they do so in some cases. There are many officials in "rubber posts" who would be only too glad to reduce or entirely do away with the tax. These realise the hardships, and, while they are powerless to do anything else than see that it is paid, they strive to live on good terms with the natives. The quantity of the tax is, of course, fixed by the high officials, who are anxious to show good results and thus help to swell the budget. The chiefs are responsible for its payment and consequently for any abuse practised in order to keep the natives up to the mark.

Such, then, are the various kinds of chiefs in the Uele, the nature of their duties to the Government, and their authority over the people.

The new law therefore which invests them with the power to imprison and flog their people after having sat in judgment upon them would be a dangerous expedient in any circumstances and even in the lands of such hereditary chiefs as Manziga and Okundu. But to invest men such as Gonga and others of his class with such power will result in slavery, extortion, and abuse. No proof of this is needed. As I have just pointed out, they have been allowed tacitly to wield these powers in the immediate past, although they have been clearly given to understand that abuse would not be tolerated by the judiciary. And, while the administrative or territorial officials pretend that they also do not allow the chiefs to abuse their people, no effort has as yet been made by them to stop it, and for this reason there is absolutely no sympathy or co-operation between the judiciary and the administration. The latter rather defends the chief against the former until it suits their interests to denounce them, and their interests are the payment of taxes and supply of labour. As long as these are forthcoming the chiefs are given a free hand, and only when the supply ceases that they open their eyes, as in the cases of Mopone, Manza, and others. It is scandalous that Gonga, for instance, should be allowed to continue his abusive methods. There is no doubt that if a magistrate were allowed to investigate the state of affairs in his territory, it would result in his immediate imprisonment. Officials told me, in answer to my argument, that the chief had too much power and therefore abused the people that they were closely watched and punished whenever their natives complained.

against them. This, then, shows that the authorities suspect the chief, and it follows that these latter resort to every possible means to stop their natives from complaining. It is thus that one hears of natives being kept in the village prison and in chains for eighteen months at a time. But the least satisfactory side of this new law, and that which will give rise to the gravest abuse, is the fact that the chief sits in judgment upon his people and against his decision there is no appeal.

It is true that the "chefs de poste" are supposed to control their judgments. But one would ask why this control has been taken from the judiciary, and more especially so as the law strictly enjoins "chefs de poste" to see that the chiefs' decisions are in no way contrary to the various decrees, "arrêtes," and ordinances, circulars, &c., and these are so numerous and complicated that magistrates are at pains to interpret them. It follows, therefore, the "chefs de poste" will be guided in their decisions more by the exigencies of the rubber tax than by the multitudinous laws, &c., of which they can at best have a very superficial knowledge. Up to the present the judiciary has had control over the decisions of the territorial officials and have protected the natives to a certain extent against abuse, and in fact, so acute has their surveillance been that officials have almost been prevented from imprisoning natives without a trial. But as magistrates are few in number (there are at most five for the Uele district) their duties prevent them from travelling to any great extent in the district, which accounts for the large numbers of prisoners to be seen in the least accessible posts. These prisoners are invariably victims of the rubber tax, and I am told they are immediately set at liberty when the arrival of a magistrate is announced. It would not therefore appear just to allow these officials control over the chiefs' judgment, because they have profited by the absence of magistrates to imprison natives in order to force them to work rubber.

The use of this kind of force, which has been illegal hitherto, will now be made law. The work of the magistrates then is to be completely undermined, and I would point out that the separation of the judiciary from the administration, which should have given the former full scope to punish abuse, has now been nullified.

The only semblance of a guarantee that abuse would stop, which was extracted with infinite difficulty from the late Congo Free State Government, has now been swept away by the new law. This arrangement would be subject to less suspicion had the Belgian Government done away with the rubber tax, which always has been, and still continues to be, the root of all the evil. But since this is to continue for a further period of eighteen months the new law is most unsatisfactory. The native is to be judged by two persons whose sole interest is the payment of taxes, and he will not be able to expose his side of the question because if this is permitted it will longer be the chief who condemns, but the "chef de poste," and it is precisely this which the Government seeks to avoid, because abuses when committed by Europeans are so hard to explain away, whereas no one can criticise the Government for the abuses committed by native chiefs. Nor can these latter defend themselves in court by showing that they were merely carrying out instructions.

It is scarcely necessary to discuss as to whether a chief is a sufficiently responsible person to wield such powers. No one with any knowledge of African natives, and least of all Congo natives, to whom no abusive method is unknown, would deny the fact that in no circumstances can he be allowed almost unlimited power to judge and condemn his people. I have heard *ad nauseam*, and seen examples of, the terrible barbarities which have been practised in the immediate past. I do not mean to imply that the Government will tolerate such atrocious acts. But I refer to them in order to point out the dangers of giving chiefs any latitude whatever in matters of justice. The native justice system is corrupt in the extreme, is common knowledge, even when dispensed by hereditary chiefs. What hot-beds of bribery, extortion, and corruption these tribunals will become when presided over by ex-soldiers and others of a different tribe to those whom they govern it is difficult to imagine.

But the object of this new law is plainly evident to those who have a knowledge of the work of enforcing the rubber tax.

To use the words of officials of the rubber tax cannot be imposed without force. And law has always been the result of all abuse, and therefore of criticism of the system. Up to the present officials have been obliged to commit abuse and put up with the criticism. But now the Belgian Government has declared openly that abuse has ceased, and that it will be made punishable, and as it is essential in view of these assurances to place officials entirely beyond the possibility of being brought to justice for acts of abuse which are liable to become public property by the fact of their being tried in a public court, it has decided to place the responsibility upon the chiefs

whose courts will be entirely inaccessible to the public, and whose acts of abuse will therefore be concealed.

In order to explain what powers these chiefs are now invested with, and what inducements to commit abuse they are offered, I must state briefly the status of the Uele native, and the means employed in enforcing payment of the rubber tax.

In this district slavery is rife. In no other part of the Congo, nor indeed in any other part of Africa that I have visited, is slavery carried on so openly. No attempt whatever is made to hide it. Natives are bought and sold, and officials take no notice whatever of the fact. Indeed it would be difficult for them to do so because they have actually organised a thorough system of slavery in the Mamvu country.

These people, the Mamvu, have been handed over entirely to a few Mangbettu and Manguele chiefs. Their territory has likewise been taken from them and given to these latter. These chiefs told me that the Mamvu had been given to them because they refused to work the rubber tax. They said that they were always their slaves. This I am inclined to doubt because the Mamvu have chiefs of their own which they recognise, and which the Government ignores because they refuse to force their people to work rubber. For this reason the Government has handed them over, together with their territory, to Mangbettu Manguele chiefs who, with the aid of cap-guns, the prison, and flogging, have managed to make them work.

The Mangbettu Chief Osmani told me that he had been given a large portion of the Mamvu territory in payment for the services which he rendered to the Government during their occupation of this territory some years ago, and it is only natural that he regards the people as his slaves. He said that many of his people were killed by the Mamvu, and that even now he was unable to travel in his territory without a guard. There is no doubt therefore that he abuses the people.

The Mamvu, on the other hand, complain that they have been enslaved by the Mangbettu, who have no right whatever to their territory. They also complain bitterly of the abusive treatment which they receive from the Mangbettu.

That a direct system of slavery has been created, and is being maintained by the Government, is indisputable. And even admitting that the Mamvu were at one time the slaves of the Mangbettu, it is no argument to use nowadays in support of maintaining them in their servile condition. The Mangbettu were likewise the slaves of the Arabs, as were other tribes, and the Congo Government was the first to cry out against such a system, and very rightly. And they lost no time in putting it down.

Officials state that the Mamvu are a very wild and lawless tribe. That such is the case I do not doubt for a moment, but it is no justification for their enslavement. And, furthermore, I am by no means disposed to agree that they are lawless. The Mamvu themselves told me that their grievances were the hardships of the rubber tax, and the abuses which were committed upon them by the Mangbettu and certain Europeans. And they are far from being conquered at present, in spite of the fact that the Government has been established in this district for many years. The Mangbettu chief told me that up till quite recently they were allowed to use arms to force them to work rubber, and that they had killed many of them.

In fact, the system as they explained it to me was precisely the same as the sentry-system of the Equator and Mongalla districts, and more especially in the A.B.I.R. and Mongalla possessions. There is no doubt, therefore, from the evidence of the Mamvu and their task-masters the Mangbettu chiefs themselves, that these people are badly treated.

Nor is this system peculiar only in regard to the Mamvu. Every large tribe has slaves, and these form the larger proportion of the population. And it is the slave who does all the work. There is no difficulty for the Government to obtain labour or rubber from the larger tribes. The slave dares not to disobey the chief's orders any more than he would dare to dispute the chief's decisions in matters of justice. But there are exceptions even to this rule. Where ordinary labour or taxes in food are imposed, the slaves work without attempt at resistance. It is only in rubber-bearing areas that one hears of trouble. And when the chiefs lose authority, their territory is taken from them and divided up amongst the ex-soldiers or any other such individuals who, with the aid of Government and a personal body-guard armed with cap-guns, know how to drive the people. And there is never any lack of persons to accept a chieftainship, which affords a means of accumulating considerable wealth and numbers of women. The means then of enforcing the rubber tax has been to depose all chiefs who refuse to press their people, and to divide their territory amongst individuals of another tribe who of course treat the people as their slaves.

This has had a great effect upon native chiefs. They have had ample opportunity

of realising that unless they can make their people work their chieftainship will be taken from them. And, furthermore, that abuses which they committed in the past will be used against them when once their authority has gone, as in the cases of the Chiefs Baniu and Danga. The former was given a free hand until his natives revolted against his abuse of authority, and when he was no longer able to furnish labour to the Government he was arrested upon charges of abuse which the Government had indirectly obliged him to commit. The chiefs therefore are forced to abuse their people.

The method of obtaining rubber has been to drive them from their villages into the forest. This has been done by the chief and his body-guard, and these in turn have been backed up by Government officials, who travel in the district with soldiers going from village to village, and driving out those who are not apparently working. Those who fail to return after the lapse of a specified time with the required quantity of rubber are punished by the chief. They are beaten and imprisoned. I have witnessed both forms of punishment. I have seen several native prisons, and they are as unhealthy and dirty as one would expect them to be.

And as their idea of time is as elementary as their idea of justice, it not infrequently happens that a prisoner is kept in prison indefinitely.

In answer to a question I put to a chief on one occasion concerning the length of time a certain individual had been in prison, he replied that he did not know, but he thought six months. On reckoning up the time with him by calling his attention to various incidents, I calculated that he must have been eighteen months in the chain. On another occasion I asked the chief why certain natives were in prison, as I had heard that they had been chained up when the news reached them that a white man was coming. He replied that if he had no one in prison, and if his taxes should be short, he would be accused of lack of authority and might be deposed. It will thus be seen that a chief is under very severe moral obligations to commit abuse.

The material inducement is also an important one. The chiefs are paid by the Government according to the amount of rubber they produce or labour they furnish, as the case may be. They are, of course, remunerated at the expense of the people, which accounts for the fact that the natives are paid only 1d. per lb. for their rubber in some areas. Payment is made in guns and ammunition where large quantities of rubber are furnished. Failing this they are given cloth, salt, tobacco, &c.

The chiefs then are forced to accept their responsibility, or else forfeit their rights. In other words, they are now to be made the butt of the rubber tax, and to suffer for any abuse of power which they are forced to commit whenever the Government sees fit to enquire into their treatment of their people. If the chiefs knew exactly what their powers were, it would not be a worse system than that of investing Europeans with such authority as has been done hitherto, and which has been condemned. But to place an unsuspecting chief in such a situation is, to say the least, unfair.

It is stated in support of this system of native tribunals that it resembles the French system. But I can state from personal knowledge that there is no French colonial law which invests the chief with the right of imprisoning and flogging his people. That native tribunals exist in French colonies is perfectly true, but they differ from the Belgian system very materially in the sense that a European, and always a high official, presides, and is generally advised upon points of native law and custom by the chief and his advisers. And in any case there are no rubber or forced labour taxes in French colonies. Taxes are not levied until the Government are in a position to protect the people. And again, the French and Belgian conceptions of what constitutes a native chief are very different. In French colonies a chief is one who, by native law and custom inherits the throne. In the Belgian colony a chief is apparently anyone who can obtain the maximum of work at the smallest cost. And taxes are levied before justice and law are established.

I have been obliged to state at some length the new system of native tribunals in order to make the rubber tax more comprehensible. I have stated that officials are, generally speaking, on good terms with the natives, and it might therefore give rise to misunderstanding to make this statement, and at the same time to show that the natives work twenty-five days in each month in order to supply the tax. In point of fact the officials know very little of the native slave who supplies the labour. The slave being a criminal is not permitted by native custom to associate with the chiefs and their freemen. The natives one sees at Government posts are generally freemen, and as they do not work rubber they have no grievances, and consequently are on good terms with officials. Slaves, on the other hand, are unknown to officials, and it is thus the system is maintained without the apparent knowledge of the authorities who close their eyes to the acts of the chiefs.

The rubber tax has always been the root of all evil in the Congo State. We have received assurances without number that abuse would not be tolerated under Belgian rule. But these assurances were of small value because the Belgian Government denied that abuse ever existed, and by maintaining this attitude the Government implied that the rubber tax was not abusive. It is not surprising, therefore, that the evils of the tax have not been removed. A thorough reform of this system is necessary before any condition of affairs can be considered satisfactory.

As the result of my visit to the Lake Leopold II district in 1907, I was able to prove that the natives were forced to work twenty-five days in each month in order to pay their tax of about 1 kilogram of rubber, and that they received practically no remuneration for their labour. The following information will show that this system still exists in the Uele district. The tax is nominally collective, i.e., the chiefs are responsible for its payment although the natives are said to be remunerated personally. And while such is in some instances the case it happens occasionally that the freemen carry the rubber to the posts and receive the payment. But as the slaves make the rubber and not the freemen, I am not prepared to assert that those who do work receive the payment.

In the Rubi zone the tax is in some instances, owing to the scarcity of rubber, 1 kilogram, payable every three months. In other and richer areas it is 1 kilogram per month. It was extremely difficult to obtain information in this zone. This was partly due to the fact that the language spoken was quite different to that in the Lower Congo. (And although I had an interpreter it is always difficult to obtain information through that medium). And as this zone was the first I visited, I had not had the time to learn the language. But the principle difficulty was that the chiefs, or at all events the more important ones, were in flight towards French territory to the north. I managed, however, to talk with a few natives and also with ex-soldiers and others living in the vicinity of the rubber forest. By all these I was informed that the tax as it was then imposed entailed some twenty-five days' work per month in the forest. On the other hand, officials told me that the natives did not actually furnish one-half the amount imposed. And this is probably true because some of the chiefs had run away. But this is no proof that the tax when paid in full is not abusive. On the contrary, it shows that whatever the amount demanded might have been the natives preferred to abandon everything and run away in order to escape it. The punishment for failure to supply the amount was inflicted by the chiefs—where these were able and willing to do so—and failing that they are imprisoned at Government posts. Here again, I was informed by the officials that the natives were not punished for the non-payment of taxes. And while, for the sake of argument I am willing to admit this to be true, it would seem strange that so many chiefs were in flight at the time I passed through the zone if they were not afraid of the prison. But information obtained from a most reliable source flatly contradicts this statement. And, furthermore, officials of all grades declare that rubber cannot be made without force, and as this zone furnishes some 10 tons of rubber per month there is little doubt but that it is used.

In the Bomakandi zone, however, I was able to talk to the chiefs and people without the use of an interpreter. This country is peopled by the Mamvu who have been enslaved by the Mangbettu at the instance of the Government.

All the southern portion of this zone is rubber-bearing forest, and the tax is imposed upon all the natives south of the line of posts stretching from Zobia to Vanderhovenville and Arebi, including amongst others Poko, Kungu, Duru, and Gombari. I visited Rungu, Duru, and Gombari, and during the eight days' march between these posts I had the opportunity of hearing from the natives themselves full details as to the amount of remuneration and time employed in gathering it. Their accounts were, in every instance, corroborated by the chiefs whose duty it is to see that they were paid. The information furnished by these Mangbettu chiefs is all the more to be relied upon when the relations between their chiefs and the Mamvu people are considered.

As I have stated before in this report, the Mangbettu chiefs declare the Mamvu to be a wild and lawless tribe. They say it is even dangerous to-day for them to travel in their territory without armed men. They accused the Mamvu of every sort of misdemeanor, and such a state of mutual hatred had been whipped into existence that the Government is obliged to be constantly on guard to prevent actual hostilities from breaking out. The Mamvu, of course, have no arms; but their Mangbettu chiefs are liberally supplied with the guns, and without these they would have been exterminated long ago. It is evident, therefore, that they had no reason whatever to

plead the cause of these Mamvu. And, furthermore, they are paid by the Government in proportion to the amount of rubber they obtain from the people.

But when I questioned them as to the hardships of the tax, they at once confirmed all that the people had told me, viz., that the natives worked from twenty-one to twenty-five days in the forest in each month, and that force was used to make them work—such as the prison, flogging, &c.

They also told me that these people suffer every sort of hardship such as results from exposure and insufficient food. They said that the natives were paid practically nothing, and in some cases they were not paid at all.

The amount of the tax is 1 kilogram per man per month. The remuneration is 25 centimes per kilogramme, or roughly speaking 1d. per lb. The time employed in gathering 1 kilog. of rubber—and therefore of earning 24d.—being from twenty-one to twenty-five days in the forest, exposed to all sorts of hardships and with little or no food.

This state of affairs then is precisely the same as that which existed in the A.B.I.R. in 1906, the Lake Leopold II district in 1907, the Kasai in 1908, the Oriental province and Equator district in 1909, and from common report a similar state of affairs exists in the Kwango, and in fact everywhere that this tax is levied. It is not surprising then that Government officials foresee in the withdrawal of force the immediate cessation of the production of rubber.

But in all the above-mentioned districts the amount of the tax differed in weight but entailed the same amount of time in gathering it. The amount of the tax measured in kilogrammes forms no basis whatever upon which can be calculated the time employed in gathering it. I wasted no time therefore in asking questions in this connection. The amount of the tax I have stated to be 1 kilog., but I am not able to state that this is absolutely true. The natives had no tax papers whatever. All they knew as to the amount required was that the basket in which it was brought had to be of certain dimensions, and as these seemed to be considerably more than 1 kilog. my information in this respect may be wrong. But I repeat that this is quite unimportant because whatever the amount of the tax may be on paper it entails twenty-one to twenty-five days labour per month.

I was told by an official that the time required to make 1 kilog. of rubber was forty-seven hours in this district. The experiment made by an official in 1908, at the request of the American consul-general, was apparently unknown to him. That experiment showed that in a district where the natives made as much as 3 kilog. of rubber per month the time employed in making 1 kilog., under the most favourable conditions, was seven days. This information cannot therefore be treated seriously, but I put this on record as showing how little officials really know, or pretend to know, of this tax.

The methods of enforcing this tax are various, and differ from those employed in other districts in the sense that it is the chief and not the European who is responsible for their acquittal. The chiefs are, however, effectively backed up by officials. This system is especially adaptable in the Uele because the various tribes are divided up among a few important and influential chiefs or sultans; and, furthermore, because the majority of the people are slaves either by native law and custom or else, as in the case of the Manyu, by design of the Government. These chiefs, in addition to being possessed by native law and custom of the most autocratic rights over their people, and rights which extend to every sort of brutality, are likewise allowed by the Government rights which extend to every sort of armed capitula, to have a prison and flog their people, to control large numbers of armed capitula, to have a prison and flog their people, and as a last resort they can appeal to the Government for aid when menaced by their exasperated tribesmen. This is used generally against the chiefs themselves, for when once they have failed to make the people work by abuse and have provoked them into revolt the cause of the disturbance is enquired into by the Government and it is then the chief who is punished for his misdeeds—unless, of course, the chief and his people can be reconciled in their differences. Of chiefs that have been punished in this manner are the Mangbettu chief near Banga, and the chief near Banga, who are those whom Baza, Chief of Durango, and Banga, a Mangbettu chief near Banga, are those whom the natives and others speak principally of. The chiefs Mangbettu, and the latter has now changed to French or Sorandese territory, are of the time in the Rubi zone the chiefs Kamingo, Simbo, and Lengua were punished. At the time I passed through the zone. All the above-named chiefs are in rubber-producing areas and represent the three largest tribes in the Uele, viz., Azande, Ababaya, and Mangbettu. And it is significant that whereas these chiefs are troublesome others of the same tribes such as Manziga, Bokoyo, and Reza (Azande), and Okundu, Kongoli (Mangbettu), who are outside the rubber areas, are on excellent terms with the

Government. This fact alone is sufficient evidence of the evils attending the rubber-tax.

And, finally, there are chiefs chosen by the Government and recruited among ex-soldiers of the public force and others. These are with few exceptions in rubber-bearing areas, and are naturally on good terms with the Government, because they have been chosen with the knowledge that they are able to enforce the rubber tax. These chiefs, Gouga, at Bondo or Djarbir, would appear to be the most ruthless. Stories of every kind of brutality practised by him, were on the lips of every native of the surrounding country. I am assured on good authority that neither he nor other chiefs of his class are able to move outside their compounds without the protection of an armed guard.

Native chiefs appointed in this manner must be abusive, even if they had nothing whatever to do with the collection of taxes. Officials state that they are carefully watched and punished when they receive complaints against them made by their natives. This, of course, shows that officials realise the danger of such appointments. But the surveillance must be very ineffective because natives complain bitterly of these chiefs and the abusive manner in which they are driven into the forest to make rubber.

This system as in many respects similar to the capita, or sentry system, which existed in the A.B.I.R. in 1906, and which was in reality the cause of all the atrocities. And, while it is difficult to find out exactly what takes place within the compound of these chiefs, there is plenty of evidence in the form of mutilated persons to show that mutilation is a common practice among these people, and for this reason it is all the more necessary to restrict their powers. To give them guns is almost to invite them to commit murder. But to impose a tax which is held in abomination by every native of every tribe in the Congo and then to give chiefs guns, prisons, and the lash to enforce payment is criminal. And the officials are quite aware that the chief is quite as powerless as they are themselves to make the natives work rubber without abuse.

This new arrangement, then, is most acceptable to officials because, to use their own words, it is no longer they who are responsible for any abuse committed, but the chief. It may, then, be concluded that abuse is committed within the compounds of these chiefs, and it also justifies the conclusion that these chiefs are totally unfitted to dispense justice in the degree defined by the new law.

The question of remuneration is one which has also gone far to necessitate and to cause abuse. It stands to reason that force must be used to obtain labour which is unremunerated.

The Belgian Government realised this when it stated that the remuneration in respect of the rubber tax had been raised throughout the Congo. It stated, for instance, that in the Lake Leopold II district the price had been raised from 50 centimes to 1 fr. per kilogramme. But this arrangement makes the native no better off than he was five years ago, when he received 30 centimes per kilogramme, because rubber has become more scarce, and where at one time he was able to make 2 kilog. per month now he finds it hard to make 1 kilog. But in the Bomakandi zone the price paid today is 25 centimes per kilog. or 1d. per lb. This district had undoubtedly been overlooked by the Government when it decided to increase the remuneration. In the Rubi zone the price paid varies between 25 centimes and 1 fr. 25 c. per kilogramme. Thus in the former zone the natives receive 24d. per month, and in the latter from 24d. to 1s. per month. But these amounts are paid in trade goods, of which salt is the most necessary and cloth the most appreciated. (The native is obliged to purchase a certain amount of salt because he has no time to make his own as he did formerly.) The payment he receives, then, stated in terms of currency, gives one no idea of the actual value of his remuneration. For this reason I give the prices of the chief articles of exchange. Salt is 2 fr. per kilogramme, or roughly speaking 8d. per lb.; cloth, of the kind preferred by natives, about 1s. 4d. per fathom. Thus in the Bomakandi zone the remuneration which the native receives for 6 months work (1 kilog. of rubber) is 6s. 8d. salt. And to obtain a fathom of cloth he must work 6 months, viz., he must furnish 6 kilog. of rubber.

It is not unnatural, therefore, that the natives complain of the remuneration or that officials declare that without force they will not work rubber. And nothing could be more inconsistent than the action of the Government in free trade areas, where officials are authorised to pay up to 3 fr. per kilogramme in order to protect the natives against a possible combination among merchants to keep down the price of rubber. And while this arrangement is fair to the natives, it is hardly just that the Government only pays 25 centimes per kilogramme in areas where they retain a monopoly. If in reality the natives need protection of this kind, they need it as much in one zone as in another. And, in any case, private enterprise could never hope to buy rubber for 25 centimes per kilogramme.

Nowhere in the limited area of free trade does private enterprise pay less than 2 fr. — excepting the concession areas. And here, again, the native is unprotected; and in view of the increased duties on rubber, to which must be added the enormous transport charges, to insist upon a minimum price of 3 fr. per kilogramme may prove more than the prices in Europe will permit.

All this evidence, then, points to the fact that the Government intends to make free trade as difficult as possible. And merchants who force in this policy a scheme by which the Government seeks to hinder the expansion of private enterprise in the areas opened to free trade in July 1910, and thus eventually to substitute a monopoly, as existed heretofore, cannot be blamed for thus showing a lack of confidence in Government assurances.

Merchants confidently hoped that the Government would abstain from trading. They cannot, of course, compete with it. And when the Government declared its intention of creating new posts in order to protect the natives from being robbed by the merchants, these latter never suspected that it intended to continue to purchase produce in competition with them. It is doubtful whether the price of rubber in Europe will permit private enterprise to pay 3 fr. per kilogramme. Customs duties have been raised, and together with various other taxes amount to about 2 fr. 20 c. per kilogramme. It looks extremely doubtful whether private enterprise can afford to pay the minimum price fixed by the Government and all the enormous transport charges besides. At any rate, the Government cannot pretend to be anxious to assist private enterprise. It cannot therefore object to the accusation that it is seeking to hinder free trade.

In summing up the foregoing facts concerning the rubber tax, it is quite evident that it is most abusive, and since in all its detail it is similar to the state of affairs which existed under Congo Free State rule, and which was condemned by the whole of the civilized world as slavery, the Belgian Government has yet to make good its claim that the natives will be justly and humanely treated and that forced labour will not be permitted.

This cannot be until some sort of order is placed in the compounds of the chiefs and until chiefs of the same tribe at least are permitted to govern the people. The powers which have lately been given to sultans to judge, condemn, and punish are far too advanced for their actual state of civilisation. The control which the law provides for is inefficient. Officials whose duty it is to control these native courts do not know for where their responsibility begins or ends. The sultans, then, are much less able to understand the limits of their powers, and under such a system abuse cannot be prevented. We shall be losing the ground gained in the past by allowing the Government to withdraw from magistrates the control of officials and chiefs in areas where a tax on rubber is imposed, even should the amount of the tax be greatly diminished and the remuneration increased, and until this has been done the condition of the natives cannot be considered in any other light than that of slavery.

If under the Belgian Government the amount of the tax had been reduced, there would have been less cause for criticism, but it is plainly evident that every effort is being made to obtain as much rubber as possible, in total disregard of the means employed by the chiefs whose duty it is to enforce its payment.

Porterage.

Means of communication in the Uele district are not so many as a glance at the map would imply. The various water-courses such as the Uele River itself, the Bomakandi, the Lukati, and the Rubi, are almost un navigable for anything larger than a canoe. On the Uele River the Government has placed a small steamer which renders a great service, but as this subsidises all the porterage at Buta, a canoe line has been organised on the Likati River which reduces the porterage on the Buta-Bambili route.

The Government now proposes to build a light railway from Buta to Bambili on the automobile route, which will relieve the natives from ten to twelve days' porterage. This is the main line for all the Uele porterage, and the constant work is beginning to tell upon the population.

All canoe work is done by voluntary labour, i.e. by men engaged for a term of service of about three years. Their pay ranges from 4 fr. 50 c. to 6 fr. per month, which is a fair wage. They are well treated, and the time allowance from post to post is ample.

Porters, however, are forced to carry, and are not so well paid as canoe-men. The Government has extended its recruiting over a large area, and thus the amount of individual labour is kept within limits which prevent natives from being overworked.

The amount of individual labour does not exceed, as far as I could ascertain, ten days per month, but it is, of course, impossible for officials even to state precisely how often a particular individual is recruited.

They are paid 40 centimes per day, which includes rations. Thus, while the canoe-men are paid from 4 fr. 50 c. to 6 fr. per month and fed by Government, the porter only earns 4 fr., and has to feed himself.

Porterage will long continue in the Uele district; the only possible solution of the difficulties will be railways. (Oxen are being used on the Dangu-Aba route, but the mortality among the cattle is enormous. This is due partly to the fly and partly to the climate.) But the Uele district possesses very few natural resources of a marketable value with the exception of rubber and ivory, and these are disappearing with a rapidity which must be most disconcerting for the future of the colony. It is hoped that rubber plantations will prove successful; in fact, nothing else is being attempted at present. But I am told that they have not yet found a rubber which is suited to the climate of the Congo. Manihotte, *Funtumia elastica*, native vine rubber, and Hevea have all been tried and abandoned. Irish is now being planted, but its success has yet to be proved. Rubber-planting, if successful, would justify the construction of railways; until then porterage will have to continue. The completion of the Buta-Bambili Railway and the introduction of free trade will lessen the cost of merchandise and competition will increase the price of labour, so that the native will be better off and the Government can confidently expect to obtain a fair revenue from taxation. But free trade will have to subsist entirely upon ivory and rubber, which at the present time is in imminent danger of becoming entirely exhausted.

If, however, free trade can be established, forced labour for porterage and other work will disappear, provided the laws which at present bind the native to his sultan are modified. The June 1906 reform decrees, under the heading of "chefs indigènes," prohibited the native from leaving his chief's territory without the consent of the latter, with the result that a native cannot engage himself to third parties without having previously obtained the chief's consent. This law, of course, was merely an expedient used in order to prevent a general exodus of natives from areas where the rubber tax was enforced to districts where there was either no rubber or where they could obtain protection from abuse. And apart from the fact that this law bound the native in Government reserves and concession areas to slavery, it has given rise to another and serious abuse, viz. that the chiefs, before giving their consent to a native to accept a situation with a private individual, demand the most exorbitant sums of head money, which are naturally deducted from the natives' wages. This is the result of the Government's system of paying chiefs large sums for the rubber and porterage which he forces his people to furnish. And, furthermore, at the present time it is almost impossible to obtain porters. The natives are quite willing to work, but the chief cannot allow them to leave his territory without the consent of the Government, because he is responsible for the payment of their taxes. On one occasion I was present when a Greek merchant asked the Government to assist him to recruit labour. The official replied that he should ask the chief. The merchant maintained that this had been done, but that the chief would not consent unless the official would agree to accept a reduction in the various taxes, either in the number of porters furnished to Government or in food. The official then said he could not order the chief to furnish porters to merchants, that it was entirely the chief's affair, and that he could do as he wished. The merchant pleaded that without porters he was unable to move, and unless the official would help him he would be obliged to remain indefinitely at the post. He appealed to the Government for help, basing his claim for assistance on the very sound principle that in Africa merchants were entirely dependent upon Government aid. The official was in a very awkward situation. To submit to any reduction in Government revenues would be to invite a reprimand; to hinder commerce would also be regarded with a certain degree of disfavour. And while his instructions were to abstain from placing any hindrance upon trade, this did not imply that he was obliged to help merchants. "A more ridiculous situation it would be difficult to imagine, and I quote it as showing the obvious defects of the law. Here were natives not only willing but pleased to work for a merchant, but, owing to taxes being paid in kind and not in currency, the chief, in order to safeguard himself, was obliged to exercise his right to refuse them permission to leave his territory, while the official, by retiring from this three-cornered controversy, supported the chief's decisions. After several days' discussion the merchant eventually persuaded the official to give him six or seven porters instead of thirty or more, the amount he really required.

And while this attitude adopted by the official would appear to be merely

quibbling, in reply it showed an astute appreciation of Government policy and interests. If chiefs were permitted to supply merchants with porters in disregard of Government taxes, the recruiting would take place in areas where rubber taxes are paid because natives in those areas are willing to do anything rather than suffer the hardships of a tax which they hold in abomination.

I likewise had occasion to witness another inevitable result of allowing chiefs to hold such autocratic rights over the liberties of the natives, viz., that of insisting upon head-money being paid to themselves before allowing their people to contract. The amount that a certain chief demanded at the outset was more than double the amount a merchant could possibly afford to pay the carriers themselves and about five times the amount paid by Government. The discussion as to terms lasted several days, the great expense and inconvenience of the merchant, and finally the latter persuaded the chief to take less than half the amount paid by the Government. In this case both the chief and the porters scored off the unfortunate merchant. Thus the chief forced the merchant to pay a price which is certainly contrary to the spirit, if not the letter, of the law, because if the Government ever hopes to obtain a head tax in his own interests it is in its own interests to see that the natives obtain a fair remuneration for their work—at a price which was far below that which they could have obtained had they been free to deal themselves with the merchant. But leaving aside this consideration (which binds the natives to such abject servility) it is not only abusive but a positive hindrance to free trade, because when competition is established the chiefs will be able to demand the most exorbitant prices.

Other forms of taxation are the upkeep of roads, building and repair of rest-houses, and food supplies to Government.

The two former taxes are unremunerated and the upkeep of roads is done almost exclusively by w. neu. In the Gurba-Dungu zone a sum has been set aside, I am told, for building and repairing rest-houses.

Food is still supplied to Government for soldiers and workmen, but an effort is being made in various posts to establish a market in order that Government labour may eventually be paid their rations in cash and purchase food from the natives.

The Introduction of Money.

Money has now been introduced into the Gurba-Dungu zone. The choice of zones for the experiment was an unfortunate one because the Gurba-Dungu is one of the poorest areas in the Congo; it produces a little rubber and ivory, but the area where the former produce is obtainable has been preserved until 1912 as a Government monopoly and confirming the view which I had already expressed, viz., that the Government had merely opened up to free-trade areas which it knew were quite worthless while reserving for itself every inch of territory of any value. And in view of the wholesale exploitation of these forests by forced labour, one can safely predict that there will be nothing left for private enterprise.

For that part which is left to the native by the Government, is the exclusive property of the chief, so that the only source of revenue to the natives is portage. And since ox-wagons are used to a certain extent for the transport of merchandise—which is restricted in volume by the fact that the Gurba-Dungu is on the frontier and thus loses the advantages of transit transport—and as the zone produces little or no food, the introduction of money must necessarily be exceedingly slow and it will be some time before the Government can hope to obtain payment of taxes in cash.

The sum of 2000 francs was put in circulation. Natives are paid in cash for their work, as also are soldiers and contract labour. At the end of three months nearly the whole of this amount had been paid out and returned to the local treasury. No sooner are natives paid than they spend their money in the payment of taxes. Thus it would appear that there is nothing set aside for the Government stores.

The natives are, of course still pressed into supplying food and carriers for Government, and for this reason they have no desire to save their money, because they have not understood that when once they have paid their taxes in cash they cannot be forced to work.

The present state of wages will have to be increased if the native is to be shown that it is his interest to pay his taxes in cash. At present he is paid 30 centimes per day for his work, which does not include his rations. But the amount of work he is called upon to supply does not admit of regular employment. Thus I obtained

thirty carriers at Dungu to carry me to Ferialje, a journey which occupied six days. The carriers were paid less than their rations of 1 fr. 70 c. each for the six days' work. But in reality they were absent from their villages some fifteen days in connection with this work as follows:—

The return journey to Dungu (four days); the journey from their villages to Dungu (two days); return journey (two days); and one day or more to assemble at the recruiting ground, and a day lost at the post awaiting my departure. They had to wait their turn before obtaining further work. Thus in one month they earned 1 fr. 80 c. which they could spend upon merchandise. And since the tax is the minimum, i.e., 6 fr. per head, it takes them a little more than three months to pay it. But they could have no merchandise to show, of course, for the work, and consequently would have to work a further six months to obtain the advantage of the former system of remuneration. To explain all this to natives and impress upon them the fact that they would have three months to themselves would be difficult. They would probably prefer to work the remaining three months in order to earn a little more money.

There is therefore little to choose between the old system of being forced to work for a remuneration and the present system of being free for the remaining nine months and thus earning nothing. This situation is peculiar because the native is entirely dependent upon portage to earn a wage. So many difficulties have been placed in the way of private individuals obtaining porters (such as I have attempted to point out under the heading of "portage") that the native cannot hope to obtain work which merchants are prepared to offer. They are thus entirely dependent upon the Government for a means to earn the price of their tax.

And the remedy is entirely in the hands of the Government. If it had opened rubber bearing areas to free trade, a great deal of money would have been put in circulation. But with a virtual monopoly of the ivory trade, and of absolute monopoly of every ounce of the rubber trade, nothing remains in the country as a medium for the circulation of cash. And again, if the Government had commenced this year by paying an adequate price for rubber, say, for instance, 3 fr. per kilogramme, the amount it has decided to pay where free trade is established, in 1912, when eventually it will have relinquished its monopoly over this produce, it would have found the country ready to pay a tax in currency. As it is, it will find an impoverished country, containing no produce whatever as an inducement to outside capital, and thus no medium for the circulation of currency. Had such a policy been adopted it would have necessitated a sacrifice in the revenues obtained from rubber because natives would have saved their earnings and demanded to pay their taxes in cash. But the work of putting order into a country which has been ruthlessly exploited for many years by a Government which only apparently intended to occupy it so long as it was profitable must entail sacrifices, and the longer they are deferred the greater they will become. Officials are already beginning to hint at the impossibility of introducing money. The matter, however, rests entirely in the hands of the Government, and the obvious remedy is to use rubber and ivory as a medium through which to circulate currency if it wishes to disclaim any intention of pursuing a policy of spoliation which was the predominant feature of the Congo Free State rule. At all events, if this system fails, as it inevitably must, the Government cannot appeal with any degree of right or justice to the Directory/Powers to the Berlin and Brussels Acts for permission to raise import duties or to retain further monopolies in order to meet an overwhelming deficit in its colonial budget.

Arms and Ammunition.

The sale of arms and ammunition in the Uele district has reached the most alarming proportions. There is no article on the market of African trade goods which is so highly prized by natives as guns and ammunition. And this fact is undoubtedly the reason why private enterprise has been forbidden their use, and the reason that the Government has disposed of such enormous quantities. The greater part of these arms have been given in exchange for ivory on terms which might be called usurious had the Government no sense to anticipate the expense and danger of a revolt. But in order to counteract the effect of distributing large quantities of arms and ammunition a force of considerable over 900 troops is distributed over the Uele district. Officials are only now beginning to realize the danger of this policy. And it is said that henceforth no more arms and ammunition will be furnished to the natives, except by the order of a high official—the chef de zone, or the "commissaire général." And while this would appear on paper to be a safeguard, it would have been more satisfactory if the Government had prohibited the exchange of arms and ammunition for ivory. I am also told that

the Government is now seeking a means whereby the arms in possession of natives may be withdrawn. Had they been given to the natives as a present and not exchanged for ivory or given in payment for services rendered, there would have been no possibility of any danger arising, because they would have been given out in reasonable quantities, and thus in accordance with the spirit of the Arms and Ammunition Conference.

Nearly all the freemen in every village have guns. And chiefs have as many as 150. They all appear to have unlimited quantities of powder and caps. Each of these guns is duly inscribed upon the chief's licence, and he is responsible for them to the Government. But the chiefs look upon this and treat it as a mere formality, and use them for trade and other purposes, and not infrequently for the purchase of women. And these deals are made with the tacit consent of the Government, because the majority of native disputes concern the purchase of women for which guns are used. And such disputes are settled by officials. No chief could lay equitable claim to one-half of the number of guns which figure on his licence. And while this matter would be solely the business of the Government were there no other colonies touching the borders of the Uele district, in effect a great deal of trade in guns and ammunition is actually carried on between the Congo and the neighbouring colonies. That this state of affairs is highly dangerous is manifest. The relations between the Congo Government and some of its chiefs on the north of the Uele River are almost hostile. And everything points to an uprise in the near future. I have pointed out this elsewhere in this report, showing that such a situation has arisen as the result of investing chiefs with despotic rights over the people in order to enforce rubber and other taxes. And these chiefs being obliged to resort to the most abusive means in order to enforce the payment of their taxes are given numbers of guns to protect themselves against the vengeance of their people. At regular intervals therefore they have been obliged to listen to the demands of their people, and thus defy the Government. This state of affairs has been going on for years. Chiefs who are the Government's friends to-day are its enemies to-morrow. To supply them with guns and ammunition therefore is to invite them to revolt whenever the occasion presents itself. There is scarcely a chief in the Uele district who has not at some time or other been forced into this situation. Punitive expeditions have been sent against them, which have resulted in the reinstatement of the chiefs and the re-establishment of the rubber tax. This state of affairs can be seen in almost all its evolutionary stages at the present time, and would therefore appear to be almost a direct line of policy.

It remains now to be seen what interpretation the Government expects officials to give to the new regulation restricting the sale of arms and ammunition. It is imperative that the most severe restrictions should be placed upon this commerce which is at present a positive menace to the tranquillity, not only of the Belgian Colony, but also of the neighbouring colonies.

The Ivory Trade.

The decree of the 15th March, 1910, published in the "Official Bulletin" of the 25th March, 1910, relative to the tax on ivory now establishes definitely that the merchant trading in this produce is held to hand over to the Government in addition to the export duty and other charges such as trade licences one-half of all the ivory purchased.

This law has been nominally in force since the 30th September, 1905, but owing to a certain vagueness in the wording of the Government was only able to oblige those merchants to surrender one-half who were unable for financial reasons to bring the matter before the courts. In defiance, then, of the law as interpreted by the courts of the First Instance and Appeal, merchants' ivory was seized in the belief that they were unable to afford the expense of a lawsuit against the Government for its recovery.

This anomaly at least has been rectified; but at the further expense of the merchant who complains, justly, of the many other hindrances which are placed upon the ivory trade, the first of these being that the Government itself is a competitor and an unfair one. The Government is by far the largest exporter of ivory. And the methods it resorts to in obtaining it are by means of almost arbitrary laws and unfair competition.

Firstly, it insists that no ivory can be bought by private individuals or merchants during the close season—some seven or eight months in the year. This regulation would be unjust to merchants even if the Government did not purchase any during that period, because the open season begins and ends with the rains, and merchants therefore have great difficulty in travelling through the country. Trade in this produce as far as private enterprise is concerned is entirely in the hands of hawkers, because up

to the present no land has been available for the purpose of building stores and houses. And, furthermore, ivory is widely spread, and in small lots, over a very large area. There is no other trade which would justify the continual residence of a merchant in one place. Rubber is a Government monopoly; and cash has only been introduced into the Gurba-Dungu zone, and as there is only some 2,000 in circulation at the present time, it is obviously out of the question to consider this as sufficient to justify the establishment of a store. For these reasons merchants are obliged to confine themselves to the hawkers' business. The majority of the merchants in the Uele district are either Greeks and Assyrians, trading from Khartoum, or Indians trading on behalf of British firms in Uganda and East Africa.

Owing to the impossibility of obtaining porters in the Congo, and the difficulty of obtaining them in large numbers in Uganda, the merchant is only able to bring in a very limited amount of trade goods for the purchase of ivory. Few merchants can obtain more than five carriers. (I have already explained the reason why merchants are unable to recruit locally their carriers under the heading of "portage"). And this explains why they are entirely dependent upon Uganda for carriers. Such being the case they are obliged to travel for the most part without food, because all kinds of tinned foods are exceedingly heavy, and thirty porters would not be sufficient to carry enough provisions to last six months. Merchants, therefore, have relied entirely upon Government officials for their food, and the day upon which the Government stores are closed to merchants the ivory trade will cease, as far as hawkers are concerned. The merchant then being so entirely dependent upon the Government cannot openly complain of the many unjust restrictions placed upon his trade, nor of the unfair means used by the Government in competition against him. For this reason they were obliged to forfeit all the ivory seized illegally in the past, there being no consular officer in the district to whom they could appeal for aid.

The Government complains bitterly of these Uele merchants. They complain that they bribe wherever it is possible, smuggle ivory over the frontier without paying duties of any kind, and cheat the native unmercifully.

That such is the case I had ample opportunity of judging, and many merchants make not the slightest secret of the fact. A merchant, for instance, asked me to assist him to smuggle ivory over the frontier of a neighbouring colony by obtaining for him a trading licence in that colony, which would allow him to have ivory in his possession—otherwise it would have been seized. This shows the prodigious callousness of the average Uele merchant, but the unusual restrictions and limitations placed upon the trade are the cause; and it is obvious therefore, that an honest and respectable merchant or company could not possibly compete with this class of merchant, with whom every illicit means is neither an obstacle nor of a nature to incur any grave risk. He has no established factory, and at the most he only risks to lose a few hundred pounds should he be caught red-handed in the act of using illicit means; whereas a merchant or firm established in the country is a guarantee itself of fair dealing both with the native and towards the Government.

It is unjust to accuse these merchants of wilful dishonesty. The ivory trade offers many temptations to them, and in fact to all those who are in any way connected with it. The Government has succeeded in keeping down the price to such a level that it can be bought from the natives for little or nothing, and its great value and small bulk invites and facilitates smuggling.

But the vital point is that existing conditions, for which the law and Government are responsible, render the trade, if carried on honestly, unremunerative—or, at most, only a small profit can be made even at the present exceptionally low prices. This assertion I can make with the accuracy which accompanies a careful enquiry into figures, and I give the following account, which is the result of information obtained from several Greek merchants actually engaged in the trade—

The time engaged in trading is calculated at eighteen months' residence in the Congo. This, it appears, is the usual time occupied, but it may be objected to on the ground that I am charging the account with time lost during the close season, when merchants are not supposed to buy ivory. But, apart from the consideration that the law which obliges them to refrain from trading during that season is purely arbitrary, it stands to reason that a merchant cannot travel backwards and forwards between the Congo and Uganda every few months. Nevertheless, it is impossible to dispose of this point with exactitude. But since merchants themselves adopt this manner of stating in the two seasons, it will be fair for the present purposes to assume that they know, after a good deal of experience, the most profitable way of trading. And in any

case I am not giving credit for any ivory which may have been bought—as undoubtedly a quantity is—during the close season.

The following, then, is an account showing the capital with which the average merchant is supplied:—

	£
Trade goods (sufficient to load thirty porters)	200
Two mules, at 25 <i>l.</i> each	50
Cash in gold	300
Total	

Thus the capital can be roughly estimated at 300*l.* And it is seldom that these hawkers can obtain a larger credit, because none of them, I am given to understand, are in a position to furnish any guarantee to their creditors. Again, they have no place where they can store goods, and as the buying season begins and ends with the rains they must refrain from bringing any more goods than they can effectively secure against damage. Those who give credit to these merchants take certain risks. Only lately a hawker who had obtained credit from a Khartoum firm escaped to Boma with ivory that he had bought, where it was sold and the proceeds carried off to Europe by him.

The price paid by hawkers for ivory is, generally speaking, 4*s.* per kilogramme, and 1 kilog. of ivory is worth 1*l.* Thus 300*l.* worth of trade goods will purchase 1½ tons of ivory, worth, roughly speaking, 1,500*l.* And since merchants obtain the most fantastic prices for some merchandise, I add to the above amount the result of the sale of two mules, costing 25*l.* each, and which I estimate as being sold for 500*l.* So the merchant obtains for his 300*l.* capital ivory to the value of 2,000*l.*

The following is the account of the taxes paid to the Government on the amount of ivory (2 tons) purchased:—

One-half of total amount of ivory purchased, i.e.:	£
Half of 2 tons, at 1,000 <i>l.</i> per ton	1,000
Custom duties on half retained by merchant, at 2 fr. 50 c per kilogramme	100
Import duty on 300 <i>l.</i> merchandise, at 12 per cent.	36
Hawkers' licence, 500 fr.	20
Total	1,156

Thus the Government receives in taxes 1,156*l.* The merchant's gross profits amount then to 844*l.* But from this amount the following must be deducted:—

	£
Amount paid to native in exchange for ivory	300
Wages to thirty-five porters, at 10 <i>s.</i> per day for eighteen months, inclusive of food, &c.	515
Total	815
Gross profit	30
Costs	815
Net profit	229

Thus the merchant's gains after eighteen months' trade—229*l.*—and should feed himself. The charge made against the merchant to the effect that he robs the native thus falls to the ground, unless of course he robs him in other ways which the above accounts would seem almost to necessitate. As it is, the native only receives 300*l.* for the 2,000*l.* worth of ivory. But it is obvious that the merchant cannot pay more to the native. And the Government would have been by this time supposed to have remained silent on the subject of the merchant's dealings with the natives. Nor is a merchant expected to advise the native in matters of trade. This the Government should do. But no official could with any degree of plausibility advise the native that he is being robbed when he pays 300*l.* for two mules, worth at least 50*l.*, and at the same time sell him a cap-gun worth 4 fr. 50 c in Europe for 200*l.* worth of ivory. It is not surprising therefore that the merchant employs illegal methods in his trade, or that he is morally callous in the means he employs to avoid giving up one-half of his ivory to the Government.

In the foregoing account I have given the merchant credit for being honest. That

he cannot be is natural and manifest. No sane person would think of going to the Uele district, or indeed to any other part of Equatorial Africa, for eighteen months to earn 229*l.* and feed himself. The merchant's only hope of making money in the business is by fraud. And this then brings me to the point of my argument, viz.: that a 50 per cent. tax on ivory, in addition to other dues, in a country where transport is so difficult, and the charges so heavy, constitutes a monopoly.

I have not thought it worth while in the above accounts to take into consideration many other items which should be charged against the merchant's profits, such as interest on capital, travelling expenses, and so forth, which would, if deducted from the profits, show a loss to the merchant. That some of them do lose money I am assured. I met, for instance, a representative of an important British firm in Khartoum, who was proceeding to the Uele district to settle up affairs there before finally closing down their ivory business, and he informed me that the result of supplying capital to Greeks and Assyrians in the Congo incurred a loss to his firm of over 1,000*l.*, and that a similar sum will be lost this year. It is obviously impossible for anyone outside the Congo to realise what such a tax of 50 per cent. means. They naturally do not consider the Government in the light of a competitor, and an unfair one. The Government should have made it understood that they had monopolised the trade instead of making it a trap for unsuspecting persons. I do not wish to imply that the Government has intentionally laid this trap. It has rather based its tax upon the knowledge that some merchants have found the business profitable without enquiring into the means employed. The tax, if it is not intended to constitute a monopoly, has been fixed to meet fraud rather than honest dealing.

It may be said that in calculating the price paid by the merchants to the natives for ivory at 4*s.* per kilogramme I have exaggerated. It is of course impossible to find the amount paid by each individual merchant, and thus to arrive at a mean figure. I was told by all the merchants with whom I spoke, that 4*s.* was a fair estimate. And, furthermore, I witnessed one sale of ivory—two tusks weighing about 25 kilog. each. For these two points a Greek merchant paid 18*l.* in gold, and a few other articles worth some five or six pounds, so that he paid, roughly speaking, 10*s.* per kilogramme for each. And these being already stamped, he did not have to surrender one-half to the Government. But he had to pay the customs-duties, which brought the price up to 12*s.* per kilogramme. But while this was slightly more than the usual price paid for stamped ivory, I think that my estimate of 4*s.* for that which is unstamped is a fair one. They do of course obtain fantastic prices for merchandise, which is novel to the natives. And to meet this contingency, I have calculated two mules—the utmost value of which is 25*l.* each, as fetching the sum of 500*l.*, which is by no means an unusual figure.

But there are other and very great difficulties with which the merchants have to contend, such as Government competition; the close season; the alleged objection made by merchants that officials conceal from, or refuse to inform natives of, the date when the open season commences; and, finally, the Government monopoly of the sale of arms for ivory.

Government competition is always unfair, and more especially so when unreasonable taxes are levied. And this is aggravated when officials attempt to intimidate the natives from selling to private individuals. And while this charge is of course open to denial I nevertheless heard from natives themselves that this was done. And since the Government obtains such an enormous revenue from the ivory it buys, it is not unreasonable to suppose that some officials overstep the bounds of their authority in their haste to serve the Government interests. Furthermore, I met some merchants at a post, and their business was to ask the officials to send a messenger to a chief who had ivory to sell, but who would not do so because he had been told that it was close season. The officials replied that all the natives were aware that the open season had commenced, but in deference to the merchant's assurances to the contrary he agreed to tell the particular chief again. Thus the natives are aware that officials are anxious to buy ivory, and very naturally when they are in trouble or have disputes they wish settled they expect a little favour to be shown them if they bring some ivory to the posts for sale to the official.

It is impossible to understand the reason for prohibiting the sale or purchase of ivory by natives or merchants during the close season; and on this point I was unable to obtain information.

It would appear, therefore, that the Government claims a right to the absolute monopoly of the trade during this period—some seven or eight months in the year. At all events it buys ivory regardless of the season, and seizes no small quantities from elephants shot during that period.

As far as I know the original reason for this regulation was to preserve elephants. But the purchase of ivory by merchants can have no relation whatever to the "game preservation" regulations. And in any case the new regulation which obliges merchants to declare at the nearest post all ivory purchased is ample guarantee that no ivory shot during the close season will be bought by them.

The natives are held to report all elephants shot by them during the close season, and the ivory is confiscated. It is, therefore, in the interest of the native not to shoot during that season, because he is entitled to half the ivory shot during the open season. Merchants, therefore, have no influence over the native in this respect; and such a regulation is a mere hindrance to free trade.

The natives, as I have stated elsewhere in this report, prefer arms and ammunition to any other article of exchange. These the Government has given out *ad libitum*; and judging from the price at which they are sold, it is beyond doubt that the Government is solely concerned with the profits of the trade, and in no sense does it respect the Arms and Ammunition Convention. The price demanded for a cap-gun costing in Europe about 4s., and priced in the Uele district at 11 4s., is 180 to 200 kilog. of ivory, worth about 180l. to 200l. It is, therefore, unjust that the Government should accuse merchants of robbing the natives when they charge 200% for a mule worth 25l.; and more especially so as in each case it shares the profits with merchants.

If the Government had made any attempt whatever to restrict the sale of arms and ammunition by refusing to accept ivory in exchange for them, its disrespect of the terms of the convention would have been less open to criticism. But to elect to forbid the exchange of arms and ammunition in unlimited quantities to any native who brings in ivory is unreasonably a great hindrance to trade.

There is one more grievance which was mentioned to me by merchants and the chief of which I was able to witness, viz. that of dividing up unstamped ivory with the merchants. And while the law distinctly claims one-half of all such ivory, the manner in which it should be divided up is not stated. Government officials, or at least some of them, refuse to accept small tusks otherwise than by sharing them with the merchants. Thus when a merchant purchases one large point weighing 30 kilog., and a quantity of smaller ones of the same weight, officials refuse to accept the smaller points and insist upon the merchant finding a larger one. The large points are a little more valuable; and merchants find them more economical for carrying. A porter, for instance, prefers to carry a large point weighing 40 kilog. than to carry several small points of even less weight. Also the Sudan Government prohibits the export of points under 5 kilog. The Congo Government's limit is 2 kilog. It follows therefore that small points are not only a hindrance to merchants but in many cases even valueless. They are of course obliged to purchase all ivory brought to them whether large or small. And often they are unable to buy a pair of large points. The natives divide up their ivory into mixed lots, selling the different lots to different merchants. But when the merchant carries such a lot to the Government to be stamped and to deliver up the half due in respect of the tax, officials refuse to accept the smaller points, and insist upon the merchant finding a large one. Merchants are obliged therefore to carry their ivory from post to post until they can find a point more or less of equal weight, or until they have sufficient to enable the official to divide it up according to size. This causes considerable delay and entails great expense to merchants. They claim the right to indicate to the Government which points they wish to keep provided that the amount they surrender is not less than one-half. But officials refuse them this privilege. I was present at a post when a merchant brought a lot of ivory, some thirty tusks, to be stamped and divided up with the Government. The official refused to accept the part offered by the merchant, who proceeded to another post in the hope of being more fairly treated. I again met him at the next post, but as he was unable to obtain any redress he decided to allow the official to take what he wanted of the lot in order to avoid any further portage expenses. This is of course the result of obliging merchants to surrender one-half on the spot instead of allowing them to pay a duty at the custom-house. There is apparently no reason why the Government should not allow merchants to pay the tax in cash at the custom-house. If it is afraid of fraud it could still oblige merchants to present their ivory at each post and obtain a visa of their certificates. And in any case fraud cannot be effectively prevented so long as such an exorbitant tax is levied. But the Government does not desire to do so because it would have to accept a slightly lower valuation of ivory in order to enable the merchant to cover extra transport expenses; and furthermore, it would lose the advantage of a rise in the ordinary market prices.

Nothing could be more inconsistent than the Government's declaration to the effect that it is desirous of introducing cash in the country (in order that the natives may eventually pay taxes in currency instead of in produce with its corollary of forced labour), and its action which has made possible the ruthless spoliation of ivory and rubber, the only possible means the natives possess of obtaining cash.

That the Government is fully aware of the necessity of securing to the natives a fair price for their rubber is apparent by the fact of its having established a minimum price of 3 fr. per kilogramme in free-trade areas. And, without enquiring into the local conditions and the effect which this policy will have upon free trade, it cannot be disputed that it is fair to the natives. But obviously it makes the establishment of free trade more difficult. It remains to be seen whether it will not make it impossible, for it must not be forgotten that the Belgian Government has increased taxation all round instead of reducing it as it would appear to have done on paper. For instance, export duties have been raised all round in order to permit the Government to abolish the "replantation tax." As a matter of fact the "replantation tax" was not observed by merchants. They found it more economical to pay a fine of 50 or 60 fr. per annum than to replant. And although this did not relieve them of the obligation, nevertheless they planted nothing, as the facts show; these plantations do not exist, although some few merchants did plant some seeds, but they made no attempt to cultivate them, with the result that they died. This tax then was in practice a dead-letter. Again, the tax of 5,000 fr. for permission to buy rubber has been replaced by one of 250 fr. The difference then is that the Government reduced the annual tax by 4,750 fr. and raised the export duty on rubber by 25 centimes per kilogramme. There is no question therefore but that they have gained in the transaction. And again with regard to ivory the Government has made absolute the payment of 50 per cent. of the total amount exported; and while under the old regime this tax existed nominally it was illegal in practice as the judgments in record at the courts prove.

Other taxes have been raised, such as the hawker's licence from 250 fr. to 500 fr.

In considering the question of the natives and the abolition of forced labour which the payment of taxes in cash is supposed definitely to determine, it is necessary to look to the means they have to acquire money for this purpose.

I think it cannot be open to question that the tax on ivory reduces their means to acquire money from this source to an impossibility. And in any case the Government has given the chiefs the sole right to the whole of the small profits to be made from the sale of this produce, so that this does not benefit the taxpayer in any way whatsoever.

Rubber then is the only other produce by which they can obtain money. And apart from the consideration that they are not likely to gather this produce after all these years of absolute slavery and ill-treatment until they have had not only time to forget the past but also to realize that it is a direct means of emancipation, the more important question is to ascertain how much rubber actually remains. And while it is an indisputable fact that the areas abandoned by the Belgian Government to free trade this year are quite exhausted, it is also necessary to consider what steps the Government is taking to insure the areas reserved until 1911 and 1912 from suffering a similar fate.

A glance at the system actually in force in the Uele district of obtaining payment of the rubber tax is sufficient to dispose of these points. Production of rubber is being pushed to its utmost. The natives are being forced to destroy the forests in the most ruthless manner in order to fulfil their tax obligations. No notice is being paid to past experience, which shows positively that this tax has caused the immediate destruction of valuable rubber forests. The Equator district is one of the many examples. In 1900 a part only of this district produced as much as 110 tons of rubber monthly. To-day the output would not exceed 12 tons per annum with the use of forced labour.

But in addition to the fact that the Government is now laying waste the rubber-bearing forests of the Uele, it is not even paying the natives a reasonable remuneration for their work. The amount actually paid (24l. per ton) or 12 per cent. would be absurd even if it were paid in cash. But paid in kind, in goods and cloth, does not justify the conclusion that the Government is in the least desirous of assisting the natives eventually to pay taxes in cash.

Forced labour of this kind must disappear before conditions in the Congo can be considered satisfactory. And the present state of affairs will remain in this unsatisfactory condition as long as taxes in produce are levied, and until the Government pays the native a reasonable remuneration, in cash, for his work.

There is little to be said with regard to trade in the Uele. Merchants are hampered with all the disadvantages which were the outstanding features of Congo Free State rule, and in addition taxes have been raised all round.

It has been stated that the land for building purposes may be had on application. But up to the present no sites have been granted, although several have been applied for. The price demanded is 40l. per hectare, for land within the limits of what will eventually be known as township areas. This price, while out of all proportion to the value of the land, will not be a hindrance to its acquisition by merchants. Land has been promised to private enterprise for so long, and not as yet been granted (with the exception of a site granted to a Belgian firm in Buta), that the acquisition of a site, even at the enormous price of 40l., will come as a welcome surprise to merchants.

At present private enterprise is obliged to store goods as best they can, either by paying exorbitant prices to chiefs, who can, with the consent of the officials, rent small houses to merchants for this purpose, or else in tents; and even then they are liable to be ordered to leave after fifteen days' residence, although this law, which has been considered by the Belgian Government as unjust, I am informed by officials, has not been abrogated.

It is of utmost importance that merchants should be advised to refrain from attempting to trade in ivory in the Uele. It is impossible in the present circumstances successfully to engage in this trade without resorting to fraudulent methods.

Rubber is a Government monopoly. I am told, however, that there is a little rubber in the free trade area of the Gurba-Dungu zone and in the territory of the Azandi Chief Bokoyo. It is estimated by officials that as much as 500 kilog. (½ ton metric) might be obtained if the natives could be induced to work it. It is to be presumed, however, that 3 fr. per kilogramme, or about 1s. per lb., will be the minimum price fixed by the Government. Export duties are 1 fr. 35 c. per kilogramme. Transport charges would amount to about 3 fr. per kilogramme between Dungu and Boma. So that, without taking into consideration various other taxes, it will cost rendered at Boma 7 fr. 35 c. per kilogramme, or, roughly speaking, 2s. 6d. per lb. In all other parts of the Uele district the rubber trade is a Government monopoly, so that private enterprise must be content to wait until 1912, when presumably the country will be opened. But merchants should make careful enquiries into local conditions before deciding to commence trading operations, because it is unlikely that the country will offer many inducements to private enterprise if the Government continues to exploit rubber and ivory at the present rate.

JACK H. ARMSTRONG.

[3010]

Acting Consul Campbell to Sir Edward Grey. (Received January 26, 1911.)

(No. 121.)

Boma, December 31, 1910.
Sir, I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith copy of Vice-Consul Thurstan's despatch No. 60 of the 30th ultimo forwarding a report of his tour in the Lufua, Baluba, and Kanyoka country, together with some remarks of a general nature on the Kasai district.

I have, &c.

GERALD CAMPBELL

Enclosure 1 in No. 7.

Vice-Consul Thurstan to Acting Consul Campbell.

(No. 60.)

Luebo, Kasai District, November 30, 1910.

Sir, I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a report of the tour which I recently made in the Lufua, Baluba, and Kanyoka sections of the Kasai district; a part of the Lufua country I shall deal with in another report in which I am describing more particularly that section of this district visited by Consul Thesiger in 1908.

I left Luebo on the 3rd August intending to make an extended journey in a southerly direction. I had found recruiting porters, even with the active assistance of the American Mission, a matter of extreme difficulty, and, though I was eventually able to start with a sufficient number, I was continually hampered by desertions at almost every village. This culminated in my being abandoned by practically the

entire caravan at Tchifama, to the south of Kanda Kanda (between 7° and 8° south), and I was reluctantly compelled to return northward, all efforts to obtain recruits for the journey south having proved nugatory; indeed, it was not without some considerable difficulty that I was able to return to Luebo, which place I reached once more on the 24th September.

I much regret that I was not able to advance any further towards the south. I learned that large quantities of rubber are being made by the Compagnie du Kasai between latitudes 8° and 10° south, and I was naturally anxious to ascertain the conditions under which this trade is carried on.

I am, however, convinced that, as circumstances are at present, it is quite impossible for anyone to approach this rich section of the country from the north without the active assistance of the Belgian authorities.

As prior to my arrival here no consular officer had been permanently stationed in the Kasai district, which, indeed, has been visited by very few British subjects, little is known in this district to the general British public. I have therefore thought it well to divide my report into two parts, Part I, containing some general information with regard to my district as a whole and Part II dealing in detail with those regions which I visited in August and September last.

I have also the honour to enclose two sketch maps, map (A) giving the principal features of the district and map (B) showing more particularly my recent itineraries.

I have, &c.

E. W. P. THURSTAN.

Enclosure 2 in No. 7.

Report of Tour made by Vice-Consul Thurstan.

PART I—General Report on the Kasai District

General Information.—The Kasai district in its greatest length stretch s from the 2nd to the 11th degree of latitude south, and in its greatest breadth from the 19th to the 25th degree of longitude east of Greenwich. It varies greatly in configuration and even to a certain degree in climate, from the hot, swampy forest-country of the north to the vast grassy plains of the centre and higher plateaus of the south. Basongo, at the junction of the Kasai and Sankuru Rivers, about 700 miles above Stanley Pool, is some 1,300 feet above sea-level, while Dilolo, in the extreme south, is nearly 3,500 feet. While the northern part of the district is slightly less hot and less unhealthy than the west coast, it may well be that the extreme southern section may at some future date be found suitable for permanent settlement by Europeans. The entire foreign-born population of the Kasai does not at present much exceed 300, consisting almost entirely of Government officials, agents of the Compagnie du Kasai, and missionaries. Including natives of Africa, there are not more than twenty British subjects in the district.

Means of Communication.—One of the principal obstacles to trade and development in the Kasai is the absence of any natural means of communication throughout the larger part of the district. The Kasai, Lufua, and Sankuru Rivers are not navigable for steamers above Djoka Punda, Luebo, and Pania Mutombo respectively. These three places are all very little south of latitude 5° s., and, as canoes can hardly be used above them, it follows that the transport throughout the major portion of the district is at present conducted by means of native porters entailing much loss of time and a considerable addition of expense. The Bas-Congo-Katanga Railway Company have, however, already surveyed a route running south from Lusambo along the border of the Kasai district and the Katanga, leading eventually into the latter, and actual construction will commence ere long. The completion of this line is bound to have an important influence on the future of the district.

Free Trade.—The whole of the Kasai district was thrown open to free trade on the 1st July of this year, with the exception of that section of the district lying to the north of the Sankuru and its tributary the Lufefa, which was formerly "non-conceded" territory of the "domaine," and will not be opened to freedom of trade until the 1st July, 1911. Even after that date two large zones, each of 600,000 hectares (or about

Not reproduced.

1,480,000 acres) around Loto and Lodja respectively are to be reserved in perpetuity for exploitation by the Belgian Government. This section of the district is, or was, very rich in rubber, and presumably the Belgian authorities were careful to ascertain that these reserved zones were at least as rich as any others. There are no less than six State posts here in a comparatively small area, and why this region was closed to free trade for a year longer than the rest of the district, unless it was in order to obtain all the rubber possible in the time remaining, is difficult to comprehend. There are large parts of the districts already opened to freedom of trade—the Bashilele, Southern Bakette, and Balolo territories, for instance—which are wholly unexplored and people for the most part by half-naked cannibals.

As free trade was only established on the 1st July of this year, it is far too early as yet to say how far the result will be beneficial to the natives and to traders in general. The Belgian Government is trying to substitute Belgian currency for trade-goods through the greater part of the district: it is also anxious to collect a tax in coin from all the natives who are able to pay it, and for this cause, if for no other, it would appear unreasonable to doubt the pressed anxiety of the Belgians for the speedy success of competitive commerce. Two Portuguese firms have already established themselves at Lusambo and Luebo respectively, and, if reports are to be believed, others of that nationality are now trading in the extreme south of the district.

Rubber and Ivory.—The only two exportable articles at present are rubber and ivory. The district is particularly rich in the former, which is derived both from grass and vine. The success of the trade in rubber in the Kasai must largely depend in future on the amount of the export tax levied by the Belgian Government and on the maintenance of the present price of rubber on the European market. I have already mentioned the great disadvantage to trade caused by the lack of adequate transport facilities.

There are a few rubber plantations in the district, notably at Mangai, Bena Makima, Galkoko, and the Lulefu, but they are not yet producing any considerable quantities of rubber.

The decree of the 25th April, 1910, makes it incumbent on purchasers of ivory to prove that it has been lawfully acquired. If the new law is strictly enforced, it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that the ivory trade, in the Kasai district at least, will be killed, for, as a general rule, ivory has passed through many native hands before reaching the trader, who can be no more aware of its origin than is the native from whom he has bought it. It is of paramount importance therefore that new regulations should be made if any trade in ivory is to be carried on.

Sleeping Sickness.—Sleeping sickness is prevalent throughout large sections of the district. The riverine tribes on the south bank of the main Kasai River are being rapidly exterminated, but for some reason it does not appear to have spread across the Louenge to the little-known Bashilele. The central sections of the district have also suffered very severely from it. It is obviously a matter of vital importance for the future prosperity of the district that all possible measures should be taken to ensure the preservation of those tribes which have hitherto enjoyed immunity from this disease.

PART II.—Report on the Bena Lulua, Baluba, and Kanyoka Sections of the Kasai District.

Geographical Position.—The central area of the Kasai district, lying roughly between the 5th and 8th parallels of latitude south, is inhabited for the most part by the tribes known as the Bena Lulua, the Baluba (with their many sub-divisions), the Kanyoka. On the east is the Katanga border, to the west are the Southern Bakette the Balolo, half-naked cannibals, whose territory is practically unexplored. The Bena Lulua are properly speaking a forest-dwelling people, but have spread out over the open country that lies to the east of the Lulua River; the Baluba and the Kanyoka are more truly inhabitants of the plain.

Occupation.—The majority of the Bena Lulua, living as they do in a forest country, have a potential source of wealth in their dealings with the European, in the shape of rubber. The Baluba, however, and to a large extent the Kanyoka, live on the plain where grass rubber does not appear to grow, and have hitherto been content to obtain a livelihood from crops of maize, manioc, and ground-nuts, and from their flocks of goats.

Administration.—The Bena Lulua are nominally under the authority of one hereditary paramount chief or king, named Kalamba; for various reasons, however, the latter's

authority has been much weakened in recent times. Many years ago the father of the present chief fled to the Portuguese frontier, whence he waged an intermittent war on the Congo State. After his death hostilities were carried on by his son, the present chief, and were not finally terminated until about three years ago, when he was persuaded to return and build a new town near the State post at Luluaburg, not far from the site of his father's old capital. Though apparently listless and broken in spirits, I cannot see that he has now any cause for complaint, and he gave me assurances to this effect himself, when I was at his village.

Neither the Baluba nor the Kanyoka owe allegiance to a single chief, but are split up into a number of independent subdivisions or small tribes. It is this lack of unity which has made the Baluba the prey of all their neighbours, and causes them to be scattered everywhere throughout the district as domestic slaves, as workers for the European, or as "libérés" (former slaves freed by the State, traders, or missionaries), at large centres, such as Lusambo, Luluaburg, and Luebo; it is thus that the language of the Baluba has become the *lingua franca* of the Kasai. The territory covered by these tribes is administered by a "chef de secteur," stationed at Luluaburg, who is of course subject to the orders of the "commissaire général" of the district at Lusambo; he has under him "chefs de poste" at Luluaburg, Luebo, and Kanda Kanda.

That this country has been well administered in the past it is impossible to assert. I am not aware that any judge or "substitut" has yet found time to travel in the greater part of it, nor has the "chef de secteur," continually over-worked, been able to do more than make occasional journeys through the territory. Consequently away from large centres the people remain more or less, as far as occupation and customs are concerned, in their primitive state. No effort seems to have been made to teach them any new methods of agriculture, or indeed to encourage them to occupy themselves in any way whatever. Though oxen flourish well on the central plains no attempt has been made to construct wagon roads. The paths are, as a rule, nothing but the primitive native tracks, the streams unbridged. Beyond being occasionally called upon to clear a main path in a perfunctory manner, to contribute a certain number of soldiers to the State, and to pay an annual tax in copper crosses, goats, or food-stuffs; the natives seem to have been left more or less to their own devices by the Congo State, and are proportionately contented. It should not be forgotten, however, that thanks to the State, they are now enjoying a condition of absolute peace. The Arabs, the Batetela, Kalamba have all in turn been conquered. This region was, moreover, in former days the scene of continual internecine strife; the Baluba were a prey to each other and, until quite recent times, to the slave-trader, who drove great caravans of them westward over the Kasai River. Only some three years ago the "chef de secteur" encountered and broke up a column of several hundred slaves wending their way towards the frontier. This seems to have been the end of organised slave-trading, for I could hear of nothing of the kind during my journey through this region.

I wish to add that I did not hear a single complaint against an officer of the Government during my entire journey with the exception of the charges brought against M. Kervyn, the late "chef de poste" at Luluaburg, whose actions in 1908 have been discussed in the Belgian Chamber, and are presumably now *sub judice*.

Belgian Reforms and the Future.—It is too early as yet to pass any judgment on the reforms to be carried out by the Belgian Government. Vice Governor-General Henry is at present travelling in the district, charged with the general inauguration of them.

Taxation and Coinage.—Taxation in kind has already ceased, and coinage has been introduced at large centres such as Luebo, Luluaburg, and Kanda Kanda, where it is now, to a limited degree in circulation. Away from these towns, however, the natives, when I passed through, had hardly heard of coinage, and simply imagined that the era of taxation, seemingly never very burdensome, was at an end. Nominally, the natives in all this area are to be taxed at the rate of 6 fr. a-head for the remainder of the current year, with the addition of 1 fr. for every wife above one; while it may be possible to collect this tax from the majority of the inhabitants of Luebo, Luluaburg, and Kanda Kanda, it will obviously be impossible to obtain it outside these centres. Moreover, unless the prosperity of the whole region increases in some unexpected manner, it is difficult to see how the majority of the native of this region will be able to pay the full tax of 12 fr. in future years.

Present Administration of Justice.—While the Belgian authorities have already shown an earnest of their good intentions in increasing the staff at the posts of Luebo, Luluaburg, and Kanda Kanda, there are two questions which require immediate attention, namely, those of the administration of justice and of domestic slavery. Hitherto, no judge or

"substitut" seems to have travelled in the greater part of this region, and even where a "substitut" has been, he has not been able by himself to cope adequately with the work. At present, a "chef de poste" has only the smallest judicial powers, so that a large number of crimes must necessarily go unpunished. Moreover, there appears to be such an accumulation of cases awaiting trial at Lusambo that witnesses have to wait many months there before they are called, the long delay often entailing as much hardship on the witnesses as on the parties accused. Thus it is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain satisfactory evidence, and the natives have little respect for Belgian administration of justice. I believe the establishment of a tribunal at Luebo is contemplated, and if this is the case it will certainly be a step in the right direction.

Domestic Slavery.—The wide-spread existence of domestic slavery is a very real hindrance to economic progress, besides being a ready means of substituting surreptitious barter for the regular trade; the Bachoko tribe, who live to the west of the Kasai River, carry on a regular business in this way. Hitherto a slave has been able to free himself on payment of a maximum of sixteen pieces of cloth to his owner (between 4 and 6) in the presence of a State officer. This, at least, has been the practice at Luebo and Luluaburg. It is true that the Government has declared that it does not recognise domestic slavery, and it is equally true that a freed slave is given a "certificate of identity," and not a "certificate of freedom." Non-recognition, however, by no means implies non-existence, as sometimes seems to have been supposed, and domestic slavery is at present the chief item of wealth in many parts of this region.

Future Prospects.—It has been already said that manioc, maize, and groundnuts form the staple crops of this region. Goats seem to thrive, and herds of cattle, belonging to the Government and Catholic missions, are to be found at Luluaburg, Kanda Kanda, and Kalala; they seem to flourish especially well at the last-named place, where the grass has a peculiar saline property. A certain amount of iron ore is smelted, and the natives also make for this metal is to be found strewn widespread over the plains; the natives also discovered the future prosperity of this region would seem to depend on agriculture and cattle-raising. It seems not impossible that tobacco and cotton might be grown with success, but I am not aware that any experiments in this direction have yet been made by the Government.

Transport.—The difficulties of transport are at present a great obstacle to development. The greater portion of this region is remotely situated from navigable rivers, both to the north and to the south, and all goods have to be carried on the heads of porters. South of Kanda Kanda, moreover, a large extent of country, formerly ravaged during the Batetela rebellion, is very sparsely populated, thus adding very greatly to the difficulties of portage. These difficulties will not be finally solved until the completion of the Bas-Congo-Katanga Railway, which is to be built from Lusambo southward into the Katanga.

Rubber.—In the regions where rubber grows it is at present purchased exclusively by the *Compagnie du Kasai*. I nowhere heard of any abuse in connection with the traffic in it. Although I was not able actually to visit the rubber region round Ntonto, about four days south of Kanda Kanda, I had opportunities of learning from the natives that there was no discontent; the rubber seems to be bought for cloth, flint-lock guns, knives, &c., and these goods are not given in advance as in some other parts of the district. The natives around Ntonto are of the Kanyoka, Balunda and Bachoko tribes. I was, however, able personally to visit the rubber zone stretching from Tchitama, south of Kanda Kanda, northward to Tchitadi, along the western edge of the great plain. Here rubber is made by the Kanyoka, Southern Bakette and Baluba tribes. The price around Ntonto and throughout this zone seems to be uniformly fixed at 100 baïks to the fathom of cloth, with sometimes a little trade powder in addition. This is the same price as that obtaining until recently in the Bakuba country, but is really better when the cost of transport is taken into consideration. The natives appeared to have absolutely no grounds for complaint; indeed among the Bakette, who are savage cannibals, it would be by no means easy to exercise any pressure. In one village, it is true, they said that the price paid them was insufficient; this was the sole complaint that I received anywhere. The price is, perhaps, not very liberal considering the present value of rubber on the European market. As long, however, as the Kasai Company agents exercise no pressure—and of this there is no evidence whatsoever in this region—there would appear to be nothing to prevent them from following the principles of supply and demand, which naturally favour them as long as they are the sole buyers of rubber. The natives, moreover, admitted that they could by hard work earn one piece of cloth

a month, which is considerably more than they could make as workmen at a Government post, a company factory or a mission station. The system of advance payment, which is liable to abuse, does not appear to be anywhere in vogue in this region. The rubber appears to be almost all pounded; indeed the Bakette informed me that they had not tapped the vines for very many years. The cutting of vines, however, was sanctioned by the decree of the 22nd March, 1910, so that there can no longer be any ground for complaint on this score.

I did not visit the very rich rubber country of the Beta Lulua near the Kasai River, between 5° and 7° south. The "advance payment system" is in vogue there, I understand, but beyond this I know nothing of the conditions prevailing. I learned, however, that Kalamba, the paramount chief, is not in receipt of any commission on the amount of rubber produced by his people, as is the case with the King of the Bakuba people.

Transport of Rubber.—The transport of rubber to and from the south is organised in sections, partly carried on for the Kasai Company by the Pères Scheut, and partly managed by the company itself. While opinions may differ as to the advisability of missionaries engaging in work of this nature, it is only fair to say that the porters are well paid and seem to be contented. I heard complaints at Tchitadi, where the company itself organises a very large transport service, of insufficiency of pay. In reply to a suggestion that if the pay were insufficient the natives need not work, I was told that they continued to work owing to fear of punishment from the Government officials, they could not, however, cite any instance of force being employed to compel them to work, nor do I think that any such force is employed. Nevertheless, portage is not a congenial kind of labour, and doubtless a rise in the scale of pay would be not unwelcome.

Sleeping Sickness.—Sleeping sickness has caused terrible ravages in this part of the country, more especially in the neighbourhood of the Bushimai River, where thousands of natives must have perished in recent years. It is also much prevalent among the Kanyoka to the south of Kanda Kanda, where I more than once found children exposed to die on the plains. The Kanyoka, however, like other tribes, conceal their sick and generally deny the existence of the disease, so that it is a difficult matter to determine to what extent it is prevalent. At one Baluba village the chief admitted that he had lost thirty out of fifty wives in five years, and at the large Beta Lulua village of Mwamba Kafala at least 1,000 must have perished in the same period. The population cannot be more than 2,000 at the present time. The mortality, however, seems to be now diminishing slightly near the Bushimai. There is a very extensive salt-making industry here, and doubtless those engaged in it have been almost all bitten by the infected tsetse fly which may possibly account for the fact that there is a widespread belief among the natives of this region that European salt is the cause of the disease.

It is to be hoped that the Belgian Government which is about to erect a hospital near Luluaburg, will also take some administrative measures tending to combat the disease. The Congo Free State appears to have done nothing in this direction.

[3011]

No. 8.

Acting Consul Campbell to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received January 26, 1911.)

(No. 122.)
Sir,

Boma, December 21, 1910.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith copy of Vice-Consul Thurstan's despatch No. 61 of the 30th ultimo, forwarding a report on the present state of affairs in the Bakuba and Lulua sections of the Kasai district.

I have, &c.

GERALD CAMPBELL

Enclosure 1 in No. 8.

Vice-Consul Thurstan to Acting Consul Campbell.

(No. 61.)
Sir,

Luebo, Kasai District, November 30, 1910.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a report on the present state of affairs in the Bakuba and Lulua sections of the Kasai district. I have endeavoured as far as possible to make a close comparison between conditions as I found them in the course of my journeys through those sections in the months of June to October 1910 and those described by Consul Theisger as existing in 1908.

I have, &c.

E. W. P. THURSTAN.

Enclosure 2 in No. 8.

Report by Vice-Consul Thurstan.

PART I.—The Bakuba Country.

Character of the Bakuba.—The Bakuba are a forest dwelling people given to fishing and hunting, and being possessed of marked artistic tendencies, they are able to produce iron- and woodwork which is unapproached in its excellence by that of any other native race of the Kasai. They are, however, uncleanly and untidy, and all their work is done in a manner which is leisurely in the extreme. They have from time immemorial been slave-owners, and this appears to have given them a rooted dislike, and even contempt, for work, for which they have no hereditary inclination. Even when engaged on tasks which are congenial to them, they will only work at such times as they feel inclined; with rare exceptions they refuse altogether to work as servants or labourers for Europeans. A short while ago Vice-Governor-General Henri, who has been making a tour of inspection in this country, succeeded in engaging a certain number of porters for the journey from Mushengi to Luebo, a matter of four days. These men were specially chosen by their King, Lukengu, and were promised a reasonable wage in francs. Although they were well aware of the importance of the work, and knew that the francs were essential to them for paying their tax, they all deserted at the end of the first day's journey. It is this inveterate aversion to work of an unaccustomed nature, which has been at the root of all the trouble in connection with the rubber, for although rubber-gathering comes more or less naturally to them, as it does to all forest dwellers, yet unquestionably they have a strong dislike for it. Their intense conservatism seems to have bred in them an almost insuperable distrust of all strangers, and with it a tendency to falsehood which, often makes it difficult in the extreme to arrive at the true state of affairs.

Taxation in Coin and Freedom of Trade.—The Bakuba have now reached a definite turning-point in their history. The Belgian Government has just founded a State post at Mushengi, the residence of King Lukengu, in the heart of their country. This course, which I urged in a previous despatch as being absolutely essential, should have been taken at least two years ago. Simultaneously with the establishment of this post, the Government authorities are attempting to substitute coins for cowries as the currency of the country, and will endeavour to gather a tax of 6 fr. per adult male before the end of the current year; it is obvious, however, that they can succeed in collecting but a small part of this in the time that remains.

The major portion of the Kasai district was thrown open to freedom of commerce on the 1st July last. It was not long ere a Portuguese firm made its appearance in the Bakuba country with the avowed intention of competing with the Compagnie du Kasai for the trade in rubber. Unfortunately the caravan of the latter came into collision with the Bakuba shortly after leaving the Sankuru River, resulting in the death of one Mukuta, and in forcible measures being subsequently taken to compel the caravan to continue the journey. A judicial enquiry will be held, and it may well be that the circumstances will be found to have been of an extenuating nature. In any event, the affair was a most inauspicious inauguration of the era of free trade, and created an unfortunate impression in the minds of the natives. The Compagnie du Kasai first endeavoured to meet the new competition by everywhere placing a white agent in a tent

a few paces from their rivals' house, apparently with the sole intention of watching them. They subsequently recognised the futility of this, and withdrew this form of opposition; instead they raised the price which they paid for rubber at their factories, giving one piece of indigo drill for 300 balls, instead of for 500 balls as formerly, and thus approximating it to that of the Portuguese firm; the native, then, is now receiving about 10d. per lb. for all grades of rubber.

Bena Lulua in the Bakuba Country.—The Bakuba have thus already gained a substantial advantage from the competition. As a matter of fact, it is unquestionable that the greater portion of the rubber emanating from the Bakuba country is not made by the Bakuba but by the Bena Lulua, who have settled in their country. These Bena Lulua, who are sometimes to be found in separate villages of their own and sometimes quartered in those of the Bakuba, appear to have come of their own free will, attracted by stories of the wealth to be gained in the Bakuba country. They remain for a year or two until they have gained sufficient cloth to enable them to buy one or two wives, and then return home. The director of the Portuguese house has informed me that practically all the rubber which he has bought is made by the Bena Lulua, the rubber balls made by the Bakuba being small and full of dirt and dust. I am further able to give the following figures from the books of the Kasai Company, showing the total rubber production for the three months August, September, October 1908, compared with the total production for the corresponding months of the year 1910, and also the proportion of rubber made by Lulua settlers during each of these periods. If these figures are accurate they corroborate, not only the statements of the Portuguese trader, but also my own observations at the Mushengi factory of the Kasai Company.

FACTORY of Mushengi.

Period.	Total Production.	Production.	
		Bakuba.	Lulua.
	Kilog.	Kilog.	Kilog.
August, September, October 1908	12,335	1,020	11,315
1910	10,227	870	9,357

At the Luebo factory about 4 tons are stated to be brought in per annum from fourteen villages of the Bakette (a subject tribe of the Bakuba). Of this amount about two-thirds is produced by Bena Lulua.

Taxation and Rubber Production.—It remains to be seen whether the enforced payment of taxation in coin will induce the Bakuba to make more rubber than at present. Vice-Governor-General Henri explained to Lukengu and his chiefs that the Bakuba were entirely free to choose their work, but that work they must in order to pay their tax. As they have little marketable produce beyond rubber and ivory the greater part of their money will no doubt be gained by making rubber. Any increase in the rubber production will undoubtedly benefit the Compagnie du Kasai, placed as it is in an advantageous position by reason of its long establishment in the country and its perfect organisation. As long, however, as the Compagnie du Kasai has any competitors it cannot be said that the Belgian Government is taxing the natives to the exclusive advantage of the company. This, however, would certainly be the case if the company ultimately succeeded in stifling competition, and it would then remain to be decided how far those who put the Kasai Company in a virtually impregnable position were responsible for the resulting state of affairs.

I will now proceed to make a direct comparison as possible between the state of affairs as Consul Theisger found them in 1908 and as I observed them in the course of my recent tour.

Consul Theisger's Report.—Mr. Theisger laid five principal charges to the door of the company's officials; they were:—

1. That they ordered the rubber vines to be cut.
2. That they taxed the villages at the maximum amount of rubber which they were capable of producing.
3. That they armed their capitas with cap-guns.

4. That they punished natives by flogging and imprisonment, and allowed their capitas to do likewise.
5. That they employed Lukengu's soldiers to enforce the rubber tax.

Comparison with present Conditions.—I will deal with these points seriatim.

1. Rubber vines are still cut to a very large extent; this is now, however, permitted by article 10 of the decree of the 22nd March, 1910.

2. Mr. Thesiger thus described the system then in vogue of taxing the villages:—
 "These (trade goods) the capita proceeds to distribute, giving a piece of cloth to one man, a hat or an iron hoe-head to another, and so on. Each recipient is then at the end of the month responsible for so many bulls of rubber. No choice of the object is given, no refusal of them is allowed. If anyone makes objection, the stuff is thrown down at his door, and whether it is taken or left the man is responsible for so many balls at the end of the month. The total amounts are fixed by the agents at the maximum which the inhabitants are capable of producing."

Though the advance system is still generally in vogue, the capitas no longer throw goods at the doors of huts and hold the occupants responsible for the equivalent in goods. I only heard of a very few cases in which capitas were accused of petty acts of violence in connection with the distribution, and on examination even these proved without exception to be unfounded. In many more cases I was told that capitas threatened the natives with violence if they expressed an unwillingness to make rubber, but I am satisfied that in cases where natives accept goods against their will it is due rather to fear of Lukengu—a fact which I shall explain later—than to any threats of the capitas. Even where I was told that a man was free to choose what goods he liked, the goods distributed by the capitas are certainly no longer fixed at the maximum which the village is capable of producing, for the majority of the people are now making no rubber at all. In an ordinary village of about fifty houses I rarely saw more than three or four men pounding rubber, and there were very few traces of rubber dust, and one or two others would perhaps be weaving mats or cloth, but the rest of the men would be sitting under their sheds doing nothing. The "monotonous thudding of mallets beating out rubber" noticed by Consul Thesiger, is now conspicuous by its absence.

It is of frequent occurrence that men who have accepted cloth or other goods in advance are short of the requisite amount of rubber when the day of payment becomes due; they then have either to return the goods received, or, if they have used them, as is generally the case, to pay the equivalent in cowries. This is the inevitable result of the advance system, and is obviously one of the ways in which it can be abused, for the native, while acknowledging the equity of a debt, is not always anxious to liquidate it. Yet the Bakuba have as a rule no complaint to offer in this respect; and the very fact that they do not complain is the strongest evidence that the capita has used no pressure to induce them to accept goods in the first place, for the native conceives it to be perfectly just that he should repay a debt provided he contracted it of his own free will and is not asked for excessive interest on the loan. The village of Mueka provided the only instance of a complaint in this respect. There it was said that the capita had in the month of September last seized a goat, and some canoe wood from a village for shortage of rubber; the grievance, however, lay solely in the fact that the value of the goods seized far exceeded that of the rubber due, and further that the owner of them was not the debtor nor even a relative of his. The capita was unfortunately absent from this village, so that I was not able to substantiate the charges made against him. This same village of Mueka is mentioned in Consul Thesiger's report as having been attacked by Lukengu for shortage in rubber. Instead of 3,000 balls of rubber a month which it was then making, it is now producing about 3,000 a month according to the statements of the natives; this can be accepted as the maximum. I counted 127 houses in the village, so that there must at least be an equal number of adult males. If they all made rubber, this would mean at the most eight days' work a month for each male, if a man may be considered able to make 1 kilog. per month—not an excessive estimate in this rich region.

3. I was singularly unfortunate in not meeting any capitas during my journey. The reason of this was that they had nearly all been temporarily recalled to Mushengi or Ibanj to receive new instructions regarding the price of rubber, necessitated by competition. I am not therefore able to state whether they are now armed with cap-gun or not, but from enquiries it would appear that they have flintlocks; this is permitted

by law. I was informed by agents of the Kasai Company that they are now liable to instant dismissal if they knowingly permit one of their capitas to have a cap-gun, and they argue somewhat forcibly that, this being so, it would be sheer folly on their part to permit a capita to carry a cap-gun when he could as easily intimidate a native with a flint-gun did he wish to do so. As a matter of fact, I heard of no instance of any such intimidation.

4. I did not hear of a single case in which either a white agent or a capita had imprisoned, flogged, or otherwise maltreated a native for shortage of rubber. The villages of Ibungu and Bolog, whose capitas Consul Thesiger mentions as having been notorious in this respect, were making no rubber when I was there in July last; settlements of Bena Lulua in the neighbourhood seemed to be doing all the work. The Bakette village of Sangela, where the capita was "chickoted" by a white agent shortly before Mr. Thesiger's visit, has now likewise ceased to make rubber; so has the neighbouring village of Kaban. At the large village of Bakowa Tumbi, a native from which Consul Thesiger mentions as having tried to hang himself while in captivity, the rubber production is now about 25 per cent. of what it was. The villagers express themselves as being quite contented now. Until about eight months ago they had an unpopular capita and there was much discontent; in consequence they made complaint to the white agent at Ibanj. The latter promptly gave them a new capita, since when they have had no grounds for complaint. At another village named Nshenga or Muliya, I was told that the same agent had immediately changed the capita on hearing that the village was discontented.

5. Lukengu's soldiers seem to have disappeared. This is probably due to the action of the chef de secteur, who shortly after Consul Thesiger's visit forbade them to wear a uniform, and must have taken other measures to oppress them; at least, I could hear of no instance of their being used to enforce the collection of rubber. Consul Thesiger's report mentions frequent instances of villages being overawed by Lukengu's soldiers and fined, adding that these fines appeared ultimately to find their way to the company's posts. I could hear of no such occurrence in recent times. The village of Koshi, mentioned particularly in that report in this connection, I found to be perfectly quiet. While I was there no one was actually making rubber, but the chief informed me that the village made a little quite voluntarily. He vouched for the fact that his village and the sixteen others belonging to the same tribe of the Bakuba, the Tena Mashah, are now perfectly happy. This is in welcome contrast to their former state, which was graphically described to me by the natives. Indeed, in these seventeen villages the advance system does not appear to be by any means universal, as it was wherever else I went.

A few further points mentioned in Consul Thesiger's report remain to be touched on. Dilapidated houses in plenty are still to be seen in the Bakuba country. I was, however, unable to find that their existence had any connection with the rubber question; on the contrary, according to my observations, the villages which were making most rubber, cloth, and mats had the least number of ill-conditioned dwellings. This is perhaps only what one would expect in view of the altered state of affairs. I closely questioned many of those whom I saw wearing cloth or mats, and their answer invariably was that they were making them of their own free will. They might or might not subsequently give them as tribute to Lukengu, but they were not working on them by his orders, as Consul Thesiger generally found to be the case. At the time of the latter's visit the Bakuba were not allowed to carry bows and arrows. This order has been since countermanded, for everywhere in the forest I met hunting parties so armed. Finally, there is no longer any evident scarcity of food in the country; the Bakuba have now at least a sufficiency.

It is evident from the foregoing remarks that the situation has changed, and changed in a very radical manner, for the better during the last two years. I heard of no complaint of any sort against a white agent of the Compagnie du Kasai, and of no serious charge against a capita. Forceful measures are no longer used to compel the natives to make rubber; they are no longer beaten, imprisoned, or overawed by the guns of soldiers or capitas. Instead of the work being incessant, as formerly, it is a fact that the majority of the Bakuba are now making no rubber at all.

Two Sources of Abuse.—There are, in short, only two elements in the present situation which I consider unsatisfactory, namely, the subsidy to Lukengu and the "payment in advance," and both of these are unsatisfactory rather because of the possibility of their abuse than because they actually and necessarily entail injustice.

Lukengu's Commission. The Compagnie du Kasai continues to pay King Lukengu

a substantial commission per ton on all the rubber collected in his country. It is perfectly true that this bonus is paid on the rubber made by the Bena Lulua as well as on that made by the Bakuba. This is an important point by the company's officials to prove that the commission cannot be paid to Lukengu's moral or physical aid in the collection of rubber, since he has no authority over the Bena Lulua. The amount of the commission, however, large as it may appear to Lukengu, is infinitesimally small compared with the company's profits. Moreover, it is very obvious that it is well worth the company's while to ensure that their Lulua rubber-gatherers be allowed to work unmolested by the Bakuba, who are none too tolerant of strangers.

Whatever arguments may be used to the contrary, it is quite obvious that the payment made to Lukengu is made with one object, namely, that of indirectly fostering the rubber production. The Bakuba in the majority of villages which I visited were well aware of this payment, and in many cases stated openly that they made rubber because Lukengu ordered them to do so. I would not go so far as to say that the Bakuba, if the matter were left entirely to their own inclinations, would make no rubber at all, but I have received so many proofs of their indolence and aversion to working for others that I am convinced that the small number making rubber now would be reduced to a mere handful in such a contingency. I did not, however, hear of a single instance of any actual force having been used by Lukengu, much less by white agents, since the time of Consul Theisger's visit. A mere order from Lukengu seems to be sufficient to ensure the production of a limited quantity of rubber. Indeed, I was told in more than one village that Lukengu's word was "to make a little rubber every day, but not too much." This is exactly, in point of fact, what the majority of Bakuba villages are now doing.

Advance Payment.—By the "advance-payment system," the capita distributes his goods (cloth, knives, flintlocks, and the like) in advance and comes to claim their equivalent in rubber at stated intervals (generally every two months). This system is directly contrary to the rules and instructions of the Kasai Company to their agents. It is practically universal throughout those parts of the Bakuba country which I visited, and though it is practised not by the white agents but by the native capita, the former are well aware that it is in vogue and it is almost incredible that their superiors are not equally cognizant of it. I have heard it compared with the "credit" or "instalment system" prevalent in Europe. In point of fact there is no similarity. In its mildest form the advance system is a means whereby to take advantage of the African native's irresistible temptation to get into debt. Its worst side was seen in Consul Theisger's report.

The Future.—I do not pretend to say whether the Belgian Government or the Compagnie du Kasai itself is responsible for this great change in the situation. Whether or not, however, the change was made willingly, I do not foresee any possibility of the old order of things returning as long as there is real freedom of trade and open competition, and as long as justice is fearlessly and impartially administered by the Government officials. Indeed, if the Bakuba can only be induced to overcome their natural apathy and conservatism, the future appears to hold a bright prospect in store for them, inasmuch as they are by nature with a country rich in rubber and ivory. The chief of the large Mpianga tribe of the Bakuba told me that he intended in future to tell all his people, instead of receiving advances from the Kasai Company's capita as they have hitherto done, to go to Ibari with their rubber and sell it for francs to the highest bidder. If only all the other Bakuba will do the same, they will not be likely to have any serious cause for complaint in the future.

PART II.—The Bena Lulua Country.

Lulua Country.—The Bena Lulua inhabit a large tract of country lying east of the Kasai River, roughly speaking between the 5th and 7th parallels of latitude south. Though they are nominally ruled by one paramount chief, named Kalamba, the latter never had the influence over them that is exercised over the neighbouring Bakuba by Lukengu, and the outlying clans have within recent years practically drifted into a state of autonomy, leaving only those in the more immediate neighbourhood of the paramount chief to show him any concrete form of allegiance.

Consul Theisger did not visit the greater part of the Lulua country which lies to the south of Luebo; indeed, it can hardly be said to have been accessible to the Europeans at that time. He did, however, report on the state of affairs prevailing in many of those more or less independent villages which lie in the valley of the Lulua River.

During my journey along the south side of this river I was, for various reasons, unable to leave the main path, the villages along which are now making hardly any rubber; consequently any criticisms which I may offer may be considered as applying more particularly to the rubber-producing district on the north or right bank.

Consul Theisger's Criticisms.—I will now quote a few remarks from Consul Theisger's report on this section of the country in order that I may make a clear comparison as possible between present conditions and those prevailing in 1908:—

"In this district," says Mr. Theisger, "the company applies the same methods of collecting rubber as with the Bakubas whenever the forest is sufficiently rich in vines, save that they have not Lukengu's soldiers to enforce payment, and have consequently to alter their system slightly. The chiefs are made to act as secondary capita, and it appears to be a common thing, especially in the notorious Zappo Lulua district, for them to be detained as hostages if there is any shortage. . . . At the beginning of every month the capita, or the chief, is given a supply of goods which have to be converted into rubber, either by making it or by buying it. . . . If any village cannot get the full amount due they have to hand back goods equal in amount to the shortage, and it depends entirely on the character of the agent they have to deal with whether they are punished or escape merely with threats of future punishment if they fail again."

Difficulty in ascertaining Facts.—I found it a matter of extreme difficulty to obtain trustworthy information in this section of the country. The statements of the natives were almost invariably of so contradictory a nature that, though I spent several hours in many villages questioning and cross-questioning them, I was unable to arrive at any definite conclusion. It would generally happen that after an hour's discussion of the question they would practically unanimously declare that they were making rubber under pressure; a whispered consultation would then follow and the chief would deliberately proceed to contradict his previous statements by saying that there was no cause for complaint, thus necessitating a recommencement of the whole discussion *ab initio*. In these circumstances I generally left the village feeling that it was a sheer impossibility to arrive at the truth, although I had the general impression that there was considerable discontent.

Method of buying Rubber. In these villages, whenever there is a "market," i.e., wherever there is a resident capita, the latter renews his stock of goods, of which there is a considerable variety, as a rule at the end of every two months, proceeding for this purpose in company with the village chief to the factory of the white agent who employs him. On their return to the village they proceed to distribute these goods or a part of them, and the equivalent in rubber for the goods distributed is due at the end of the ensuing two months, or whatever the fixed period may be. Cloth is the commonest kind of trade-goods, one piece of blue drill being equivalent to 500 balls of rubber; 5 kilogram of rubber, then, is bought for about 6 fr., or, say, 1 lb. for 5d. or 6d. There are two principal means of abuse in this system: the natives can be forced to accept trade-goods, and they can be punished for shortage in rubber at the end of the allotted period. Thus much depends on the character of the white agent, as Mr. Theisger points out. The villages in this district being practically independent of Kalamba, the king or paramount chief, no pressure can possibly be exercised by the agents of the Compagnie du Kasai through him.

Complaints of Natives.—The villagers complain rather that they are forced to make rubber by the threats of the white agents, who are continually menacing them with imprisonment by "Bula Matadi" (the Government) if they do not make rubber. It appears that the capita frequently seize chickens or other personal property in cases where the natives have not furnished the quantity of rubber corresponding with the trade-goods which they were given, but the villagers did not appear to consider this a real grievance unless they had in the first place accepted the trade-goods involuntarily. The real cause of complaint was that they were forced by threats to make rubber; I could not discover any cases where actual violence had been used by the present agents of the company.

It seems a natural inference that if threats are being continually made but never fulfilled they must ere long lose their force, especially in the minds of the natives, who are accustomed to regard such matters from an eminently practical point of view.

It appears, however, that some two or three years ago the six leading chiefs of this neighbourhood, Ndumba Munine, Dibinga dia Beya, Safo wa Mbumba, Lushika Kankoude, Tebingesha, and Shimata were seized by a State official and thrown into prison at Luluaburg, where they remained for about two months. As a matter of

fact, the reason, or alleged reason, for this was that these chiefs refused to supply soldiers to the State. They are, however, convinced that the real reason, was for shortage of rubber. All this occurred before the annexation of the Congo by the Belgian Government, and whatever the truth of the matter, the latter can be held in no wise responsible for it. I mention the incident, however, because it appears to have created an indelible impression in the minds of these chiefs and their villagers, and is to-day the precedent which they themselves quote for their present fears.

There is no question but that the rubber is growing very scarce in this neighbourhood, and the natives have often to go considerable distances to find it. Moreover, they often pay a substantial price for it in meat, fish, &c., at other villages where there is no capita. I do not, however, regard this as necessarily a proof of oppression, since European goods are much in demand among the Bena Lulua. Similarly it is not, in my opinion, inevitably a sign of abuse that the hereditary chiefs of villages are often used as capitas or assistant capitas, since it is the universal custom for the European to make use of the influence of village chiefs. It is rather by reason of the possibility of abuse that fault can be found in this system. The majority of the villages in this neighbourhood are dependent for trading purposes on the factories of the Compagnie du Kasai, situated at Ndembu and Zappo Lulua. Both the agents at these factories have been changed since the time of Consul Thesiger's visit, and it may well be that the natives are to some degree at any rate still overawed by the memory of former agents. I should, however, certainly have left this district with the impression that conditions were by no means satisfactory had I not had the opportunity of discussing the question with the agent at Zappo Lulua, a gentleman the pleasure of whose acquaintance I already had and whom I found it difficult to believe guilty of any conscious ill-treatment of the natives. He expressed the greatest astonishment when I told him that the villagers complained that they were forced to make rubber, and pleaded all his books and serried arms as disposal for inspection.

Complaint of the Village of Mikele.—The villagers of Mikele in particular had complained to me most bitterly that they were compelled to make rubber by threats of violence and imprisonment and had to make so much that they had no time to attend to their own affairs. The agent was able to disprove by figures, the genuineness of which is incontestable, that the inhabitants were forced to produce the maximum of which they were capable, since the bi-monthly production continually varied; for, he argued, if he were so foolish as to employ force or threats, once he had determined on the maximum he would at least see to it that the production did not vary. The following are the figures which I copied from his ledger:—

VILLAGE of Mikele.

Period.	Equivalent of Goods in Balls of Rubber given out to Capita.	Balls brought in by Capita.
1910		
February	8,100	4,100
March	29,050	7,000
April	30,000	9,000
May	27,275	4,000
June	15,800	(Period not finished.)
July		
August		
September		
October		
November		

As a proof that when a village failed to produce rubber in any quantities he did not punish the village but withdrew his capita, the agent showed me several entries to this effect in his ledger. I suggested that it might well be argued that the capitas had been withdrawn because the rubber in the neighbourhood was exhausted, and not because the villagers refused to make rubber; but he was able to disprove this contention by pointing to several entries showing that a capita had been withdrawn, but had been reinstated several months later at the request of the villagers. The bi-monthly production of the village of Bena Bilulu, for instance, decreased in the first nine months of this year from 14,000 balls to 3,000 balls, and a capita was withdrawn. Similarly, the production of the village of Kabamba fell from 3,000 balls to 1,200 balls, and the

capita was withdrawn, but subsequently sent back to the village at the request of the inhabitants.

The agent is now going to withdraw the capita from the village of Mikele, since the latter made complaint to me, but he assured me that the villagers would soon request a re-establishment of their "market."

These figures, if figures can prove anything, show the absolute falsity of the statements of the villagers of Mikele, who told me that they had to make 5,000 balls every two months, and were threatened with "chicotte" and imprisonment if they fell short of this amount.

Difficulty of determining the Truth.—There is no reason why the company's agent at Ndembu should not also be able to show similar figures to prove the falsity of the natives' statements were he given an opportunity to do so, and I am forced to the conclusion that the natives' assertions must be largely exaggerated. Yet it requires a more concise understanding of the mentality of the native than I possess to explain why, if he is really a perfectly free agent and is gladly selling rubber for cloth and other European goods, he can have any possible reason for saying that he is forced by threats into making rubber.

Conclusion.—In any case, if there is much that is unsatisfactory in the state of affairs in this section of the country it would be easy to exaggerate it. It is an insignificant portion of the Kasai district, some 150 miles in length, and cannot be producing as much as 3 tons of rubber a month. Moreover even supposing that the natives have substantial cause for complaint, no one who has passed through these villages could suggest that they are in a state of extreme misery, for of this there is no ocular evidence whatsoever.

The Future.—In the meantime taxation in kind by the Belgian authorities has ceased and there is as yet no coinage in use in this district, through which hitherto the passage of a State official has been a more or less rare occurrence. It remains to be seen what effect a closer occupation, coupled with the introduction of coinage and taxation in money, will have upon the lives of this section of the Lulua people.

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No. 9.

Sir Edward Gray to Sir A. Harding.

(No. 29. Africa.)

Foreign Office, March 3, 1911

Sir,

I TRANSMIT to you herewith a copy of a despatch from His Majesty's vice-consul at Leopoldville, describing the condition of the Uele district of the Congo, which does not appear to me at all satisfactory.

You will observe that Mr. Armstrong complains particularly that the slight control exercised by the judiciary over native tribunals having been taken away by the decree on "chefferies" and "sous-chefferies indigènes" contained in the "Bulletin officiel" of the 6th May last, scope is given for great abuses.

In view of the terms of article 19 of the decree it would seem that Mr. Armstrong may be under a misapprehension as to the legal aspect of the matter, but in practice there can be little doubt that the power given to chiefs under article 20, to punish natives with twelve strokes of the whip, is dangerous.

Mr. Armstrong also complains that many of the chiefs are selected arbitrarily. According to article 9 this only occurs in default of a native custom on the subject obtaining in the district in question, but the choice made of strangers seems to be very unfortunate.

I shall be glad if you will bring these two points to the notice of M. Davignon or M. Renkin.

Mr. Armstrong also reports that the Chief Gonga is committing a great number of abuses. It would be well to call the attention of the Belgian Government to this matter, and you may, if such a course seems to you advisable, furnish M. Davignon with a memorandum setting forth the facts of the case as reported to me by Mr. Armstrong.

You are also authorised to make such use of the remainder of Mr. Armstrong's despatch in conversation with M. Davignon as you think fit, and you should point out

• No. 6.

the inference that there can be little hope of really satisfactory progress so long as the present class of officials remains unchanged. On this point absolute unanimity appears to prevail among all who are acquainted with the state of affairs in the Congo.

The most serious point, however, of the whole report is that abuses appear to be inseparable from the collection of taxes in rubber. Where this has been discontinued the condition of things seems to improve so rapidly that His Majesty's Government would be justified in announcing to Parliament their intention to recognise the Belgian annexation as a reasonable fulfilment of treaty conditions as soon as the whole area is opened to trade. Where on the other hand the collection of taxes on rubber continues, it seems to be almost impossible for the Belgians, as it would be for any Government, to prevent cruelty and abuses; and it must, of course, remain impossible for His Majesty's Government, with the best will in the world and giving every credit for good intentions, to recognise the annexation.

You should explain this to M. Davignon as representing my view.

I am, &c.

E. GREY.

[8657]

No. 10

S. A. Harding to Sir Edward Grey. (Received March 9)

(No. 51 Africa
Sir,

Brussels, March 8, 1911

I HAVE had the honour to receive your despatch No. 29 of the 8th instant on the subject of the condition of the Ule district.

I had already read Mr. Armstrong's report at the Congo confidential print, and you will see, by a reference to my despatch No. 29, Africa, of the 8th ultimo, that, although I abstained from asking you to let me show it to M. Renkin, on account of the assumption of the bad faith and stupid perversity of the Brussels Government which pervades it—it assumes, for example, that the Government is bent on destroying all the natural resources of its territory in order to discourage or prevent free trade. I did speak to him about the cruelties committed by some of the native Sultans, and that he informed me of his determination to destroy their power in view of the abuses of which so many of them had been guilty.

I now propose, as you leave me the alternative of choice to speak on the points touched upon in your despatch and to reply to M. Renkin rather than to M. Davignon, as the latter will probably declare himself incompetent to discuss with me such technical matters as the working of the "native chieftainships' decree," and will merely promise to transmit my remarks on it to his colleague of the colonial Ministry.

My own opinion of that decree, viewed in the abstract, and without reference to the possible practical difficulties attendant upon its successful application locally, is that it is on the whole a very good one. The objects with which it was drawn up will be found carefully indicated in the report on it submitted in April 1910 to the Colonial Council here, and in the account of the discussion to which it gave rise in that body. I have the honour to transmit these herewith.

It is, I think, impossible to read the very thoughtful report of M. Diderich on its draft, which was unanimously approved by all the members of the council, including so strong a liberal critic of the Government and advocate of native interests as Professor Speyer, or the debate which it occasioned, without giving to that body and to the Belgian Government generally the fullest credit for a praiseworthy effort to deal efficiently and humanely with the difficult problem of native local government in the Congo. Inadequate instruments or adverse local conditions may contribute to defeat the beneficent intentions of the Belgian legislator—the old saying *quid leges sine moribus* seems to dominate the whole situation in the Congo—but if the text of the decree is examined and compared with the legislation of other European protectorates in Central Africa it does not seem easy to amend it.

It is difficult for me to discuss seriously the grotesque theory as to its origin, which is put forward by Mr. Armstrong on p. 6 (paragraphs 2 and 3) of his report, and which, in my opinion, is sufficient to vitiate most of the political conclusions which he draws from a very interesting and otherwise valuable account of his journey. His view is that the Belgian Government, in order to shield oppressive Belgian officials, had deliberately

decided to place the responsibility upon the chiefs, whose courts will be inaccessible to the public" (why this need be so he does not say), "and whose acts of abuse will therefore be concealed." This is just the sort of explanation which the "Besophore Egyptian" and other Anglophobe papers of that kind used to give of the measures of Lord Cromer, and which is probably still common in the anti-British press of Cairo and Calcutta. The supposition that the serious statesmen and jurists of Brussels would be likely to organise throughout their colony a huge machinery of secret cruelty for the sole purpose of more easily extorting from a few districts during the next fifteen months a few more tons of rubber is almost on a par with the babu story that Lord Egan deliberately introduced the bubonic plague into India to divert the attention of the natives from their political grievances.

I would venture, in connection with one particular criticism of the decree, most respectfully to deprecate the view put forward in your despatch, or at least its expression by me to the Belgian Government, that "there can be little doubt that the power given to the chiefs under article 20 to punish natives with twelve strokes of the whip is dangerous."

My reasons for doing so are—

1. That this power is essential if the chiefs' authority is to possess any sanction or reality. He cannot be made responsible for the maintenance of order and for the repression of petty crimes too insignificant for the cognizance of the European district officer or judge unless he is allowed to punish, and in practice the only simple and efficient form of punishment at his disposal, one, moreover, which Mr. Armstrong himself states that the chiefs have already long employed, is the whip. He may, no doubt, misuse this weapon, he may inflict it too indiscriminately or exceed the number of legally-prescribed lashes, but there is the same danger in regard to any other penal powers which you may give him. He may, for example, if he has oppressive instincts, use the power of fine as a means of unjust extortion, the power of imposing hard labour as a convenient pretext for adding to the number of his own slaves, the power of simple imprisonment as an opportunity of appropriating a prisoner's wives. These are risks which must be taken whenever you give power to, or recognise within whatever limits, the authority of savage or semi-savage rulers, and the risk of the abuse of the whip is, I think, less formidable than the others, owing to the extreme leniency of the legal maximum sentence of twelve lashes. Such a punishment is scarcely felt (and you will note that women, children, old men and invalids are exempted from it) by an able-bodied savage, so that no humanitarian need feel greatly distressed if it is now and then exceeded; indeed, I myself found it necessary in East Africa to obtain from your department authority to raise to a maximum of 100 the number of lashes (I think thirty or fifty) which the Indian Act allowed me to inflict.

2. A second reason for not formulating this particular criticism is that we ourselves entrust in our own neighbouring protectorates similar and, indeed, much fuller penal powers to native chiefs. When I drew up—in 1895 or 1896—the native courts ordinance, which still forms the basis of our native judicial system in East Africa, I gave to the Arab valis and mudirs and to the Somali Sultans on the coast and to the chiefs and elders of the tribes of the remoter parts of the interior, concurrent jurisdiction over natives with the British collectors or deputy collectors in their respective districts, including power to administer, and enforce by penalties, in the former region the Mahomedan law, and in the latter region the local native customary law, in so far as any feature of these was not repugnant to our own conceptions of justice and humanity, a provision which article 17 of the Belgian decree of the 2nd May reproduces in somewhat different language. This implied (I do not accurately recollect the precise number of strokes which I laid down in each case—I left, I think, a wide discretion to the courts) punishment by the whip or "kiboko," and I have no reason to believe that the power which I gave, with the full sanction at the time of the late Lord Salisbury, was frequently or, indeed, ever cruelly abused.

In the Uganda protectorates on the other hand, under the system in force since the much more recent ordinance of January 1909, the whipping powers entrusted to native chiefs are very carefully limited and defined, and it may be useful to compare them, as Uganda and the Ule district are almost conterminous, with those established by the decree under discussion.

In Uganda proper the sub-chiefs have power to inflict a fine of 10 rupees and a flogging of ten lashes, the higher courts of "Abamasaza" held by the native chiefs of the so-called "counties" of Uganda can inflict fines not exceeding 30 rupees and

floggings not exceeding twenty-four lashes, while the "Lukiko," the court of the King or Kabaka, can exceed these penalties, and can pass sentences of death, subject to the prisoner's right to appeal in such cases to the British High Court of Uganda. All these native chiefs exercise concurrent jurisdiction with the British native courts sitting at Entebbe, Kampala, &c.

In Usoga, under the ordinance above cited, similar judicial powers are vested in the native chiefs, sub-chiefs, and Lukiko or Council of Chiefs; these chiefs are not empowered to try capital offences, or offences punishable by transportation or imprisonment for life, but they may inflict twenty-four lashes on adult males and twelve lashes on boys; girls and women of all ages are exempted from the whip.

In Unyoro our ordinance of 1905 distinguishes between petty sub-chiefs, with very limited powers (5 rupees fine, six lashes with the whip, and one month's imprisonment), chiefs of the native sub-divisions called "sazas" who can fine up to 30 rupees, imprison up to six months and flog (like the Congo chiefs) up to twelve lashes, and the Lukiko or court of the native King, which can pronounce very severe sentences including death, subject to an appeal as in Uganda proper to the British High Court. The maximum of lashes which the Lukiko can inflict without reference to a British authority is, as in Usoga, twenty-four for an adult male and twelve for a boy.

In Toru and in the primitive shepherd State of Ankole the various grades of native chiefs are invested with corresponding powers, but I cannot quote the number of lashes which they are competent under the law of the protectorate to inflict. I have, however, little doubt that the lesser chiefs are empowered to give ten or twelve and the higher chiefs up to twenty-four.

I believe the number of greater and lesser chiefs or kinglets legally invested with the powers of flogging, fining, and imprisoning natives in the Uganda Protectorate is not far short of 100. The legal instrument for the floggings inflicted by these chiefs is, as in the East African Protectorate, the "kiboko" or hippopotamus hide whip for adults, and for boys under 15 a common rod.

It will be seen from the above that the powers of flogging entrusted in adjacent British protectorates to native chiefs are a good deal wider than those allowed in the Congo under the Belgian decree of the 2nd May, so that if I am to lay down the principle that to invest chiefs with such powers is necessarily and in all cases dangerous, I should invite a somewhat telling retort from M. Renkin. His Excellency is well acquainted with our own colonial legislation; for his office has carefully studied the fiscal, penal, and land systems of the German and English dependencies in the conventional basin of the Congo, and in Africa generally, and has, as you will remember, been able to show that the Belgian regulations respecting the ivory trade, which our consular officers in the Congo have denounced in such unsparing terms, are very similar to our own in Uganda.

You will notice that in the debate on the decree in the Colonial Council one member, I should think probably Professor Speyer, raised objections to the use of the whip, but was overruled by those of his colleagues whose experience of Africa had taught them that it was really the most humane deterrent. More imprisonment with moderate labour and fair food had no terrors for the ordinary African negro, whilst the old-fashioned native prison as it existed within my recollection in Pemba, in Bokhara, and in backwood parts of Turkey and Persia, with its darkness, starvation, stench and vermin, is really a far more barbarous punishment than a short sharp thrashing with the "kiboko."

So far as I can judge—handicapped as I am on all these questions by the lack of personal acquaintance with the Congo—the state of things complained of by Mr. Armstrong calls for two main remedies, the first, the abolition of the rubber tax, which he justly terms the root of all evil in the country and which the Government seems most unfortunately bent on preserving in a few remote districts for rather more than another year till it can, so it alleges, get its taxes there paid in cash, and the second, the substitution of their natural hereditary chiefs for the alien tyrants whom the Belgians have either found in occupation, by conquest, of some of the native sultanates or chieftainships, or have, as in the case of Gouga, themselves placed there after deposing previous rulers. To these should perhaps be added the more efficient inspection of the local chiefs of whatever character and origin by the European officers in charge of their districts, but this is merely another way of saying that the rubber tax should go, for so long as it exists, the chiefs will be tempted by the demands it makes on them to commit high-handed acts, and the district officers, busy with the collection of rubber, will lack the leisure necessary for their careful supervision.

The hereditary chiefs by Mr. Armstrong's own showing "use their people well,"

and their is little cause for dissatisfaction with them, though elsewhere he accuses them of "corruption." But side by side with them the chiefs of stronger tribes, or in some cases mere adventurers, like the Mahratta raiders who founded the present great dynasties of Central India, appear to have imposed their power on comparatively feeble races, as the Mangbetu and Mangwele did on the Mamzu, and have been accepted and supported as *de facto* rulers by the Belgians, whilst others like Gouga, or the Mangbetu chief Osmani, have been substituted by the Government itself, for earlier native rulers who rebelled against it just as we put the present Sultan of Witu, who had no hereditary claim into the chieftainship after deposing Fumo Onari. M. Renkin appears to be fully alive to the evils attending on the tyranny of some of these native despots, and to have made up his mind to remove them, and Mr. Armstrong, though he says of them, somewhat inconsistently as it appears to me, elsewhere that "the Sultans are completely in the hands of their people," admits that several of them, such as Sasa, are already conscious that their power is slipping from them, while others, such as Semio, are in flight. I observe that he characteristically attributes the Belgian Government's dissatisfaction with them to the fact that they are not, with all their crimes, quite cruel enough to please it, while at the same time stating (p. 5) that the chiefs "resort to every possible means to stop the natives from complaining" when maltreated to the authorities.

As regards Gouga of Djarbir, I am quite prepared to believe him to be a tyrant and to urge his removal, but the actual charges against him, when closely examined, are rather vague. Mr. Armstrong says that he "rules by terror," has a fenced compound, seventy armed guards and sixty wives and concubines. These, however, are attributes common to many savage African rulers, and would not in a British protectorate be regarded as in themselves affording a sufficient ground for his forcible deposition. I shall speak, therefore, about him in general terms to M. Renkin without giving his Excellency a written memorandum till I have something more definite to say in it.

There is one more point in Mr. Armstrong's criticism of the native chieftainships decree on which I should be inclined to differ, though less positively than I do in other respects from the sentiments expressed in his report. I refer to his opinion that the Belgian judiciary, and not as at present the executive district officers, should be required to supervise the judicial decisions of the chiefs. I should personally prefer that any appeal from their decisions should be to the latter rather than to the former, and this for the following reasons:—

1. I believe that a judge from Boma, Stanleyville, Niangara, or from some other judicial centre, imbued with the legal conceptions which are enshrined in the Belgian codes, unacquainted with the local dialects or customs, and dependent on Swahili interpreters, who are probably often young "mission boys," would exercise a less valuable and intelligent control over the administration of so-called justice by the chiefs than a resident district officer conversant with all these matters, and enjoying, as some few Belgians seem to have done, the confidence of the native population. In my own East African native courts regulations I provided for an appeal in serious cases from the decisions of the valis and chiefs, not to the protectorate judge, whose time was fully taken up with other matters, but to the sub-commissioner of the province, and in Uganda the British judiciary, I think, only intervenes "where a sentence of death or of imprisonment exceeding five years, or of fine exceeding 1000, or of whipping of over twenty-four lashes has been passed." But the district commissioners (i.e. the executive officers of the protectorate) may enquire into the proceedings of the lower courts held by native chiefs, may transfer cases to the hearing of a British native court, and may cancel, in certain circumstances, unjust sentences, whilst the governor has also, in virtue of his executive office, certain powers of exceptional interference with their action.

2. It must not be forgotten that most of the cases decided by these native chiefs do not need a legal expert for their revision. In so far as they are difficult or complex, it is because they are apt to be mixed up with questions of tribal law or usage, of which a local executive officer probably knows more than a professional judge. What I take it is wanted in the Congo is a simple and summary system of native justice, which avoids bringing prisoners and witnesses long distances or keeping them waiting till the professional judge arrives. The native courts of summary jurisdiction which, when I was in Egypt, the late Sir John Scott set up all over the provinces, always seemed to me, of course allowing for the great and necessary difference between Egyptian and Central African institutions, the kind of model up to which we should strive to educate the native chieftains of Central Africa, and these allowed, if my memory is correct, of a

much simpler and more elastic procedure than that of the higher native tribunals. All the critics of the Congolese system have indeed complained of the cumbrousness and delays of its judicial procedure which, like that of the reformed Egyptian codes, is based on French models, and is apt to develop a type of magistrature rather unsuited by habits and modes of thought to the rapid administration of justice in very primitive communities.

It may, however, I think, be fairly contended that so long as the rubber and labour tax is in force there is something to be said for control over the sentences of the native chiefs by the judiciary rather than by the district officers charged with its collection. This tax, the taproot of all or most of the evils in the Congo, is to come to an end in every part of the territory next year; I deeply deplore the decision of the Belgian Government to defer its final abolition, in the districts in which it still lingers, till that date, and I have always been of opinion that so long as it is maintained, for whatever reason, in any part of the Congo Colony, we are fully justified in withholding our recognition of Belgian rule. I have indeed intimated as much more than once to members of the Belgian Government.

I apologise to you for the length of this despatch, but the questions raised by Mr. Armstrong's report are, I venture to think, of sufficient importance to call for rather detailed observations.

I have, &c.

ARTHUR H. HARDINGE.

[9133]

No. 11.

Sir A. Hardinge to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received March 13.)

(No. 53. Africa. Confidential.)

Brussels, March 8, 1911.

Sir, I HAVE the honour to report, in continuation of my despatch No. 51 of yesterday's date, that I spoke to M. Renkin this morning on the various points arising out of Mr. Armstrong's report on the Uele district, other than the powers of flogging bestowed on native chiefs, which were mentioned in your despatch No. 29 of the 3rd instant.

With respect to the petty Sultan Gouga, of Bondo, whom the Belgians call (from the better-known Arabic name of his residence) "Jabir," M. Renkin informed me that the Government had already taken action against him on account of the cruelties and abuses of which he had been guilty, and that he was believed to have fled from Belgian territory, though his present whereabouts were unknown. His Excellency sent for and read to me the latest report received by him, and dated, I think, some time in January last, from one of the Belgian officials of the Uele district who had been sent to Jabir, and who described the population as having welcomed him with great warmth, and at being apparently delighted at the deposition of Gouga, or "Jabir," though he added that some of the "Azandes," the dominant tribe, seemed to be *chagrins et maussades*. The author of the report went on to say that the removal of this chief and of his son had dealt a most satisfactory blow at the slave trade, and at slavery generally in this part of the colony, and urged strongly that they should neither of them under any circumstances be pardoned or permitted to return.

M. Renkin went on to say that he was bent, as he had already informed me, on breaking the power of these Uele sultans who maltreated their people and defied both the judicial and executive officers of the Government. There were six of them, "Jabir" or Gouga, Bokoyé, Sasa, Semio, Zumbet, and another whose name has escaped my memory, and of these three, Jabir, Bokoyé, and Zumbet, were already in flight. Zumbet, or Zumbel, is the chief who, as I had the honour to report in my despatch No. 29 of the 8th ultimo, cut to pieces a slave (or, as M. Renkin now says, two) before the Belgian Government's messenger as an act of defiance to the authorities, and was therefore, as also because he lives on the southern frontier of the Uele district, the first of these despots to be attacked. Six hundred men were sent against him, but he fled after making practically no real attempt at resistance, and M. Renkin says that he will if caught be executed for the numerous murders he has committed. Though Semio himself has escaped, his son has, I gathered,

returned, and is trying to make his peace with the Government. M. Renkin seemed to think it just possible that a rupture with Bokoyé, who, according to Mr. Armstrong (p. 10), is an Azande sultan outside the rubber area, and on good terms with the Government, might be avoided, but his view was that all these chiefs must be taught to obey Belgian authority and not to exceed or abuse the subordinate powers allowed them by Belgian law. I asked him about the Mangbetu chief, Osman; he did not remember his name, but observed that these petty sultans were often known by different designations. He added that the chieftainship hitherto held by "Jabir," or Gouga, had been given to Baduma, who was, so I understood him to say, a member of the local Azande tribe.

On my dwelling upon the importance, wherever possible, of maintaining the authority of the hereditary tribal chiefs, and avoiding the appointment of strangers unconnected with the native dynasties or tribes, M. Renkin said that he quite agreed with me, and that, as appeared from its article 9, this was one of the objects which he had in view in drafting his "native chieftainships' decree." In the earlier days of the Congo Government these matters had not been carefully studied; and even now, in the Kasai for example, there were numerous districts where the real chiefs whom the natives revered and obeyed were not in contact with the administration, but were represented by an "homme de paille" or "chef postiche," whom the Government considered, or was allowed by the people to consider, as the principal local authority, but who possessed only nominal power. In other parts of the country where reigning chiefs or sultans had had to be deposed or driven out by punitive expeditions, the administration had extemporised such successors as answered its immediate necessities. This, I think, is natural enough during the period of conquest and pacification, and it is, indeed, only after that period has been succeeded by one of comparatively peaceful occupation that the European administrator has the leisure to acquaint himself fully with the details of tribal customs, or of local institutions or requirements. Had he started equipped with a real knowledge of these, many initial and costly errors in the treatment of all native races—and this, I think, applies to ourselves as to other colonising powers—would certainly have been avoided.

I asked M. Renkin whether his "native chieftainships' decree" was intended in any sense to exclude or diminish the control over the judicial or administrative action of the chiefs hitherto exercised by the European judiciary or executive. Mr. Armstrong, I said, seemed to have derived the impression from conversations with Belgian executive officers in the Uele that this was so, and that they regarded themselves as having parted, under the new decree, to the native rulers with some of their old responsibility.

His Excellency said that if any Belgian officials had held language of this kind to Mr. Armstrong they must have been poking fun at him. I had only to read not merely the text of the decree, but the report and discussion on it, published in the proceedings of the colonial council, to be satisfied that there was not the least foundation for such a supposition. Not merely the executive officers, but also the judiciary, retained, and were intended to retain, the fullest powers of supervision over the use made by the chiefs of their judicial and administrative powers. It was precisely because some of the chiefs whom he had mentioned to me had defied in their treatment of their people both the *parquet* and their respective district officers that the Government had found it necessary to proceed against and, in grave cases, to depose them.

I enquired if he was satisfied with the European officials in the Uele. He replied that he had on the whole a very good set there, and that M. Bertrand was a decided "humanitarian," and strongly—perhaps even a little too strongly—"pro-native."

I then spoke of the rubber tax in Uele, and of the lower price of rubber in the zone, in which it was still a Government monopoly (p. 11 of Mr. Armstrong's report), as compared with that prevailing in the free-trade area. He said he was raising the price in the former zone, and had further prohibited the *déplacement* (or dispatch to long distances) of natives for the purpose of collecting it, this practice having been one of the worst and most oppressive features of the old system.

I went on to say that whereas in the free-trade region where rubber had ceased to be a Government monopoly there appeared to be a real improvement in the general condition of things, our consuls still gave a very unsatisfactory account of that condition where the collection of taxes in kind still existed, and that so long as this continued His Majesty's Government would not be able, however much they might desire to do so, to recognise the Belgian annexation. His Excellency would perhaps have noticed that

you had been asked in Parliament to publish the latest consular reports, but that you had not yet done so. Were these reports to be made public I was afraid that a regrettable impression would be produced.

M. Renkin said he feared that the memories of the old régime made it difficult for our consuls to judge his reforms quite impartially, and that His Majesty's Government seemed to suspect that if once they recognised annexation, the Belgian Government would revert to the ancient paths. He was anxious, quite apart from and without reference to the question of recognition, to reform the administration of the Congo and encourage and promote free trade in the interests of the colony itself, for without free trade money would not circulate, and without money he could not get revenue or carry on the Government at all. He was frequently being urged by his colleagues in the Cabinet to hasten the date at which the rubber monopoly and tax in kind or labour would disappear from every district, as they had already disappeared from nearly two-thirds of the territory. But the practical difficulties were enormous, and one of the chief of them was that the new system of taxation must be worked by new officials, whose recruitment and training required time. He had procured and was still procuring them to take the place of the Congo State fiscal officers who were associated by habit and in the eyes of the people with the methods of the old régime, and whom he was therefore trying gradually to replace from the financial departments of the Belgian home administration. There was however, he thought an excessive readiness to attribute every untoward incident in the Congo to the oppressive effects of the rubber monopoly. He had recently, for instance, received a representation from the Methodist missionaries at Upoto about cruelties committed on natives in their neighbourhood. He had caused an enquiry to be instituted, and it had appeared that the authors of these outrages were not, as was at first suggested, Government agents employed in the collection of taxes, but merchants who had, just within the free trade area, had a quarrel with the natives about the purchase of rubber.

The rubber tax and monopoly would be finally abolished in every district within little more than a year, but he could not take the responsibility of putting a complete end to it before that date. When the huge size of the Congo, the imperfection of its communications, and the barbarous condition of so many of its provinces were borne in mind, three years was not an excessive period for a radical economic revolution, subverting the fiscal system which had grown up and been enforced for two decades.

I have no doubt—and he admitted it, though he did not give the consideration avowed prominence in his vindication of his policy—that what weighs with him is the desire to spread over a term of years the deficits in each successive province, which must at first be the result of his reforms, and whose existence he frankly acknowledged. Nor do I think, although I myself greatly regret this feature of his programme, and have always regarded it as warranting a corresponding postponement of recognition by ourselves, that the delay of a few months (some fifteen at most) which it connotes can be censured by us as entirely indefensible. I was never, as you are aware, one of those who regarded the maintenance of the Mahomedan law of domestic slavery on the coast of our East African protectorate as a serious evil. But it was so regarded, not merely by missionaries and philanthropic bodies but by many members of successive British Governments, who were nevertheless deterred from its abolition, by fears, not unlike M. Renkin's, of financial difficulties due to dislocation of the labour market and to the necessity, in view of earlier pledges, of costly compensation to slave owners; nor was it until nearly twenty years after our assumption of the protectorate, when slavery had almost died a natural death, that its final suppression was resolved upon.

I would wish, in conclusion, to say a word upon the last paragraph of your despatch, which seems to make a distinction between the opening of the whole colony to free trade and the cessation of the collection of the rubber tax. If this distinction is intended, it is due to a misapprehension. Free trade has existed since the 1st July, 1910, throughout the colony in the sense that merchants have been free to trade with the natives and the natives with them in all the products of the soil, with this qualification, that in certain districts, one of which is the Uele, rubber and copal are still excepted, and are treated as a Government monopoly. Once they cease to be so treated, the collection of them by the natives as the form in which they pay their labour tax will equally disappear, and will be replaced by payments in cash. The opening of the whole area to unrestricted, unqualified free trade and the cessation throughout it of the collection of taxes in rubber will therefore, if I rightly understand the Belgian policy as expounded by M. Renkin, synchronise on the 1st July of next year; and it will probably then be possible for you, consistently with the attitude which you have throughout maintained, to recognise, or at least to seriously consider the

recognition of, Belgian rule in the Congo, and thus close a disagreeable chapter in the history of our relations with this country.

I have, &c.

ARTHUR H. HARDING.

[9133]

No. 12.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Hardinge.

(No. 42. Africa.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 31, 1911.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 53, Africa, of the 8th instant, reporting a conversation with M. Renkin on various subjects arising out of Mr. Vice-Consul Armstrong's report on the Uele district.

I observe, among other points to which my attention has been called in that despatch, that the Congo Government have already taken action against Sultan Gouga of Bondo. You confirm the view at which I had already arrived that the judicial are to retain full control over the native chiefs, and you report that the price of rubber is being raised in the zone where it still remains a Government monopoly, and that the dispatch of natives to long distances to collect it is forbidden.

I regard this information as extremely satisfactory, and as even more so, M. Renkin's statement that he is trying to replace the old officials "who were associated by habit and in the eyes of the people with the methods of the old régime" by new officials from Belgium.

This is the very policy which, as you are aware, His Majesty's Government have long been recommending to the Belgian Government as best calculated to inspire confidence in their policy of reform.

With regard to the last paragraph of your despatch, the distinction which I wished to draw, in my instructions as to the language you were to hold to M. Davignon, was between that portion of the country where trade is restricted by the rubber monopoly and that portion where trade is absolutely free.

I entirely approve the language held by you to M. Renkin in the course of the conversation reported in your despatch under reply.

I am, &c.

E. GREY.

[15315]

No. 13.

Vice-Consul Thurstan to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received April 24.)

Sir,

Falland, Paignton, South Devon, April 20, 1911.

I HAVE the honour to enclose herewith a report marked "confidential" containing information of a general character relating to persons and affairs in the Kasai district of the Congo.

I did not consider that information of this nature could well be included in my reports on the tours which I made in the Kasai district.

I have, &c.

E. W. P. THURSTAN.

Enclosure in No. 13.

General Report on Kasai District.

(Confidential.)

The Inhabitants of the Kasai District: The Batetela, the Bakuba, the Bena-Lulu, the Baluba, the Batchoko.—It is as well when speaking of the Belgian Congo or even of

any particular district in the Belgian Congo, to bear in mind that this vast country and its districts are occupied by different tribes of markedly varying characteristics. This is at least to as great an extent the case with the Kasai as with the other districts of the Belgian Congo, for the Kasai is the home of twelve or more tribes, who although they are all of Bantu origin and bear in common characteristics, both physical and moral, which are not to be found in the coast tribes, nevertheless differ among themselves almost as widely as, for instance, the various peoples of Western Europe. Thus the Batetela, who inhabit the extreme north of the Kasai, are warlike and aggressive. The Bakuba who live between the Sankuru and Lulua Rivers are proud, conservative, artistic but indolent, cruel but lacking in physical courage. The Bena Lulua, living to the south of the Bakuba, are very liberal in their ideas, welcoming all things European, yet inconstant to a degree, tiring rapidly of novelties which they enjoy at first, capable of arduous but not of prolonged labour. The Baluba, who live to the east of the Bena Lulua, having been from time immemorial split up into a number of small independent tribes, have always been the prey and consequently the slaves of their neighbours, and although in my opinion not so deficient in courage as many other tribes of the Kasai, they accept their position with that cheerful resignation with which time and custom endow the native. Environment, therefore, has made the Baluba the most versatile, adaptable and hard-working race of the Kasai, and the conditions under which they live at home has caused them to scatter far and wide not only throughout the district but far beyond its confines. The Batchoko, possessing two characteristics not always to be found in common, namely, those of born fighters and born traders, have become, living as they do on the eastern boundary of the district hard by Portuguese territory, the natural middlemen in the traffic in domestic slaves, who are still the greatest source of wealth known to the Central African.

There are other tribes in the Kasai district whose characteristics I have not touched upon, since they are less well known to myself and to Europeans in general than those I have already mentioned. I have perhaps, however, said sufficient to make it readily understood that the Batetela have been both the worst enemies and the best friends of the Belgian Government. They waged a widely extended rebellion against the Free State which cost the latter years of fighting to quell. Yet those who are loyal are most useful in forming colonies, friendly to the white man, in districts whose inhabitants are ill disposed towards him. The Bakuba have shown a continual aversion to the intrusion of the stranger, whether he be a State officer in search of taxes, a trader in search of rubber, or a missionary, Catholic or Protestant, in search of souls. The Baluba and Bena Lulua have on the other hand been the best friends of both the State officer, the trader and the missionary.

Native Vices.—All the native tribes of Kasai with which I am acquainted while differing widely from each other in many characteristics, as I have endeavoured to show, share three prominent vices in common, namely, idleness, untruthfulness, and dishonesty. The latter fault is not of greater importance as far as regards "the Congo question," but the other two vices have a very important bearing on the subject. Some tribes are of course greater offenders in these respects than others, notably the Bakuba people, around whom the rubber controversy in the Kasai has raged for some years past. These vices are the product both of heredity and environment, and the ordinary adherent of the Catholic and Protestant missions seems to be no better and no worse in this respect than any other native. It is frequently asserted by the Belgians that mission converts and adherents are greater liars, thieves, and idlers than their fellows, but I think that this charge is inspired rather by that antipathy to dogmatic religion so frequently observable on the continent than by any real knowledge of the facts. On the contrary I am convinced that the genuine converts to Christianity who are comparatively few in number despite published figures to the contrary, are in every way morally superior to their fellows. However, the fact remains that the great majority of the natives of the Kasai with whom I am acquainted are unquestionably both idle and untruthful. Yet, with a little sympathetic understanding of local conditions, one can readily account for this fact.

The Bakuba, for instance, who are perhaps most conspicuous in this respect have good reason for being idle. Living in a forest country, their villages nearly always separated from each other by swamps, they have not even any great inducement to stir far from their homes. The soil is rich, and their wives are able, with no great trouble, to supply them with sufficient meals of maize, manioc and ground-nuts, to satisfy their hunger. Palm trees grow in abundance and palm-wine is to be had always for the mere trouble of climbing a tree. The climate is hot, and there is therefore no inducement for the Bakuba men to do aught but sit and smoke their pipes. They are

intensely conservative, and not being permitted by custom to wear any other costume than the tribal skirt and hat of their ancestors find little use for the trader's European cloth, except to barter it with neighbouring tribes for goats, chickens, or cowries—the small shells which are the currency of their country. The custom of the tribes prescribing that only a chief may possess more than one wife, the ordinary Bakuba men are not even stimulated to accumulate wealth, as are the Bena Lulua for instance, by the desire to possess several wives. The only occupation of the men, apart from an occasional hunting trip, seems to be the weaving of cloth and mats, the forging of iron, and carving of wood. For all of these accomplishments they have a surprising genius, though their work is spasmodic and leisurely in the extreme. Yet, once the fact is conceded, that they are artists in their own peculiar way, allowance might reasonably be made for their whims and moods, just as much as it is for those of their brethren in Europe. Finally it must be borne in mind, that the native, being by every instinct conservative, finds it very difficult to adapt himself to work of an unaccustomed nature, but shows much greater assiduousness at tasks of a kindred character to those for which custom has fitted him. Thus, to give a concrete instance, the Belgians would never, in my opinion, have experienced the same degree of difficulty in inducing the Bakuba to work in mats and cloth had those articles been the marketable produce of the country and not rubber.

All the natives of Kasai with whom I am acquainted are naturally mendacious. The Bakuba are perhaps the worst offenders in this respect, but it is only a question of degree, nor have the missionaries, where their influence has been felt, had much success in their endeavours to eradicate this fault. It is indeed, so general, that it is not considered by the natives, in any way a thing of which to be ashamed; when accused of having told an untruth, they show no evidence of resentment, whether they consider the accusation justified or not; nor have they the least compunction in themselves accusing a white man of having lied. I therefore believe it to be a safe rule to assume that all native evidence is untrue until it has been proved to the contrary. It is particularly unfortunate that this should be a besetting sin in a country like the Congo, where of necessity most evidence has had to be accepted on trust without an opportunity of its being substantiated. I cannot but think that on the whole this fact must have been to the disadvantage of the Belgians.

Though the natives may be untruthful towards each other, they are particularly inclined to be so towards the white man. It should be remembered that in the Kasai at least, the great majority of the natives fully believe that the white man is a supernatural being, who lives in a village under the sea; that he is neither produced nor produces his kind in the normal way, and is in short not a human being in the accepted sense of the word. The native therefore has a natural fear of the white man by no means necessarily generated by ill treatment; indeed, if it were not so, no European's life would be safe for a day in such a country. It is this superstitious dread of the white man which prompts the native to say anything which he considers is calculated to soothe the former's anger or win his favour, irrespective of the truth. A native whom one meets in the forest will invariably, when questioned, say that the next village is close at hand. The Bakuba who were acquainted with my functions, almost uniformly began by telling me they were unhappy; presumably, they would tell an officer of the State that they had no cause for complaint. As in most cases I was taken to be a missionary the natives generally assured me that they were Christians, though they were obviously nothing of the kind.

Missions.—There are three missionary societies working in the Kasai, two Protestant and one Catholic. Of the former, one is English and the other American. The Catholics are a Belgian society.

The English Mission.—The English mission has its head-quarters at Lukongo, near Lusambo, the capital of the district. These missionaries, who belong to the sect known as the Plymouth Brethren, have also recently established a station to the north of the Sankuru River. I have never had the opportunity of visiting this mission, but I believe that their influence with the natives is insignificant. One of their religious tenets being that all interference with civil authority is unlawful or inexpedient, a belief which precludes them from exercising the right of voting in England—they have invariably avoided coming into collision with the Belgian authorities, and are in this respect unique among Protestant missions in the Congo. For this reason they are undoubtedly the most popular of all Protestant missionaries with every class of Belgian, despite their somewhat unusual beliefs.

The American Mission.—The same thing can by no means be said of the other

Protestant missions in the Kasai district, the American Presbyterian Congo Mission, which has its headquarters at Luebo on the Lulua River, and a branch at Ibanj some 50 miles away. This mission has been at constant loggerheads with the Belgian authorities almost since its foundation, certainly since the advent of Rev. Dr. Morrison, its present head. While the latter is to a great extent to blame for this state of affairs, it appears to me that the fault lies equally on the Belgian side. The mission has in the past been consistently refused concessions in flat defiance of treaty rights and obligations, and in more than one instance these concessions have been subsequently granted to the Catholics. It is only fair to the Belgians to say, in extenuation, that Dr. Morrison and the American missionaries generally have, by their own admission, shown a lack of tact and frequently an amount of incivility towards the Belgians which required, in order to ensure fair treatment, to be met with a considerable degree of moderation and self-restraint, and this the Belgians have apparently been quite incapable of showing.

Luebo, when the American Mission was founded there, in the year 1892, was a comparatively small village inhabited by the Bakette tribe, the natives of the region. It now has a population of from 12,000 to 15,000 people, and is one of the most important centres of the Kasai. Its population, however, apart from the original Bakette, now consists entirely of natives who are by origin strangers to the locality. It is around this question that one of the principal causes of dispute between the mission and the Belgians has long centred. According to the Belgians, both State and traders, these people are the offshoots from all the country round, runaway slaves, adulterers, thieves, and murderers, who have escaped from their native villages and gathered beneath the protecting wing of the missionaries. According to the latter they are either people who have fled for safety from the iron rule of the Belgians, or who, being gifted with more intelligence than their fellows, have come to hear the teaching of Christianity. As in most similar cases, probably neither the one side nor the other is entirely correct. As far as the original native population is concerned, the Protestant mission were undoubtedly unfortunate in their choice when they selected Luebo as their headquarters in 1892 for they cannot to-day claim a single member of the Bakette tribe as a convert to Christianity. The natural result of their lack of success with the Bakette, and of their inability from various causes to extend their work, was that the more ambitious Baluba and more inquisitive Bena Lulua came flocking in large numbers to the vicinity of the mission, many of them becoming subsequently converted to Christianity. Added to these were many "libérés," slaves freed by traders in return for so many years' work, time expired soldiers, and so forth. It was natural that Luebo should thus also become, as it has, the refuge of criminals, idlers, loose women, and hangers-on, who found something to gain by being under the protection of the somewhat simple-minded missionaries.

The Congo Free State on more than one occasion made attempts under the guise of the "chifferie" law to remove this population in whole or in part. While the State pretended that they were acting thus in the public interest the American missionaries looked upon it as a deliberate attempt to undo all the work which they had accomplished. While this controversy is apparently now at an end, I have thought it well to dwell upon it at some length, because it was at the root of many of the differences between the mission and the Congo State, and was, in my opinion, the principal cause of the bitter campaign which Dr. Morrison conducted both in England and America against King Leopold's rule in the Congo.

Besides Dr. Morrison, the most prominent member of the American Presbyterian Mission, was for long an American mulatto missionary named Sheppard, who has now resigned and returned to America. Dr. Sheppard was the first foreigner to penetrate into the territory of the Bakuba; indeed, he may be said to have opened it up for the Belgians. He is, moreover, to this day the only foreigner who can speak their language, and having been for many years intimately acquainted with the people and their customs is by far the best known and most popular stranger with all the natives of this tribe. Owing to the fact that he was a mulatto, Dr. Sheppard for years resisted all Dr. Morrison's entreaties to attack King Leopold's methods of administration, and was invariably silent on this subject when on furlough in America, on account of the racial hatred produced by the colour question in that country. It was not until some four years ago that Dr. Sheppard, in response to Dr. Morrison's urgent and repeated requests, at last consented to commence a campaign against the Kasai Company. It was the suddenness and bitterness of this attack on the part of one who had been previously silent which prompted the Belgians to bring a charge of ill-faith against Dr. Sheppard.

Indeed, the circumstances which led up to his attack on them, coupled with the fact that he possessed an hereditary tendency to exaggerate and was by no means always particular as regards the accuracy of the statements which he made, led me to suspect that his picture of the Bakuba's misery was somewhat highly coloured.

The American Presbyterian missionaries claim to have made several thousand native converts, despite the obstacles which have been placed in their path by the Belgians. According to Count de Grunne, who himself belongs to a Catholic family, they are more popular and more successful with the natives than the Catholics. This is due, I think, in part to their greater laxity in discipline, but more particularly to their endeavours to teach the natives to read and write, which the Catholic missionaries made no great efforts to do until recently, and then only apparently under the stress of competition. As a matter of fact it is to my mind extremely doubtful whether the acquirement of these arts is of much value to the native, who would certainly be more greatly benefited by being taught a useful trade and the elements of cleanliness, hygiene, and morality based on the grounds of common sense. However, the Bena Lulua and Baluka tribes have shown a great desire to learn to read and write, doubtless generally with the idea that they will thus acquire no small portion of the white man's wisdom and wealth, and it is this thirst for knowledge which the American missionaries have turned to good account.

The Belgians have undoubtedly on several occasions had reasonable cause for complaining of the conduct of the American missionaries, who have been much too prone to regard all the former as unscrupulous bandits. At different times Belgian officers and judges have received letters from the missionaries of an extremely insulting nature. On one occasion a travelling judge summoned one of them to appear before him to give evidence at a convenient hour in close proximity to the mission; he received a reply to the effect that the missionary did not intend to appear unless and until he found it convenient to do so. The judge, wisely perhaps, ignored the insult, for had he chosen to prosecute the missionary for contempt of court it would undoubtedly have led to a long and bitter controversy.

I will relate another incident which occurred while I was living on the American Mission, in order to show to what an extent religious fervour has more than once carried these missionaries. A State steamer arrived unexpectedly on a Sunday morning in order to take the "chef de poste," whose term of service was ended, down to Stanley Pool. The "chef de poste" thereupon sent a message to the village summoning certain natives to come and assist him to pack up his belongings (forced labour had not at that time been prohibited). The natives in question immediately came and lodged a complaint with the missionaries, on the ground that they did not wish to work on Sunday. The latter were highly indignant at the State officer's conduct, professing that it was in open defiance of the Berlin Act, which guaranteed religious liberties to all natives, and this despite the fact that the particular natives in question were not converts and had never even attended the church; indeed, the missionaries admitted that it was but a pretence on the part of the natives who were merely seeking an opportunity to escape work. They, however, insisted that all their principles were at stake, declaring their intention of making an international affair of it, nor was it without some considerable difficulty that I dissuaded them from taking any action in the matter.

Relations between the American missionaries and the local authorities and traders were considerably improved when I left Luebo. There is now only one serious question at issue between them, that of the right of the missionaries to hold a "court" and dispense justice among the natives. This claim has at various times caused considerable friction, particularly in disputes where a white trader has been involved, and the Belgian State officer must undoubtedly have suffered in prestige through the holding of this court. As long, however, as the missionaries will be content to deal only with civil cases, which I think they will do in future, and provided they obtain the consent of the natives to their adjudication, the Belgians may offer no objection; even should they do so, it is difficult to see what measures they would be justified in taking.

If I have criticised the American missionaries somewhat severely it has been owing to a desire to show that the Belgians have been by no means always in the wrong in their dealings with them. There is, however, a great deal to be said in favour of the American missionaries, who though lacking much in the discipline and respect for authority which their British colleagues seem more capable of showing, are, nevertheless, on the whole considerably more intelligent, more liberal

in their views, and better educated than those of the latter whom I met in the Lower Congo.

Roman Catholic Missionaries.—The Roman Catholic missionaries in the Kasai district all belong to one order, that of the "Pères Scheut," who are drawn mostly from the Flemish peasant class. Their head is Père Cambier, apostolic prefect for the Kasai, whose headquarters are near Luluaburg. They have some ten stations in the district of which I have visited six; and have never, I believe, experienced the least difficulty in obtaining concessions; indeed, in more than one instance they have been given land which had previously been refused the American Presbyterians. On this account, and also presumably through traditional antagonism, the two missions have invariably been on bad terms with each other, and their native followers seem to have imbibed no little of the enmity with which their spiritual leaders have become imbued.

Père Cambier is, I believe, on terms of close intimacy with M. Renkin, the Belgian Minister of the colonies. The latter recently sent out Père Cambier's brother, who is said to have failed in his printing business in Belgium, to Luluaburg, accompanied by his wife and seven young children. The object of sending them out thus at the public expense was said to be that of superintending the building of a sleeping sickness hospital, but also more especially to counteract the tendency of the Belgians to live with a native mistress, a tendency supposed to be detrimental to their efficiency and prestige in the eyes of the natives. While this custom often leads to difficulties, it can hardly be said to lower the white man in the eyes of the natives, and M. Renkin's action in sending out this man and his family, which occasioned great astonishment and outspoken criticism on the part of the Belgians on the spot, can do no good and must assuredly result in the deaths of several members of the family.

It is, however, with the Compagnie du Kasai that the Pères Scheut have always maintained the most intimate relations. Several of their mission stations are named after directors of the company, who have been generous benefactors. The company undertakes their transport as far as Luebo, while the missionaries are under contract to carry by means of native porters all the company's rubber, provisions and barter goods between Luebo and Libitadi some 200 or 250 miles. The missionaries furthermore maintain, on behalf of the company, the latter's rubber plantation at Bem Makima. It will thus be seen that there is an intimate connection between the Compagnie du Kasai and the Pères Scheut, a connection which, to my mind, is most unfortunate. It has tied the hands of the Pères Scheut in the matter of criticism of the Kasai company's methods, and has certainly materially strengthened the notion of the natives that the sole object of the white man is to get rubber from him. Individually the agents of the company being almost all agnostics, are not on good terms with the priests, but they are bound as a matter of policy to maintain good relations with them outwardly.

The stations of the Pères Scheut which I have visited are better built, better equipped, and better organised than those of the American Presbyterians, but, except politically, I do not think that they wield such a real influence with the natives in the out-villages as do the latter. Neither of the rival missions, however, has as yet succeeded in influencing more than a fringe of the native community, whom as a whole Christianity, at least as taught by the missionaries, does not seem really to interest, and it is through the children that they must look for permanent results of their labours. There is a most unfortunate tendency on the part of the rival missions to concentrate in the same area, leaving a large part of the district entirely unoccupied. This is owing to the fact that the tribes occupying that area are the only ones who show any real desire to learn, and since it cannot fail to result in a rivalry still further intensified, will require the exercise of considerable tact and impartiality on the part of the Belgian Government in the future.

While the American Presbyterians are not perhaps free from blame in this respect, the Pères Scheut have, according to information given me both by Belgian officials and native chiefs, not infrequently attempted to take political measures to secure a spiritual advantage.

Belgian Officials.—Owing to the irregularity of my official position, I did not have the same opportunity of close contact with the Government officials that I should have otherwise enjoyed. Though they seemed to be more competent than I had been led to expect would be the case, they are on the whole far inferior in education and social standing to corresponding officials in British colonies. Owing largely no doubt to the fact that the Belgians as a whole have not yet accustomed themselves to leaving their

native country, considerable difficulty must have been experienced in inducing men of the right stamp to go to the Congo. Also, no doubt, in the days of the Free State, the late King Leopold did not always find it convenient to have employes who were burdened with a too fine conscience. However, that may be, the fact remains that practically all the Belgians of whom I have heard who can claim any education or social standing in Belgium, have found themselves compelled to go to the Congo on account of debts, love intrigues, or other social difficulties. The majority of the State officials of to-day served formerly under the banner of the Free State. This of course has no bearing on the question of the attitude towards them of the natives, who can naturally make no distinction between the Government of the Free State and that of the Belgians, but it is of vast importance when one comes to consider that the employes of both régimes can scarcely avoid a certain continuity of the old policy, and that the newcomers are more or less necessarily imbued with the old ideals. Indeed, until the Belgian Colonial Office can create a career for those going out to the Congo, instead of the present short-lived money-making contract, it is difficult to see how this can be radically altered. A step in the right direction has, it is true, been taken by the recent decree, establishing a contract for two "terms" of two years each, instead of for one "term" of three years.

I met the Vice-Governor-General Henri, who now holds a special commission in the Kasai district, on several occasions and enjoyed some lengthy conversations with him. He was formerly, I believe, one of the staunchest adherents and defenders of the old Congo Free State system, and though I am aware that M. Renkin thinks most highly of him, I must admit that he by no means impressed me. Apparently gifted by nature with no great amount of brains, he seems quite overcome with a sense of his own importance. He appeared to me to find a difficulty in grasping the true gist of any question, and to be lacking in real sympathy and breadth of view. From his conversation at least, one would gather that his sole aim was to abstract as much money from the natives in taxation as was consistent with the present state of public feeling on the subject in Belgium and England. Called upon one occasion to decide a "palaver" between people of the Bakette and Baluba tribes as to the alleged encroachment of the latter on the former's territory, he decided in favour of the Bakette because their huts appeared to be old, whereas the most elementary knowledge of native customs would have told him that they are in the habit of carrying their huts from place to place whenever they decide to change the site of their village.

I did not have the opportunity of meeting M. Gustin, the commissaire général of the district. He is a Free State official of many years standing, with, I should say, a distinct leaning towards the old régime.

Count de Grunne, who was "chef de secteur" at Luebo, and with whom I was well acquainted, was, in my opinion, the most competent Belgian official in those parts of the Kasai district which I visited, he was certainly the most popular with the natives. Although he had not come to the Congo of his own free will, but on account of private and domestic troubles, he displayed far more zeal, interest and sympathy with regard to the natives than any other official I met. The American Presbyterians, unable to make any distinction between him and the other Belgian officials whom they knew, unfortunately made a series of unfounded accusations against him, which led him to certain retaliations. On the whole, however, he seems to have shown considerable ability and administrative capacity, acting in particular with great impartiality and justice in certain cases of political intrigue by Catholic missionaries against their Protestant rivals, an attitude that must have been rendered doubly difficult by the strong Catholic traditions of his family.

Of the three "chefs de poste," who were at Luebo during my stay there, the first was a stained window painter by profession. He was moderately competent and honest. The second was entirely incompetent, and was removed after a short interval to another post. The third, a Swiss, and a watchmaker by trade, was possessed of considerable intelligence, but on account of his entire absence of manners, and his unclean habits could scarcely be expected, either by precept or example, to exercise a civilising influence over the natives.

The Belgian who was selected by Colonel Henri in September last for the responsible position of "chef de poste" at Mushengi, in the capital of the Bakuba country, was formerly a rubber collector for the Société anonyme belge in the somewhat notorious "Busblock." It is difficult to see how, whatever character he may have borne there, his previous experiences could warrant his being chosen for this important post, where not the least among his duties should be to see that

the Bakuba receive fair treatment at the hands of the rubber collectors of the Kasai company.

Judges.—The only judicial official whom I met in the Kasai district was a travelling "substitute." Though lacking much in experience, he seemed to me to be extremely honest and impartial, and through my acquaintance with him I formed, rightly or wrongly, a much higher opinion of Belgian judges than I should otherwise have entertained.

I have described in some detail the characters of some of the Belgian officials whom I met, because I believe the matter of the personnel to be the crux of the whole Congo question, and while public opinion in Europe can now, more or less, mould the general lines of the Belgian policy, it cannot regulate the constitution of the staff upon whom the carrying of theory into practice depends.

It is undeniable that the higher the standard is, both of moral and intellectual training in Belgian officials in the Congo, the more nearly will the demands of public opinion be met. To give one concrete instance: there is not, so far as I am aware, a single Belgian in the Kasai who is able to speak one of the native languages. The only means of intercourse with the inhabitants is a pigeon language of a few hundred words, invented by the Belgians, only understood by a fraction of the natives, and entirely inadequate as a channel of thought and expression.

Kasai Company's Officials.—I made the acquaintance of a considerable number of employees of the Kasai Company, including that of two directors, the inspector, and two "chefs de secteur."

While they are not generally drawn from the wealthy or well-educated classes in Belgium they possessed, as a rule, a very considerable amount of natural intelligence.

I did not meet any who, to my knowledge, systematically ill-treated the natives, but they were one and all without any sympathy for them whatsoever, nor did they take any pains to conceal their sentiments in the matter. The native appears in short to be a necessary evil in their opinion, though they recognise that he is indispensable to them. Not unnaturally their sole aim, where they have any ambition, is to save as much money as will enable them to open a shop or a business of a similar kind in Belgium.

In cases where they have ill-treated the natives, some mitigation if not excuse should, I think, be found for their conduct. It is difficult, I suppose, to realise the mental strain imposed on men, not as a rule endowed with much strength of character or a very liberal education, by the life which they are called upon to lead. Living often in a miserable mud-house in the depths of the equatorial forest, it is a rare event for them to see another white man. Suffering constantly from fevers, living mostly on tinned food badly cooked by natives who are quite indifferent to their comforts or interests, without any opportunity of amusement or mental relaxation, it is small wonder that some of them have lost their self-control.

The employees of the Kasai Company one and all professed to regard not only the attack of the American missionaries on the company but also Consul Theisger's report as being entirely unjustified; nor have I much doubt but that those who had no means of knowing the facts of the case were honestly of that opinion. They affected indeed to look upon it as merely a part of the general campaign waged by Great Britain against Belgian rule in the Congo. Neither the employees of the Kasai Company nor the State officials hesitated to assert that this campaign, founded on the stories of missionaries and reports of consuls, which they consider to be equally biased, has been carried on purely for political purposes, and is a gross libel on the Belgians, who, many of them honestly believe, have never treated the natives any more badly than have the British, French, or German in their respective colonies.

These opinions, being those of subordinate officials and traders, may not have any value, but are worth recording as being apparently the uniform sentiment of the Belgians now in the Congo.

Consul Muckie to Sir Edward Grey. (Received June 10.)

(No. 22. Africa.)
Sir,

Boma, May 30, 1911.

I HAVE the honour to submit herewith reports on the colonial tours recently undertaken for the purpose of studying the condition of the Congo natives since the Belgian reform decrees came into operation in July 1910.

The three steamers hired by His Majesty's Government provided Vice-Consul Campbell and myself with the means of rapid communication that enabled us in the short space of barely three and a-half months to cover an area that would probably have occupied a year or more to journey through under ordinary conditions of African travel.

The report, dealing as it does with the existing order of things, does not contain any direct allusion to the atrocities and criminal acts that so unhappily marked the administration of this country some years ago—a circumstance that may give rise to no surprise. It may be well, therefore, to mention that the situation as depicted in Mr. R. Casemont's reports of 1903-1904 has undergone so radical a change that, beyond a few isolated acts of cruelty committed by individual offenders, nothing of the nature of systematic abuse could be detected. It is with a feeling of relief that I find myself able to say that my journeys have not been marred by any harrowing details of atrocities and excesses such as those committed in the past, and that there is substantial ground for the belief that crime and oppression are now the exception and not the rule. The cases that have come to my notice cannot be said to be of such grave import as to warrant detailed comment, and the majority of these cases have, moreover, been amply palliated by the legal measures taken to redress the wrongs committed and prevent their recurrence.

While there is no room for doubting the sincerity of the Belgian Government in the reforms they have introduced—a view that would seem to find support in the missionary testimony annexed to this report—it is nevertheless worthy of note that the future welfare of the country will depend upon outside influences rather than upon local administration. It will be remembered that the evils complained of in the past have been attributed to the influential persons in Europe who, actuated by motives of personal gain, brought the full weight of their authority to bear upon the officials in the inland rubber districts of the Congo to ensure the rapid and wholesale acquisition of the natural wealth of the soil. The unfortunate official entrusted with the care of the natives devoted all his energies to the collection of revenue instead of governing the country. This pressure has now happily been removed, and the result has worked a remarkable transformation in the space of a little over ten months since the application of the reforms. The dispirited people, released from the burden of excessive taxation in kind, are growing more reassured and contented, many natives who migrated to French territory are returning to their former homes, the birth-rate is already on the increase, sleeping sickness shows signs of abatement, and the tax in currency is in many of the wealthier districts cheerfully and readily paid. The natives are rapidly learning to appreciate the value and advantages of money. This has been especially marked in the case of gum copal, which has been eagerly collected in some of the districts near the main river. The hitherto indolent native has been known to work night and day gathering the gum, and has been said to earn as much as 10 fr a-day.

M. Renkin, in his *rapport* relating to the new reforms, sounds a cheerful note in drawing the distinction that existed between the former State, conducted with practically no funds behind it, and the Congo as it is to-day—a colony of a rich and prosperous mother-country. There therefore appear to be substantial grounds for assuming that the country will not be allowed to drift backward for lack of funds. The resources of the country have been exhausted in many districts, and in the remoter territories money is difficult to obtain. The leniency needed in the imposition of the tax must of necessity conduce to a reduced revenue and increased deficit, and it is to be hoped the situation may be relieved by the grant of a loan to tide over the difficult period of transition from forced labour to free trade.

To revert to the much contested question of land tenure, the State claiming in the past a proprietary right absolute and exclusive to nearly all the lands not actually

occupied or cultivated by the natives, I have endeavoured to question the natives closely regarding their land limits, and find they are well acquainted with their village boundaries and the limits of their hunting-grounds, fisheries, &c., which they regard as their own property. By the application of a more liberal interpretation of the law, it is proposed to accord to the natives the enjoyment of the produce of the soil, and although this privilege is still a simple sufferance, the question is gradually entering into the phase of a workable compromise. The rapid exhaustion of the soil under cassava cultivation had the need for a constant change of locality is now generally recognised both from an agricultural and sanitary standpoint.

In connection with my report on the alleged abuses at Bodala, perhaps I may be permitted to briefly allude to a matter that would appear to have a most important bearing upon the welfare of the population. The area of the present judicial circuits is so vast as to render it impossible for the present staff to cope with the magnitude of the ever-increasing duties they are called upon to perform. For this reason it would be unfair to disparage these officials for the inordinate delay that so often arises in dealing even with the graver crimes of violence and murder—it may in fact be said to their credit that it is often a matter of surprise that they have accomplished as much as they have done in spite of the vicissitudes of the climate and the discomforts of their uncivilised surroundings. The onerous duties of the administrators of justice are fraught with the hardships of constant travelling and overwork, and it would be no exaggeration to say that even if the present staff were to be increased fourfold there would still be ample scope for work on all sides.

In view of the hopes inspired by the humane measures adopted with such salutary results in the districts declared open in 1910 and 1911, which comprise the enormous territories watered by the Congo and Kasai Rivers, it is with a feeling of disappointment that I find it my duty to frankly admit that the general aspects of the situation in the "1912 zones," as set forth in the report on my tour through the Aruwimi district, does not altogether inspire confidence. There continues, in my humble judgment, to be reasonable room for doubt as to whether the conditions that have been left unchanged since the former régime will bear the light of an impartial examination. In a vast country like the Congo it is possible that the reformers, in concentrating their attention upon the newly opened areas, may have overlooked the evils of forced labour in the less fortunate districts. It is worthy of note, nevertheless, that, while the urgent need for radical reforms has been fully admitted by a commission of enquiry and also by the Belgian Government itself, it has not yet been found possible to abolish the labour system in certain zones that still remain closed to the civilising influences of trade. In these circumstances the unfavourable conditions revealed by the missionary evidence dealt with in the accompanying report may, I think, safely be accepted as irrefutable, and I have therefore not deemed it necessary to enter into a more exhaustive enquiry into the conditions in question. The object aimed at throughout the tours undertaken has been to mete out to the new Belgian administration the fullest measure of credit for the changes they have wrought, and the best that can be said of the 1912 zone is that the existing order of things is doomed to end on the 1st July, 1912. In the meantime the cessation of work in other districts has thrown the full force of the strains upon this zone still worked by forced labour.

I have, &c.
H. G. MACKIE.

Enclosure I in No. 14.

Report by Consul Mackie.

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ITINERARIES OF TOURS

In this instance the object aimed at was not, as has hitherto been the case in the Congo, merely to obtain a report on some particular district, but to form a general idea of the changes that had taken place since the Belgian annexation of the country and of the value of the reforms introduced by the decrees that came into force on the 1st July, 1910. The question being a wide one, it could not be gauged merely by the conditions prevailing in the comparatively insignificant area of a single district, and consular tours on a more extensive scale were accordingly undertaken.

Three steamers—the "Livingstone," a fast modern stern-wheeler of some 50 tons burden, owned by the Congo-Balolo Mission; the "Pioneer," a small paddle-steamer used for navigating the tributaries of the Congo inaccessible to large steamers during the low-water season; and the "Henry Reed," owned by an American mission—were hired by His Majesty's Government. The two former steamers were placed at my disposal, and the latter was reserved for the use of Vice-Consul Campbell.

To enable us to derive all possible advantage from the travelling facilities placed at our disposal, I was allowed to use my own discretion as to the itineraries of the tours, an arrangement that left us free to investigate on the spot any abuses brought to our notice by the missionaries. In this manner nearly all the irregularities to which the newspaper press has recently directed the attention of the British public have been investigated by personal inspection of the localities in which they occurred.

My own tour extended as far as Pontherville, on the Lualaba River. Overland tours were also undertaken. The first of these tours extended from the main river to the Aruwimi, which I descended in a canoe. The next overland journey was from Upoto, on the main river, to Bodala, the scene of one of the recent disorders, and then along the ridge of the Congo-Lopori watershed to Bongandanga, on the Lopori River, where the steam-ship "Pioneer" met me and conveyed me to the Maringa River, which I ascended as far as Monpono. Leaving Monpono, I descended the river to Ikou, from which point two circular tours were undertaken through the country lying to the east and west of that place. I thence proceeded by steamer up the Rubira Busira River as far as Longa. From Longa I descended again as far as Bolebe, where a circular journey to Ikoko, on Lake N'Tumba, was undertaken. From this lake a short circular

tour was made through the Lusakani villages to Irebu, and finally in the neighbourhood of Bobobo a similar circular journey was undertaken from N'Kunda over the plains to Bongendo.

The mission stations visited by me were those of Leopoldville, Kinchasa, Chumbiri, Bobobo, Lukolela, Bolebe, Upoto, Yalamba, Yakusu, Baringa, Monpono, Ikou, Bonginda, Longa, and Ikoko. A short stay of a day or two was made at almost all the stations in order to visit and inspect the villages in their immediate neighbourhood.

Owing to the breakage of a shaft on the "Livingstone," a delay of some weeks took place, but in view of the approaching low-water season an effort was made to effect a saving of time by proceeding up the river to meet the "Livingstone" on her way down. Passages were provided for us in the steam-ship "Eudeavour," owned by the Baptist Missionary Society. Unfortunately this vessel ran on at Stanley Rocks, a few days up the river, where she remained in an unsafe position during a storm. Not many days, however, were lost, the "Livingstone" having hastened down the river on receipt of the news of the accident.

The total distance covered by me on the Upper Congo River and in the territories watered by its tributaries amounted to 3,500 miles of steamer journeys and overland travel in the short space of barely three and a-half months.

Vice-Consul Campbell left Boma on the 26th January and proceeded to Leopoldville, where he made a short tour in the neighbourhood of Stanley Pool. Continuing thence to Irebu, he found the steamer "Henry Reed," hired from the American Foreign Baptist Missionary Society, awaiting him. Unfortunately the captain whose services he had hoped to secure was not available, and he incurred three weeks' delay pending the arrival of a person capable of taking charge of the steamer, and who eventually accompanied him. These three weeks he spent in visiting Lake N'Tumba and in crossing overland from that lake to Lake Leopold II. Returning to Lake N'Tumba by a different route, he embarked in the "Henry Reed" and passed the succeeding three weeks on the Oubangui River and its tributaries—the Ngiri and the Lua. On his return to Irebu he steamed up the main river as far as Mobeke, whence he proceeded up the Mongala River to Lukulu. Continuing his study of the conditions in the Bangala district, he subsequently journeyed to Lisala, from which place he made an inland tour amongst the Ngombe and Budja tribes inhabiting the territories to the north of the main river. Returning to Lulanga, he met me, and, after delivering the "Henry Reed" to the American missionaries, descended the main river on the steam-ship "Livingstone." In all, Mr. Campbell travelled a distance of 3,275 miles. The two tours combined thus show a total distance covered of 6,775 miles.

In order to cover as large an area as possible in the shortest limit of time, Mr. L. H. Taylor, secretary to this consulate, undertook several independent tours.

VISIT TO NEIGHBOURHOOD OF CHUMBIRI

The villages of Bwemba, Likeuga, Monpolenge, and N'Tari, inhabited by the Bobangi tribe, and Niamata, M'Belandunu, M'Pela, and N'Zabi, inhabited by the Batekes, were inspected by me on the occasion of my visit to Chumbiri.

Introduction of Money appreciated by Natives.

The natives appeared to fully appreciate the value of money, and were keen upon selling their produce. The demand for food supplies along the river affords them an opportunity of trading, and since the introduction of money they have undoubtedly derived much benefit from their earnings. The latter tribe is unfortunately addicted to drinking wine, they make out of the juice of the sugar cane.

The time at my disposal did not admit of my seeing the villages of the Baboma Anbe, who live some distance from the river.

Effect of Tax.

The conclusion to which an examination of the local conditions led me to arrive is that the tax of 9 fr. per man and 2 fr. for every wife except the first cannot be considered excessive in the case of the riverine tribes, who can easily earn sufficient to pay it, but farther inland money is not so easily procured, and difficulty in meeting the tax is likely to arise.

Return of Natives from French Territories.

On account of the oppression the natives of this district suffered in the past at the hands of rubber collectors, a number fled to the French side of the river. Growing reassured by the recent improved conditions, they returned to their former homes. Unfortunately they brought with them their old guns of the muzzle-loading flint-lock pattern. Being threatened by the Belgians with legal proceedings for the illegal possession of fire-arms, they have lately gone back again into French territory.

CIRCULAR TOUR IN NEIGHBOURHOOD OF BOLOBO.

This tour extended from N'Kanda or Bousolondonga, on the main river, through N'Gau and M'Pone to Bongende. The country is inhabited along the river bank by the Mone tribe, and inland by the Batendi tribe. The chiefs of the villages of both tribes were interviewed and questioned as to local conditions affecting the welfare of their people.

Taxation

In answer to an enquiry made in the village of N'Gau, inhabited by the Mone tribe, the taxes appeared to be 9 fr. per man per annum, and 2 fr. per wife in the case of men married to more than one woman. The sum of 5 fr. had already been paid. The chief stated that the sale of their produce was voluntary, except when the white man set a demand for food when they considered themselves obliged to supply it. They were, however, always paid by the white man at the usual rates, viz. 1 fr. for twenty-three kwanga rolls, 3 fr. for a duck, and 1 fr. for a large chicken. The village chief said that they were not molested in any way by the white man, but complained that the sentries stole their eggs.

At the village of M'Pone, inhabited by the Batendi tribe, the chief produced a printed receipt form for the first instalment of this year's tax, which is at the rate of 9 fr. per man and 2 fr. per married woman (the first wife excepted). According to native testimony, the money needed for paying the tax is obtained by selling kwanga and chickens, for which the State pays at the rate of 1 fr. for twenty-four kwanga rolls of large size and 1 fr. for two chickens. The chief likewise complained about the sentries taking his eggs and only paying him a teaspoon of salt for five eggs, usual sold at a dessertspoon or 5 centimes each.

Favourable General Impression.

The general impression produced on entering the villages in this district is favourable. The condition of the natives appears to have improved since 1904, when I last visited Bolobo. At a village called Bongoyne a new section is in course of construction. The huts that were being built at the time of my visit point to a more modern type, and show a considerable increase in size when compared with the older dwellings. The compounds were tidily kept, and the children appeared to be better cared for and free from skin disease. This view was endorsed by the missionaries, who said that they had noticed a considerable improvement in the health conditions of the people and increase in the birth rate.

Natives not allowed to sell Produce to Steamers.

While it is satisfactory to be able to record improved conditions, it must nevertheless be noted that some of the natives complained that they had found it difficult to pay the tax because they were not allowed to sell their produce to the steamers, who pay better prices than they could realise by going to market. In the market they did not receive full value for their produce; in fact, the native purchasers, when they had spent all their money, helped themselves to what was left for sale without making any payment. At Ljasa, the market I inspected is under the direct supervision of a white official, who insists upon fair play in the monetary transactions between the natives. I was unable to visit the market in this district, which is usually held on Sundays, but from all accounts, owing to lack of supervision, the conditions are not altogether favourable to the native vendors.

Unsatisfactory Delegation of Powers to Chiefs.

Most of the districts of the officials are so vast that it would often hardly be reasonable to expect them to do more than they have in many instances already done to promote the welfare of the native. These officials, through pressure of work, are obliged to delegate their powers to the medal chiefs, native messengers employed in conveying orders to the more distant villages, and others wholly unfit for positions of trust, who exercise their powers in a vexatious spirit, and often, as in the case of the appropriation of eggs by the sentries, arrogate to themselves privileges they were not intended to enjoy. The system of employing the chiefs to collect the taxes is peculiarly susceptible to abuse. The chiefs supply the names of the tax-payers, and it is consequently open to them, to accept bribes to let taxable men off, or they may even tax a man twice over. Unless proper precautions are taken there can be little doubt that unscrupulous chiefs will soon find tax-gathering a profitable concern, and enrich themselves at the expense of the State and the tax-payer alike.

Fixing of Prices of Food Supplies.

On several occasions during my tour the natives have asked exorbitant prices for food. Until they have had time to become better acquainted with the value of money, too much importance should not perhaps be attached to the regulation of market prices by the officials, provided these prices are fair and reasonable. The position of a white official in some remote fever-stricken district without food supplies at moments of emergency cannot be lost sight of, and for this reason the occasional demands made for food, involving no hardships upon the natives, and for which they receive payment on the same scale as for produce voluntarily supplied, should not be so severely condemned during the present period of transition. In some districts the officials say that so much food is sometimes brought in to their posts for sale that it is always convenient or profitable to buy it, but as disappointed vendors are apt to discontinue bringing in supplies they consider it bad policy to discourage enterprise and buy more than they often require.

The Chief of Gama, who appeared to consider the tax too heavy, had nevertheless a complaint of unfair treatment to make, while the Chief of Bongende said he had to sell a goat for 7 fr. to pay his first instalment of this year's tax. His men raised money by selling fish in the local market. 130 men of his village had paid their tax, but he admitted that there might be some who had not done so. Another chief said that in one or two instances the white man had let off those who could not pay, while in some cases the fathers paid for their sons.

Return of Natives from French Territory

The natives who had taken refuge in the French territories on the opposite side of the river to escape the hardships of the old régime are now returning to their former homes in the neighbourhood of Bolobo. This circumstance may be considered as a hopeful sign and substantial evidence of improved conditions.

CIRCULAR TOUR FROM LAKE N'TUMBA TO IREBU.

Taxation. Supplies of Food for Irebu.

Towards the end of the first day's march a number of villages were seen. The villages belong to the Lusitani tribe, and appear, judging from a native standpoint, to be fairly wealthy, and may be said to be well able to pay their tax of 9 fr. per man per annum and 2 fr. for every wife except the first out of the proceeds realised by the sale of their produce. These villages being near the instruction camp at Irebu, which has a garrison of over 700 men, there is a considerable demand for food supplies, both for the garrison as well as the steamers plying between the pool and Stanleyville. Women laden with large baskets of food were met on the road en route for the Irebu market, where they appear to obtain a fair price for food products. In consequence of this

demand for food some difficulty arose in providing my carriers with provisions, the natives having sold all their produce, except their own food supplies, at Irebu. It was only on being offered exorbitant prices that they were finally induced to provide sufficient food for a meal.

Inland Villages.

I encamped for the night in the village of Bongeli, and continued my journey next morning across a vast open plain for some hours until I reached the villages known as the Lusakan group. These villages are scattered over the plain, and are smaller and not so well built as the villages previously visited. The people, who appeared to be poorer, stated that they had only paid 2 fr. per man as a tax for 1910, and did not know what they would have to pay this year. They seemed to be leading a peaceful and contented life, and did not complain.

On returning to the river in the direction of Irebu the road passes an almost uninterrupted line of large villages. The natives of these villages built comfortable huts out of bamboo, which looked neater than the wattle and daub huts so common to the other parts of the Congo. Some of the villages were built in the shape of a triangle, with an extensive cleared space in the centre. Most of the villages were well stocked with poultry, including ducks, and owned a number of goats, which were at one time practically extinct in the villages of this district.

Palm Wine Drinking and Cruelty to Wives

The tribe are addicted to palm wine drinking, and are cruel to their wives. A woman who had fled from her husband had quite recently been captured and brutally beaten for three days. Hearing sobbing at night, I entered a hut in the morning and found the woman lying on a heavy fork-shaped log forming a rough collar, with an iron pin driven under her chin so as to secure her head firmly in the thongs of the log. She had been lying in that condition, according to native statements, for many days, and appeared to be suffering acutely. On arrival at Irebu I brought the case to the knowledge of the commandant, who immediately ordered the woman's release and the man to be brought before him the next day.

BOLENGE TO IKOKO, LAKE N'TEMBA.

Taxation.

The tax in this district is payable in money, the amount being 9 fr. for each male and 3 fr. for each wife after the first one. One half-yearly collection has already been made, and does not appear to have occasioned any discontent. The money is obtained by the sale of ducks, chicken, sugar-cane, kwanga (native bread), &c., to the white men and black population of Coquilhatville. Ducks fetch from 2 to 2½ fr. and chicken 1 fr. each, or, if small, 50 centimes. There is no compulsory supplying of food in addition to the money taxation, and the natives appear to be eager to earn money by the voluntary sale of their produce.

Rubber Industry Unattractive to Natives

From questions asked it seems that there is still a fair amount of rubber in this district, but the natives will not work it, being apprehensive of a repetition of the atrocities committed in the past. A trader has lately been through and tried to tempt the people to get him rubber, but he has not been able to induce them to work it. The chief at Bongeli is fully alive to the market value of rubber, but even his appeals to the natives to resume collecting have been of no avail.

Absence of Resources.

As regards resources, elephants are scarce, and gum copal is not collected, nor does there seem to be any natural wealth, with the exception, perhaps, of palm oil.

Tribes and Villages.

The tribe of this district is called N'Kundu. The women wear their hair plastered up with oil and grease, and colour it with camwood powder.

The villages have no special characteristics, the huts being of wattle and daub or bamboo, and some are simple shelters. They are not palisaded nor built with any special care. The chief of the town lives in a house covered by a large shelter over the house.

In several of the towns there are "hat chiefs." He is an old man of very high standing, who wears a tall hat decorated with cowries and buttons. He is never seen without this appendage, and if it is ever removed it is only done in the secrecy of his home. He has to be greeted by three or four claps of the hand before he is spoken to.

Fishing.

The villages near the lake live by fishing. All the creeks are netted, and large erections are seen in many places for trapping the fish at night by means of a powerful light. The net is let down into the water, and when a fair number of fish have been attracted in it is rapidly drawn up, and the fish caught in the curved-up end. There are low- as well as high-water fishermen, who work at different seasons. At low water fish is plentiful, and is easily caught by means of a portable fence made of bamboo, with which the fish is encircled by swimmers, and the circle is gradually reduced to a convenient size for removing the fish by hand. At high water the fish is caught in well-shaped traps made of shreds of bamboo, which requires more skilful manipulation. Fish weighing from 5 to 10 lb. are caught by these methods of fishing. Small fish are caught by women and children by means of a funnel-shaped basket, which they drop over the fish.

Complaint of an ex-Chief at Ikoko.

An ex-chief and a native appeared before me at Ikoko to complain about certain conditions which they considered unfavourable. The fact that in the Lake Leopold II district the natives only paid a tax of 5 fr. per man, whereas they were being taxed at 9 fr., appeared to form the basis of their complaint. On enquiry it transpired that their recent hauls of fish had been some 300 fish, weighing from 7 lb. to 10 lb. each, a-day. The largest haul during my visit to Ikoko was 408 fish in one day. These fish find a ready market at Irebu, which has a large garrison, and where they sell at 50 centimes a-fish at this season, when fish is plentiful. The chief's share out of a haul of 300 fish would be about 20, representing 10 fr. in one day. Any surplus stock left unsold is smoked, and bartered in the inland districts for native bread, &c. During the high-water season fish is less plentiful, and a native would only catch perhaps two or three. Fish caught at that season is good eating fish and fetches 1 fr. each. Owing to the ease with which money is earned, carriers for journeys in this district cannot be had under 1 fr. a-day. There consequently seemed no ground for complaint of excessive taxation, and the American missionaries support this view. Having four wives, the ex-Chief of Ikoko is taxed at the rate of 15 fr. per annum.

Signs of Commercial Activity.

Signs of commercial activity in the district of Lake N'Temba are not lacking. The Société anonyme belge, Dutch House, and the Irebu Company appear to be opening up business at Bikoro, and the Dutch House are also establishing themselves at Nalaka, on the south end of the lake.

Application of a Native for permission to grow Rubber refused.

In regard to the acquisition of land by the natives for the cultivation of rubber, &c., it would appear that natives have been placed on the same footing with white men. A pupil of the American mission at Ikoko desired to cultivate rubber to sell to the white traders, and Messrs. Hartsock and Rogers of that mission approached the authorities at Coquilhatville on his behalf with a view to obtaining permission to start a rubber plantation. They were told, however, that the applicant would have to buy the land and obtain a title-deed. A distinction is thus made between rubber planting

and the cultivation of native cereals on the village grounds. On the other hand, in the other districts, in the case of several of the plantations abandoned by the State, the natives were invited to work the rubber and bring it to the State posts for sale.

The American mission at Bolonge have several native teachers in the neighbouring villages, and they are doing good work at Bongondi, Bongigi, and other villages in the district.

No signs of Timidity among Natives.

It is worthy of note that there were no signs of timidity among the natives of the country crossed between the main river and the lake. Rather than flee on the approach of a white man, the natives of Bongigi even suggested that a white man might come to live at Bofigi, the next village, as the journey to Coquilhatville is difficult, and they find the sugar-cane and kwanza rolls heavy to carry and apt to spoil. There used to be a post at Bofigi some years ago.

American Mission, Bolonge.

The American missionaries at Bolonge appear to consider that the natives along the river-banks have no difficulty in paying their tax, and attribute any inability to pay to laziness, there being a considerable demand for labour in consequence of the shortage of working hands. Even farther inland, where greater difficulty exists in meeting the tax, money can always be raised by selling food-stuffs at Coquilhatville. The supplies are somewhat scarce at Coquilhatville, and it should be possible to earn in a single journey enough money to pay the tax. At Bolonge the natives sell their provisions at three or more times their value in the villages, while at Coquilhatville they can get double the Bolonge prices at times. The natives on the river-banks are considered to be prosperous, goats and sheep being a source of revenue for purposes of taxation.

BANGALA DISTRICT.

Visit to Nouvelle Anvers.

Nouvelle Anvers is well situated on elevated ground on the right bank of the main river. The European dwellings consist of clusters of buildings mostly made of brick, with thatched roofs, accommodating about twenty white inhabitants. From this centre a large district is administered, and it is here that the commissaire and judge reside. Near by are the colony buildings, where a number of children known as orphans are being educated and trained for military service, and to the eastward of these are also the Roman Catholic mission buildings, with an imposing church edifice.

Depopulation.

The natives live in large huts that form a street shaded by rows of tall palm trees. Close at hand are to be seen the remnants of a large village. The population of Nouvelle Anvers is believed at one time to have numbered 15,000, but now only a few hundred are left, the ravages of sleeping sickness having tended to depopulation. Interference with native customs, particularly polygamy, has also, it is believed, caused the withdrawal of the people to more secluded parts.

Military Camp.

A palm avenue leads to the drill ground and camp, where there is at present a garrison of 100 men and a number of youths under military training.

Sleeping Sickness Hospital.

Beyond the camp is the sleeping sickness hospital, consisting mainly of native huts, in which patients in the earlier stages of the disease live and cater for themselves. Those in the more advanced stages are provided with accommodation in the hospital buildings, where they lie helplessly on beds and present a pitiable sight. The latter are beyond hope. The hospital is about a mile from the river, well away from the tsetse

fly area. Patients are treated with atoxyl and sometimes recover, but generally fall ill again and come back into hospital. One man had been an inmate of the hospital for three years; others die in as many months. The hospital does not afford sufficient accommodation for the number of sufferers, and many applicants have to be refused admission.

Ravages of Sleeping Sickness in District.

The Bangala district has a river frontage stretching from Lulunga to a little beyond Bumba. For a considerable distance along this bank evidence exists of depopulation. A few months ago the missionaries made a careful census of the population, estimating it on the basis of three persons to a hut. Forty-nine villages, covering a distance of some 100 miles on both banks, were visited, and the result of the estimate showed 4,068 inhabitants. In 1890 the population was computed by a missionary at 50,000. The majority of these villages are wretchedly small, and there is a possibility that they will become extinct. In many of the inland districts a sort of lethargic state seems to have crept over the people, who have become too despondent to work, and hardly take the trouble to provide for their own needs. They are, moreover, addicted to palm-wine drinking, to which may be attributed the present low birth-rate. The introduction of currency is said to have had a stimulating effect upon the people near the river, and it is hoped its influence will extend inland. The commissaire, by whom I was accorded a most cordial reception, stated that he estimated the population of his district, which covers an area about seven-and-a-half times the size of Belgium, at the low figure of 200,000 or 250,000 at the outside. Owing to depopulation a new centre of administration has been suggested, and Lisala will probably be selected as the new head-quarters of the district. The people thus afflicted were at one time famous for their prowess and skill in warfare, as well as for the high intellectual standard of their race. The tribal marks of the Bangalas are unique, and consist of deep incisions down the centre of the forehead and nose; these incisions, repeated at intervals, result in what is commonly called the "cock's comb."

Tribes and Customs.

The N'gombe people are to be found in the districts behind the riverine towns and generally following the line of the river. These people in the more populous parts of the Bangala district are numerous and also industrious. Their villages are usually built in an elliptical formation. Each hamlet has its own headman under the jurisdiction of a chief, who, with his wives—from ten to fifty, or even more—resides in the centre of his district. The N'gombe people exorcise their faces entirely, but with a distinct design, and the result imparts to the countenance the appearance of a large rasp file.

Fetichism and spirit worship is general, superstitious fear being the chief incentive to cruelty on the one hand and cowardice on the other.

Dwellings, &c.

The Bangala huts are of very simple structure and chiefly made from the usese palm. Some sticks for the framework and the sides and roof of palm suffice to give the natives all the protection they need. The N'gombe huts have a raised floor of beaten earth some 18 inches high. The walls are sometimes made of bark previously flattened and prepared, or of wide planks adzed from some of the softer woods, and these are sawn together with cane string. The furniture consists of a stool or two and a long board generally cut from the side of an old canoe serves as a bed. Finally a canoe board some bamboos are tied together, or even rough sticks, and thus a stretcher is made.

Plantations.

The natives generally make new plantations every year. This fact accounts for the constant changes in the sites of the villages, which follow the plantations. The riverine people, who live on the river-banks that are subject to periodical inundations, have no plantations and are often obliged to build their huts on piles.

Food, &c.

The staple food of the people is the cassava root prepared in various ways. The natives also subsist on plantains, bananas, forest nuts, yams, palm oil, leaves, especially those of the cassava plant, fish, the hippopotamus, crocodile, elephant, monkey, dogs, goats, ants, beetles, snakes, as well as antelopes and fowls. The women are treated by the men as their inferiors, and are not allowed certain delicacies such as goats, dogs, or fowls, and also certain kinds of fish.

Clothing.

A small loin cloth is all that is worn, and this is now preferably of European manufacture. Native cloths are made of fibre from the midrib of the palm frond or bark of a tree of the fig species, but the native-made article is only worn in the inland districts. In the case of women, a marked change from complete nudity to clothing is observable. This change is creating an increased demand for cloth of the cheaper grades. If the estimation of the native European attire greatly adds to the importance of the wearer. It is much sought after, and an old coat or hat can be exchanged with advantage for articles of native manufacture. The riverine people wear no head covering, their hair being fantastically arranged both as a decoration and protection. Inland men wear hats made of skins of the monkey, leopard, or bush cat; the women have no head covering. Cheap straw hats should find a ready sale among the natives.

British Mission at Upoto.

The Baptist Missionary Society mission station at Upoto, on the north bank of the river, is well situated on a range of hills—one of the few breaks in the monotony of this part of the Congo. If the appearance from the river is pleasing, so also is the prospect from the mission dwellings, from which one obtains extensive views of the river and the numerous well-wooded islands. This is the centre of a large native population, and here one meets with several tribes varying considerably in physique and dialect. The N'gombe people are the most numerous, their villages extending for many miles east and west of the station and on both sides of the river, though their presence and number is not realised from the deck of a steamer, the villages for the most part being hidden by the dense vegetation. The river-side villages are numerous, but, owing to the breadth of the river and the many islands, the traveller does not see them all. These river-side villages, however, appear to have been much larger formerly than now. Sleeping sickness has been very prevalent in this region, but there is now some indication of the disease subsiding.

Industrial and Medical Work.

By means of their schools, industrial and medical work, &c., the missionaries are making a distinct impression upon these once cannibal tribes. The people are fairly industrious, the riverines being noted fishermen and hippo hunters. The N'gombe tribes have large areas under cultivation, and there is never any lack in this district of native food supplies. The temperature is equable, with a dry season of about three months' duration—January to March.

Lisala.

Half-an-hour to the eastward of Upoto on another spur of this range of hills is the important military camp of Lisala, probably one of the healthiest sites on the upper river. This is one of the largest military camps in the colony, and is the residence of about twenty white officials. The houses are chiefly of brick with thatched roofs, and the soldiers' cone-shaped dwellings, surrounding a large open space used as an exercising ground on the top of the hill, bear a somewhat imposing military aspect. A large native market is held in the neighbourhood of the camp, at which the soldiers now purchase their food supplies. Formerly the natives were taxed in food-stuffs for the victualling of the camp. Lisala at the time of my visit, on the 5th March, had a garrison of upwards of 800 men, its normal complement being 1,000. The soldiers appear to derive great benefit from their military training, and are smart in appearance.

STANLEY FALLS.

Tribes and Customs.

The natives of the territories lying below the Stanley Falls comprise the following tribes:—

(a.) Lokele, along both banks of the main river from Yatumba, on the Livi, to Yandjalo, below Isanghi. These people build their villages in adjacent squares, each square managing its own private and family affairs, but sending a headman to the chief's council. The Lokeles are fishermen and blacksmiths, and number some 20,000.

(b.) The Fomas and Turumbus, who live, in the forests behind the Lokeles, the former on the left bank and the latter on the right, build low rectangular detached huts in a long double line through the forests, the road running between the double line of dwellings. These tribes are hunters and gardeners.

(c.) The Bakumas—bush people from behind Ponthierville—now inhabiting the river-banks between the mouth of the Lindi and Ponthierville, who build wattle and daub houses joined together the whole length of the village street. They are a tribe of hunters who, though living along the river-banks, are not familiar with river life.

(d.) The Bangwanas—time-expired soldiers and servants of the State, and their adherents—living in isolated groups within some 6 or 7 miles of the Falls.

(e.) The Tambatamba (Arabises)—Bokusu, Batetela, and other followers of Arab families—are congregated at Stanley Falls on both banks as far down as La Romée. These two latter tribes live in large mud-wall houses, detached, with yards or courts. They are both farmers and stock breeders. The former are clean, clothed, and polite, while the latter are like the Arabs, superior in appearance, dress, and manners—in fact, the aristocracy of the land. Their fields are tilled by women and dependents, or slaves. They are not true Arabs, though there are a few of these too among them. In all things except religion the Tambatambas follow their Arab conquerors of earlier days, but of religion they have only the superstitions without the bonds, rules, or system of worship of the Mahomedans.

All the tribes are shy of innovations, but along with their timidity is an extreme venturesomeness, mostly met with in the Bakumas, and probably arising from faith in their fetiches. The Lokeles, Fomas, and Turumbus have their secret societies, and if anyone should reveal the secrets to an outsider, he would probably disappear mysteriously, together with the person to whom he made the disclosure.

Dress in this district is not in any way connected with any idea of comfort or protection. Men wear a piece of beaten bark, measuring about 6 feet in length, but this primitive material is giving place to cloth of European manufacture. The women wear a much smaller garment of the same material. A cap of leopard-skin marks a person of distinction. On festive occasions the people cover their bodies with a red dye or powder made of canwood, or draw white lines over their bodies with a white clay, and bedeck themselves in gorgeous ornaments only seen on these occasions. A characteristic feature is the wearing of a disc of ivory in the upper lip, which becomes abnormally distended. Time-expired soldiers are granted plots of land, on which they generally settle permanently.

Land Limits.

With regard to land limits, the people arrange between themselves a separating line of hunting operations or plantation grounds, or possible extensions of their villages. Tribes have in the past usually left a dividing strip of territory between their villages. Any animals killed on the vacant lands are subject to division between the two tribes. Generally speaking, village lands are divided by known limits on the sides and in the direction of other villages.

Property mostly belongs to families, and very rarely to individuals, except in the case of the Bangwanas, who have been servants of Europeans, and have consequently broken from their tribal customs to a certain degree.

Lack of Wealth among Natives.

There are no really wealthy natives, and the richest man would probably not own sufficient in merchandise or other property to realise 100*l.*, apart from the value of his

wives. On the other hand, no cases of actual starvation have been observed among any of the tribes. They are industrious enough to provide themselves with just the barest necessities of living, and a man at present will not catch a fish for sale for money, though he will do so for food or barter. Where steamers call money is better understood, and native knives, sticks, &c., are offered to the passengers for sale.

TOUR ALONG RIDGE OF CONGO-LOPORI WATERSHED.

Ill-treatment of Natives at Bodala.

The missionaries of Upoto Mission, when questioned as to the conditions obtaining in their district, spoke with a feeling of satisfaction of the improvements which they had noticed of late years, but expressed misgivings as regards the country lying to the north of the opposite bank of the river, where there seemed to be a tendency of late on the part of rubber traders to revert to the methods condemned in the past. According to advices that had seemingly reached the mission from time to time from a native teacher at an out-school situated between the main river and the Lopori, there had been a growing feeling of unrest among the people, and a report had also been received from a native that soldiers were coming to enforce the rubber tax, from which the people had been liberated since the introduction of currency. Moreover, an unfortunate incident had also been reported in January 1911, when, according to native testimony, several white men visited the villages in the neighbourhood of the mission school at Bodala and arrested a large number of people, both men and women. After several days the women were released, but the men were deported to a place called Knci, and he is said to have received *en route*, died a few days after his arrest, and was buried on the same day. It is alleged that he had been severely beaten by the soldiers. On the same occasion Bokindi, of the village of Bose (Ghongo), was arrested and beaten, and is supposed to bear marks on his body of the cruel treatment he received. It is said that the boiling water was poured over his manacled wrists to tighten the cords, and that the skin on his wrists came off. He was placed under arrest at Diombo with many other prisoners, but was subsequently released, though divested of his medal as chief. Great distress was reported to exist at Bodala among the women who were bereft of their husbands, and the missionaries accordingly brought the matter to the notice of the local authorities.

Result of Enquiry into Cases of Ill-treatment.

On the 29th March I proceeded to the village of Bodala, and on the 30th March I visited the chief Bokindi.

From long conversations with the natives of the neighbourhood I found that much uneasiness existed in their minds about the reinstitution of the rubber tax, with which they imagined themselves threatened. The rumour that soldiers had come to impose this tax proved unfounded, and no doubt owed its origin to the incident reported to me by the missionaries at Upoto. The natives did not seem, at the actual time of my visit, to be suffering from any immediate oppression at the hands of the white man, but they appeared to be labouring under the impression that they could not sell rubber to anyone except the local white man, and they stated that this white man, who is evidently an agent of the Societe anonyme belge, had asked the official exercising jurisdiction over them to re-enforce the collection of rubber, which the natives had been allowed to abandon in favour of a tax levied in money. The official, they affirmed, admitted that he could not force them to work rubber, but said that if they did not work he would make them pay the tax. The baskets produced by the people took a family twenty days to fill, while the remuneration they received was only 2 fr. They appeared uncertain as to the amount of their tax in money, but believed they had to pay 10 fr. per man per annum and 2 fr. for each wife.

As regards the chief Bokindi, I was able to examine his wrists, which, it is alleged, had been tightly secured by cords and then scalded until the cords contracted and his skin came off. His wrists had completely healed, so that it was impossible to tell with any degree of certainty whether they had been scalded or not. The persons implicated appear to be a Frenchman and a German, who have already left the district for Europe, and it is difficult to do anything in the matter beyond drawing the attention of

the authorities to the case. At the time of the alleged abuses Bodala was included in the territories of the former A.B.I.R. administration, but this district has since been placed under the jurisdiction of the authorities at Nouvelle-Anvers. A considerable improvement in the Bodala area will, owing to its close proximity to Lisala, doubtless result from this change.

Another case of the alleged lawlessness committed by the agents of a trading company at Yakata, near Bodala, likewise came to my knowledge during my visit to Upoto. According to information derived by the missionaries from natives who had fled from their villages in September 1910, it appears that in July of that year a European agent of the Belgian factory took soldiers into the villages of Yailange, Yayolo, Yalipapu, and Bolaka to enforce the working of rubber. He stayed in the villages for two months, and while at Yalipapu a native named Elombi was shot by the soldiers. It appears from native testimony that the agent ordered everyone into the forest to gather rubber, and shortly afterwards sent his soldiers to search the villages, with an order that if they saw any idlers there they were to shoot them. A soldier named Monganga, acting under these orders, shot Elombi dead. The dead man's hand was cut off by the chief, a native method of furnishing evidence of death. The chief showed this hand to the "chef de poste" at Yakata, by whom, it is alleged, he was beaten and fined. On another occasion, to punish refractory workers, the villages of Yailange, Yayolo, Yalipapu, and Bolaka were destroyed by fire and the village plantations devastated to deprive the natives of food.

The native mission teacher at Bodala states that in May 1909 he found a number of the inhabitants of the above villages in hiding at Bodala, their villages having been destroyed by fire and gardens ruined. At that period the system of collecting rubber adopted by the trading company was to send a white man into a village to turn out all the people into the forests for three days, during which he remained in the village. On the rubber being brought in on the fourth day the people were again turned out for another three days, and so on until the required quantity had been brought in.

I gathered that the matter had been made the subject of a judicial enquiry, but that in this case, too, a German and an Italian appear to be implicated, and as both are now in Europe it seems doubtful if any action against them can be taken.

Delays in the administration of justice in this country are unfortunately unavoidable on account of the vastness of the judicial circuits. There is only one judge in the district of Bangala, which covers an area nearly eight times the size of Belgium. As a result, however, of the recent reforms the region in which the alleged abuses occurred has regained its normal condition, and the destroyed villages have been rebuilt.

From the main river up to Bodala, and for one day's march beyond, the path lies over swamps which are crossed by means of logs placed along the route. These logs form rude bridges from tree to tree, and where there are no supports they are submerged. To avoid the wet route I turned westwards and came along the ridge of the Congo-Lopori watershed, passing a number of villages on the way, of which the principal were Kubulu, Bose Kula, Bose Konda, Bose Dungo, Bose Hona, Botula, and Bosombo, and thence to Bongandanga.

The conversations with the chiefs and natives of the villages passed through are not of sufficient importance to record at length, but one or two examples may suffice to throw some light on the conditions existing in the country on the occasion of my tour.

Taxes in Rubber, Animal Food, &c.

Most of the villages appeared to be still supplying rubber and food to the State.

A native named Bumba, of Wawa village, stated that his people were taxed in animal food and oil. The payments made by the State for the produce supplied by the natives were apparently 2 fr. for an animal—small antelope, wild boar, &c.—and 1 fr. for a demijohn of palm oil.

At Bose Dungo the chief said he supplied once in every fifteen days 4 lb. of meat, five bottles (demijohns) of oil, and five eggs. He once failed to obtain the necessary quantity of meat, and the white man would hear no excuse, but eventually paid him some animal food supplied. In former days it appears to have been the custom not to supply meat when shortages occurred.

At Botula the chief stated he supplied every two months ten pieces of rubber per man, each piece being about 1½ lb. According to his taxation paper the population of his village was assessed at fifty-eight men, forty-five women, and fifty-two children. It took three days to make each piece, and the total remuneration received was said to be 3 fr. 65 c., 1 fathom of cloth, and a hatchet. He had no

complaint to make, and said that next year he expected to pay his tax in money instead of rubber. He added that his men went far into the woods, but that the women did not have to take kwanga to them, as they carried their own supplies.

Enquiry in A.B.I.R.

After leaving Bodala the villages passed through on the first two or three days appeared tranquil enough, and there were no signs of oppression or discontent, but on entering the former territories of the A.B.I.R. the attitude of the natives underwent a rather abrupt change. The presence in their villages of a white man alarmed them, and they could be seen fleeing amid great excitement into the woods, armed with spears and carrying their poultry and food with them. News of my approach was conveyed from village to village by the native drums, by means of which the villages are able to communicate with one another. Owing to the desertion of the villages no further enquiry was possible after the fifth day's march, except on pitching tent for the night, when, after sending reassuring messages, the natives regained confidence and returned to their homes. The people in these villages appear to have such vivid recollections of their past sufferings at the hands of rubber collectors that they are often overtaken with panic at the approach of a white man, whom they associate with the rubber industry in many villages, and particularly in those near the British missions, this fear is gradually subsiding, but in several instances of late the forebodings of evil with which the more timid natives received the notice of the approaching appearance of the white man to collect the taxes has driven them to acts of desperation. On my arrival at Bongandanga I called upon the "chef de poste," but was informed that he was away investigating the murder of a soldier who had been sent to call the people to prepare their tax money.

Murders committed by Natives through fear of Taxation.

At Baringa I found all the officials were away with the soldiers to subdue a rising that had occurred at Boendo on the 10th April, on which occasion two soldiers and a carrier sent to prepare the people for the tax collector had been killed and their guns and ammunition captured.

On my arrival at Bongandanga on the 6th April two of my carriers were missing, and a search party was sent out, but returned to that place without having gone far from the river. They had evidently been deterred from doing so by the menacing attitude of the people. An attack upon my guide was only narrowly averted in one of the villages by the payment of a franc to the chief and the promise of some tobacco to honour him. It has since been reported to me by an official that the two missing men have been killed by the Bongwonga people, and that an official enquiry into the circumstances attending the deaths is being made. For a long time past the reputation of Bongwonga has been a bad one. Another carrier died of sunstroke.

Bongandanga I joined the "Pioneer," sent to convey me into the A.B.I.R. territories on the Maringa River, the steam-ship "Livingstone" being too large a steamer for the upper reaches of that river at low water.

A Pigmy Tribe.

At Bodala it came to my knowledge that a tribe of pigmies had settled in the neighbouring forest, and I accordingly decided to see them if possible. The natives of Bodala said that the pigmies were so timid that it would be futile for a white man to attempt to approach them. As the miniature race of people seek security in the secrecy of their paths, it was some time before a guide acquainted with their whereabouts could be procured, but I was eventually conducted by a native into a dense forest through which it was impossible in places to walk upright. On approaching the small pigmy kraal the guide enjoined strict silence, and himself advanced cautiously in order to explain the friendly nature of our visit to some of the pigmy men before our presence spread alarm through the village. The guide, having successfully accomplished his mission, soon returned and conducted me into the kraal, where the people, after a little wavering, eventually allowed me to approach them, and even permitted themselves to be photographed.

These pigmies, being free from the deformities usually associated with dwarfs, do not appear small at a distance, and it was only on placing one of my carriers alongside them that their short stature became apparent. The inhabitants of this small village

belong to a tribe called Baputp, and their village is named Bose Epeko. They lead a precarious isolated existence, constantly flying on the approach of the white man, and evidently pay no taxes, nor do they work for him. Owing to the nomadic life they lead they do not cultivate cassava, except on a small scale that hardly suffices to meet their needs, and live mostly by hunting and trapping game. As they do not trade with Europeans, they do not know the value of money, and seem very poor. Their miniature huts are similar in type to the habitations of the ordinary native of the country, whose habits and customs they simulate to a certain degree. In view of their poverty and savage state it is presumed that they will be allowed to remain untaxed for the present.

MARINGA RIVER.

Improvement in the Treatment of the Natives.

From the 11th to the 21st April was spent in the Maringa River, which flows through the territories of the A.B.I.R., where some of the worst features of the rubber régime were enacted. The natives of the villages visited around Baringa seemed tranquil enough and to be gradually recovering from the effects of their former harsh treatment. The birth-rate, according to the missionaries, has shown a decided improvement; the people are becoming more spirited and even insolent, which may be taken as a sure sign of relaxation in the methods of government. The laws are now so stringently applied at that post that, as the missionaries expressed it, beyond a few acts of temper, no violence of any kind is resorted to. The people, however, have been slower here in appreciating the advantages of money than in the other districts visited. Until they realise the value of money and the advantages of labour there are no prospects of any settled industry, though doubtless the younger men could be brought to work if proper inducement were offered and if a demand for clothing could be created.

Insignificant Prices paid for Native Produce.

The reason the people are not keen on money may possibly be attributed to the insignificant prices paid at the post for native goods. According to the missionaries 10 centimes is offered for a fowl worth 50 centimes at the lowest estimate, and 2 fr. for a large necklet highly prized by the native and probably representing the first instalment paid for a wife. Some of the largest necklets seen by me were valued by the natives at as much as 15 fr. and took 500 rods to make. Spears needed by the natives for hunting and fishing purposes were taken from them at ridiculously low prices.

Tribal Divisions.

The district is inhabited by the Mongo tribe, divided into numerous chiefdoms, of which the principal are:

(a.) Esanga, a large district on the right and left banks of the river, ruled over by numerous minor chiefs.

(b.) Lifumba, consisting of four sections, starting at a point four hours to the east of Baringa. These villages have medal chiefs, who are not endowed with any real power over the people and merely act as agents to the State officials. They do not take any prominent part in ruling the people, their principal functions consisting in providing food supplies for the white officials. I gather from the missionaries that these food supplies are not voluntarily offered for sale, but are produced on demand.

(c.) Boendo, comprising eight separate villages, situated on the right bank four hours down-river from Baringa. These villages are inhabited by a hostile, quarrelsome people, at enmity among themselves and antagonistic to the State. They resent taxation, and two soldiers and a carrier sent to prepare them for the tax collector were killed on the 10th April. The chief, however, remained loyal to the State, and was instrumental in recovering the soldiers, guns and ammunition that had been seized. All the available soldiers were sent from Baringa and Lingunda to subdue the insurgents and restore order. The tax-payers are assessed at 200. The Boendo people have large villages and are a numerous tribe.

(d.) Lingunda is the residence of a "chef de secteur." The post is ravaged by sleeping sickness and will probably be abolished. This post has 400 tax-payers, and is surrounded by numerous small scattered villages.

(e) and (f). The Esanga chefferie is densely populated and compact. That of Lifumba is less compact, the villages being one to two hours apart and less populous.

Mompono.

Reaching Mompono on the 16th April, I inspected the villages in the neighbourhood of that post and interrogated the missionaries on the subject of the treatment and general welfare of the natives.

General Indications of Improved Conditions.

Though indications of improved conditions were not lacking, nevertheless, in the opinion of the missionaries, the people have been so oppressed in the past that they feel afraid to bring their grievances to the notice of the officials, by whom they are still harshly dealt with at times. No evidence in support of this lack of confidence on the part of the natives could be adduced, but the missionaries appeared to consider that there is reason to believe, from the constant complaints, that cuffing and intimidation is occasionally resorted to. There were, however, no serious cases of maltreatment.

Poverty of Natives.

No signs of prosperity were observable among the people, who seemed very poor, having no property beyond their gardens and wives. Beyond loin-cloths for the men and leaves for the women the people are unclothed, but a few of the more important men's wives adorn themselves with anklets of great weight, up to 10 lb. each, made of brass rods, at one time the money of the country.

Pursuits.

The natives earn their living inland by hunting and on the river by fishing, but the only means of acquiring money at present to meet the tax of 5 fr. per man and 2 fr. per woman is by selling meat and native bread to the officials at the State post, who fix their own prices.

Elephant hunting is carried on by groups of hunters, who climb trees and drop weighted spears on the animals as they pass by. The State does not seemingly buy ivory in this district, and only a small quantity is sold occasionally to merchants at a small nominal price, the bulk being probably hidden away by the natives. Game is trapped and netted without restriction, the difficulty and hardship involved in the rigorous application of the game laws being recognised by the officials. Moreover, game areas are generally recognised as breeding places for the much dreaded malarial fever.

Tribes and Villages.

The principal tribal sections are the Lunji, Basekatulu, Lokongi, and Linsa on the left bank of the river; on the right bank at Bompono and Lyala, the largest villages, the people are composed of sections of the above tribes, who are a Mongo- or Lomongo-speaking people. About a day's journey inland the country is peopled by the Lomboelo, Lonolo, and smaller communities scattered in the bush lands. The villages on the left bank are to be found in small clusters of huts, very numerous in places, but badly built, in many cases being mere shelters of leaves without any walls. On the right bank the huts have bamboo or mat walls and are better constructed. The compounds are larger and cleaner and the people stronger and superior in every respect.

TOURS IN DISTRICT OF BOSANKUSU.

Two tours were undertaken in the district around Bosankusu. The first of these tours extended through the villages of Bolanda to Bofungi, from Bofungi through Koi Lifumba to Hinga, from Hinga to Hena, back to Bolanda, and thence to Bosankusu.

Taxation.

The tax in this district is payable in money, the amount being 5 fr. a year for each male over 14 years of age, roughly speaking, and 2 fr. for each wife after the

first. The people obtain the money by the sale of chickens, kwanga, and other native products in Bosankusu, the usual price being 50 centimes to 1 fr. for a chicken, and a centime for each roll of kwanga. The natives live by their crops, and by hunting antelopes, wild pig, &c., while fishing is carried on in the towns close to the river, notably at Bofungi, near the Maringa River. At Hena the natives wanted to know the minimum age for taxation, and pointed out a boy they considered too young to be taxed. No produce need be taken to the State post in addition to the payment of the tax, the sale of marketable articles being voluntary.

Resources.

From a few questions asked and observations made, the resources of the country seem to be insignificant. Elephants are not common, and gum copal is not worked. There are rubber plantations at some of the villages visited—Bolanda and Bofungi. They were planted two years ago by the natives in lieu of paying taxes, but since the introduction of money and the payment of the taxes in currency no work has been done, and the ground is all overgrown. No wild rubber is worked or traded in.

Tribes.

The Mongo tribes inhabit this district. They are to be distinguished by circular markings on the cheek, near the ear in the male and on the chin in the female. Their bodies are also plentifully scarred, and teeth filed.

Villages.

The majority of the villages passed through were long and straggling, Koi Lifumba taking over an hour to march through. The individual dwellings are of the common wattle and daub type, or simply thatched shelters. Some of the dwellings are better made of bamboo; the majority are built on raised clay foundations, and are strongly persuaded to prevent the approach of leopards, which are plentiful in this district and have taken to man-eating. Some twenty victims have recently been reported at Hena.

Communications.

Unlike the majority of the native tracks in the Congo, which often lead through swamps waist-deep and dense vegetation for many miles at a time, the forest paths in this district are admirable travelling. In many places they are 15 feet wide, and are kept free from grass and weeds by the women of the villages. On enquiry, it seems the women are sent out by the village chiefs, under orders from the medal chief at Bolanda or by that chief direct, to clear the paths, for which no pay is given. Everybody fears this medal chief, and no information about his doings could be obtained. At the time of this tour he was with a State man who was out after a native who had committed two murders.

There was no sign of any timidity on the approach of the white man, except at Hinga, where the natives had heard that the State official was at Koi Lifumba and was going to take back recruits. This large village was empty on arrival, but on hearing that an Englishman was in the village the natives returned, bringing their wealth, which included spears, bows and arrows, &c., with them.

The population is large, but no one could give any idea of the numbers.

Natives satisfied with Present Treatment.

The natives seem fairly satisfied with their present treatment and have few grievances, except some isolated complaints against the medal chief. They dislike being taken for soldiers, especially when they are "tied up" or detained by compulsion.

Mission Work.

The Congo Balob Mission has many native teachers out in the district, and are well pleased with the progress they are making in the schools at Bolanda, Koi Lifumba, and Hinga, as well as in the villages near these places. The Roman Catholics are likewise working in the same district.

Epondo, the mutilated boy whose portrait appears on the cover of Sir A. Copan Doyle's book on the Congo, lives at Bolanda, where he is engaged in mission work. He has lost an arm and a leg, but does not know how it happened. His brother at Hinga says he was mutilated by a sentry of the A.B.I.R. Company when a mere youth, at the time when rubber was being worked in this district.

CIRCULAR TOUR FROM IKAU TO BOKAKATA.

Taxation.

The second tour in the neighbourhood of Bosankusu extended through the villages of Lisafa, Boonji, Bonulu, N'Tomba, Lifumba, and Libangi to Bokakata. The principal villages visited in the district of Bosankusu were Lisafa, Boonje, Bosulu, and N'Tomba. Those coming within the administrative circuit of Lulanga were the three large sections of villages known as N'Kalankoi, Toenga, and Locombo. The former pay a tax of 5 fr. per man and 1 fr. per wife, and the latter 9 fr. per man and 2 fr. per wife, the first wife in both cases being exempted.

Improved Conditions since Rejoicings among Natives.

Under the former regime it will be remembered that the people suffered great hardship and oppression in these territories, and for this reason their present condition forms the subject of close observation. The result of the enquiry conducted tended to show that the condition of the people had materially improved. Not only could no trace be discovered of any acts of cruelty such as those committed by rubber collectors in the past, but the people appeared to be celebrating their emancipation by festivities, in which, as usual, dancing formed the principal amusement. In almost every village groups of youths and even men were to be seen with their bodies besmeared with paint or dye, their heads decorated with feathers, &c., some carrying spears and shields and others wearing native rattles, marching from village to village dancing and singing all day.

Abandoned Rubber Plantations.

The rubber plantations which were abandoned some years ago near some of the villages have, needless to say, been left in a neglected condition. The natives seemed scared at any mention of rubber, and the chiefs stated that nothing would induce the people to work it; in fact, having paid their tax, they considered they were under no obligation to gather rubber. At Lisafa the natives said they had obtained money to pay their taxes by selling food at Bosankusu. They were paid 4 fr. for an antelope and 2 fr. for a chicken.

Gum Copal supplied by Trading Company regarded as a Tax.

When questioned as to whether they had any complaints to make, the chief of the village of N'Kalankoi stated that his people were still obliged to furnish gum copal to the Société anonyme belge, and produced a large basket of copal. In that section of the village they were called upon to supply thirty of these baskets every twenty-five days. They had, moreover, just received notice that the number of baskets was to be increased to forty. The natives of the Toenga section stated that they were producing twenty baskets, now increased to thirty, and the Locombo village twenty-five, now increased to forty per section. The payment made is at the rate of 2 fr. per basket, representing the work of two men for one week. When asked what they imagined would happen if they failed to bring in the supplies of copal, they said the "white man would beat them up," and had in fact threatened them with imprisonment. They said they were weary of the work, and asked why they were bound to furnish copal, seeing that the other districts were free. No answers were returned to any questions likely to lead the people to imagine they were being unfairly treated.

Need for greater Freedom in Trade.

There appears to be a growing need for free trade in the district, such, for instance, as exists on the Ikalembe River, where several commercial houses have

established themselves. The competition of these firms enables the people to dispose of their produce with advantage, and thus confidence is inspired in the people and a desire to meet the demands of commerce created. In the Maringa-Lopori zone there is no such competition, the few existing companies being conducted on monopoly lines, and thus the natives are obliged to sell their produce for any price the company may offer.

Difficulty of obtaining Money.

Though the district travelled through is thickly peopled, the native workers have but few opportunities at present of obtaining money.

System of Trading in Gum Copal akin to Taxation in Kind.

The only trading company in this district is a branch of the Société anonyme belge at Bokakata. In the past the company were practically tax-gatherers, and the absence of competition will leave them in almost the same position so long as the natives continue to regard them as such. Their system of collecting gum copal appears to consist in sending out capitas with the required number of baskets for distribution. The capitas receive remuneration—some 4 fr. or 5 fr. each time, while the natives get a varying price of 1 fr. to 3 fr. per basket. The gum copal has to be cleaned and chipped before it is taken in. The natives complain that when they deliver any gum that may happen to be below standard quality it is retained by the company without any payment being made them, whereas they could use it as a luminant. Signs of improvement, however, are not lacking in this district—no sentries with guns are sent out as in the past, and no cases of ill-treatment have been discovered. There are indications that with the expansion of trade competition will render the people more independent and industrious, and they will be able in time to improve their condition.

Native fear of being taken as Hostages.

Some excitement was occasioned at the time of my visit to one of the villages near Bokakata by a murder committed at that place. It appears that a white man who disapproved of polygamy took away a native's wife on the ground that he owned a number of wives. The native insisted upon having the woman back, and, imagining he was going to be tied up for claiming the return of his wife, speared the woman to death in a fit of exasperation. The chiefs of the neighbouring villages, fearing that they or their wives would be taken as hostages for the surrender of the murderer, appeared before me to protest that the murderer was not in hiding in their villages. I was able to tell them that he had already been arrested, at which they appeared much relieved.

Demolished School-house of British Mission.

At Bokakata I saw the school-house of the British mission recently demolished by the native teachers of the Roman Catholic mission. The matter has been brought to the notice of the authorities at Boma, and hopes are entertained by the British missionaries that the priests will in future take steps to restrain acts of lawlessness committed by the native Catholics.

Inter-tribal Barter Trade.

Interspersed with the Mongo people are the N'Gombe tribe and here and there the Bafoto, a tribe of elephant hunters, who intermarry. The latter tribes live in much smaller groups, and are in the minority. The population may be classified as riverine and inland people—the former live by fishing and the latter by hunting and farming. A barter trade exists between the two peoples, fish and earthenware pots being exchanged for meat, plantains, &c. The system of barter between the riverine and inland natives is to be found throughout the territories through which the tour extended, and may be said to operate against the circulation of money.

Villages and Native Chiefs.

The Mongos build large villages, the riverine people make streets, but their villages are dirty and badly built compared with the inland villages, which have larger

huts, and are much tidier and cleaner. The villages in this district are numerous, following sometimes so closely upon one another as to form an almost continuous line for many miles. The inhabitants, who are more or less connected by family ties, owe obedience to the minor chiefs, who in turn are subordinate to the medial chief, and not to the powerful hereditary chiefs of former times, who exercised absolute power over the lives and property of the people. These hereditary chiefs of the past possessed strongholds and fighting units that now no longer exist, and, with the exception of a few occasional inter-tribal skirmishes, the people may be said to be incapable of engaging in an organised warfare. The medial chiefs have been made directly responsible to the "chefs de postes," from whom they receive their orders, and who until recently practically ruled over the destinies of the people. Of late the actions of these officials have been subjected to closer supervision than heretofore.

Land Limits.

From questions asked the natives they appear to know their land limits, and near the rivers, where the fishing waters are divided among the villages, any encroachment upon the native preserves would be resented. The creeks belong to the natives, and are handed down from father to son, but the streams round Ika are practically open to native fishermen. As regards native gardens, what a man clears is considered to be his property.

Resources.

Wild rubber is now scarce owing to the ruthless destruction of the vines in the past. Elephants are still believed to be fairly numerous, particularly in the upper reaches of the Maringa Lopot, while gum copal and palm kernels are plentiful.

At one period the natives owned many goats and live stock, but they were taken away from them under the former régime. They are now reacquiring goats, which are much relished, and valued at 1,000 rolls, or roughly 11 10s., by securing the offspring for attending to white men's goats.

BONGINDA.

The river from this point downwards being navigable by the larger river steamers, I stopped at the mission station on the 28th April to transfer from the steam-ship "Pioneer" to the steam-ship "Livingstone," and was able to obtain from the missionaries reassuring accounts as to the treatment of the people.

Bonginda was originally inhabited by the Mongalas, who took to freebooting for a living. They used to travel great distances to capture canoes and merchandise on the Congo, the Mongos being their victims. The establishment in 1889 of the Congo Balolo mission station gradually put an end to freebooting, and the Mongalas have now become the Christian evangelists of the mission.

1912 Zone.

Unsatisfactory Conditions in

On the 8th March I visited the station at Yembia of the Baptist Missionary Society, and had interviews with the society's missionaries, Messrs. W. R. Kirby, C. Davies, and E. Palmer. I gathered that a recent journey undertaken by the two latter missionaries had revealed what they described as "a deplorable state of things" in the Aruwimi district. They affirmed that the treatment of the people was unjust and intolerable, and called for an immediate investigation. I thereupon proceeded to take down their evidence in support of so serious an indictment. Messrs. Davies and Palmer, after receiving a negative answer to my question as to whether any atrocities such as had occurred in the past, especially in the form of mutilated hands cut off, had come to their notice, declared that in January of the current year they received the following statement from Bagi, a capita at Monganjoro:

That his people were away in the forest for two to three months gathering rubber for the State. That formerly his men were allowed a rest of from two to three months

between their journeyings, but that now they are not allowed even a month, notwithstanding that they may have brought in the required quantity of rubber. That forty of his men were away at that moment collecting rubber in the forest, and that they were sent out at the will of the white man, who could either grant them a rest or send them into the forest again to gather rubber.

Ajamaji, another capita, stated that his people were sent into the forest for three months at a time. This statement was confirmed by all the men spoken to—at least half-a-dozen. The remainder of Ajamaji's statement did not differ from Bagi's in any essential detail.

From another chief whose name was not noted the missionaries gathered that payment for rubber amounted to a doti (4 yards) of cloth for a full bag measuring 17 inches by 10 inches, and that if the people rested in the village for any length of time the white man called them up to the post and cut off their hands—a degradation keenly felt by the natives. Some of the women of the village had been compelled to make 100 rolls of kwanga (native bread) for the white man every week, for which they received a plate or some other article of small value in payment.

Journey through Aruwimi District.

The missionaries found that in the Aruwimi district the women were obliged to take food to the rubber gatherers. They met four women in charge of a capita, who carried an old gun, while journeying along a path. They said that it took them a day to reach the rubber camp from their village, another day to procure food, and a third day to march back to their homes, exclusive of the actual time occupied in making the kwanga or native bread necessary to feed the men while gathering the rubber.

Makboloka, a capita at Yamdiaba, near Monganjoro, affirmed that his people were away in the forest from two to three months at a time, and that each man was responsible for a basket of rubber, after delivery of which they sometimes only rested five days. That from 2 to 4 yards of cloth, representing from 1s. 3d. to 2s. 6d., was the payment they received for each basket. The latter statement was corroborated by another capita, named Banangio, of the same village. A native stated that a path was being cut by the people, apparently in their spare time.

The missionaries further affirmed that they had seen two boys, whose ages could not have exceeded 13 and 14 years respectively, working rubber. They were not merely helping their father or elder brothers, but were actually working on their own account. This fact was established beyond all doubt by the medals they wore, and which bore the numbers 1218 and 1215. Messrs. Davies and Palmer also stated that they had observed a shortage of food, and that the people complained that they were beaten for any shortage of rubber.

At Ekwendekuku a capita named Bapahani asserted that he himself and a number of his people had recently been in chains for shortages of rubber; that they worked for three months and were allowed three months' rest. Ten of his men had been sent as workmen to Monganjoro and ten more to Rajamba as a punishment.

Mukula, whom the missionaries met on a path outside Ekwendekuku, stated that the white man of his village (native name M' Bulu M' Bulu) had sent the people of that village into the forest for five and six weeks at a time, and that if on their return the rubber was insufficient he ordered them to be beaten with the chicotte or hippobug whip. Another native, named M' Balanga, who was met on the same occasion, said his white man (native name Sitono) sent the people but into the forest usually for two months, and that they had to await his permission before they could return to their village. Each man had to work twenty-five cakes of rubber, measuring 13 inches by 5 inches by about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch. He allowed them to rest for one month, during which they had to prepare their food for the next expedition. A doti or a doti and a half (4 to 6 yards) was paid to each man who brought his full quantity, i.e., twenty-five cakes.

Biala, a chief of Bombongo, stated that his people were ordered to work rubber for three months at a time, and that they had to go as far as Buda, on the border of the Welle district, to collect it. This represented a march of five days, but they were allowed six months' rest. In resting time, however, they had to build a path, which was seen by the missionaries. Almost the entire village, men, women, and children, were engaged on this work. The road extends from the village to the State station, and Messrs. Davies and Palmer say that it took them an hour and a half to walk over it. At one point the clearing was nearly 40 feet wide. It is not understood for what purpose such a width was needed, but the amount of labour involved in making the path may be judged from these facts.

In view of the statements above recorded, I proceeded to the Aruwimi district on my return journey from Stanleyville.

Landing at Yangambi on the 17th March, I journeyed on foot through the forest in a northerly direction and reached Yambuza, on the Aruwimi River, on the 20th March. *En route* I passed through two large villages and questioned the chiefs as to the extent and nature of their taxes. They affirmed that they paid their taxes to the State in money at the rate of 12 fr. per annum per man, and 2 fr. for every wife except the first. One of these chiefs produced a tax-paper in support of this statement.

On the first day's march two large villages, known as Yalibua I and II, were passed through. At each of these villages the chiefs affirmed that they paid their taxes in money, but they did not show me their tax-papers or receipts. A similar statement was made to me at a subsequent village lying on the route close to the plantation of Patahongo, but it was difficult to reconcile the idea that currency had entered into circulation with the particulars I gathered from the two white men in charge of the plantation, who said that money was not understood by the people—in fact, a quantity of silver and nickel coin had been received at the plantation, but could not be turned to any useful purpose. I gathered, that labouring hands were scarce, the native not finding money a sufficient incentive to work, and that, viewed from the standpoint of labour, the outlook was not altogether favourable. I inferred from these remarks that I had entered the "1912 zone." From this point on to Yambuza, with the exception of two large deserted plantations of rubber trees (*Funtaria elastica*), upon which were clustered here and there a few native huts likewise abandoned, no further villages were seen.

On reaching Yambuza there are a large number of villages close to the left bank of the Aruwimi River. On account of the heavy rain that fell during my journey along the river bank above Yambuza, I was only able to visit three of these villages—Bosoko, Bokatu, and Bombanga. From the enquiries made on this occasion among the natives it appeared that the men worked on the station at Yambuza and that the women paid the taxes in kwanga (native bread), which they had to take to the State post every Saturday. When asked to show the quantity of native bread made by each post every Saturday. When asked to show the quantity of native bread made by each woman, baskets of various sizes were produced. The average basket to be filled by an able bodied young woman measured some 15 inches by 10 inches, and contained sixty rolls of kwanga, likewise of varying size, but mostly consisting of what is known as "medium." In return for the baskets of native bread the chiefs of the villages received four pieces of cloth, presumably measuring about 2 yards each. The object of the remuneration given is of course quite apparent, it being the chief's duty to see that all the women pay the tax.

The general impression produced by the condition of the people in this district cannot be said to be favourable. The men were seen nursing infants in arms, while the women could be heard pounding the bread—a task they did not relinquish until sunset.

To form a better idea of the nature of the tax, the social status of women in Africa, as well as the nature of the work entailed, should be taken into account. The native woman is regarded by the man as a source of wealth on account of the benefit she derives from her labour. She may be said to be the natural drudge upon whom the mainstay of the homesteads almost entirely depends. She is reduced to the level of a beast of burden by the loads she is constrained to carry often for almost incredible distances. She toils for many hours in the plantations, grows and makes the native bread, and tends to the needs of her husband and family, for whom she provides the food they require as well as the household requisites such as pottery, calabash utensils, &c. It has been estimated that a woman can, to supply an urgent need, make 60 half-pound (small size) kwangas between midday and sunset, but this estimate conveys a very erroneous idea of the amount of work actually entailed in their manufacture. The work from the clearing of the ground to the finish is considerable, and, with the exception of the felling of the trees, is done entirely by the wives and young women in the villages. After the dense forest timber, consisting mostly of large trees, has been cut away, the women clear a patch of land, which is rarely larger in size than will supply the needs of the village, and the shoots are planted. The roots are not ready for pulling for nine months. Subsequent for a few days rations are taken, scraped, and put to soak in water for at least four days so that the prussic acid may be dissolved out. When ready, the roots are pounded in a wooden mortar till a pulpy mass is formed. This mass is roughly divided into portions weighing from half-a-pound to a pound and a half, and rolled out into lengths of 1 to 2 feet. Each

root bulb, according to size, is supposed to produce a roll, which is usually called either "large," "medium," or "small." The rolls are wrapped and tied up in n'kongo leaves, and the operation is finished either by steaming or roasting. The n'kongo leaves have to be gathered as well as the fibre used for tying the rolls. In the estimate of sixty kwangas which a woman is believed to be capable of producing in half a day, no account is taken of the cleaning of the ground, the planting of the shoots, the keeping of the garden free from weeds, the scraping and the soaking, the collecting of the leaves for wrapping purposes, and the fibre for tying the rolls. At Yambuza, the workmen appear to receive rations in kwanga at the rate of fifteen rolls a-week. At this scale of reckoning the amount of food collected from each woman every week as a tax would suffice to feed four adult persons and a child. Owing to the poorness of the soil the ground does not usually yield more than one crop; fresh plots of land have therefore to be worked every year.

The imposition of a tax that increases the work already imposed upon the woman by local traditions must of necessity become an inordinate strain upon her. Its consequences are twofold—it adds to the heavy burden the woman already bears with such fortitude, and deprives the homesteads of their staple food. Dispirited men, overworked women, emaciated children, neglected homes and plantations are the outcome of this form of taxation, which is now happily being abolished in the districts of the free zones of 1910 and 1911, but which is destined to continue in the less fortunate districts of the 1912 zone until the 1st July, 1912.

Result of Enquiry into Rubber Tax.

At Yambuza I gathered that the "chef de poste" was absent collecting the rubber tax, and that he had been telling the people he did not want to see them in their villages.

On descending the Aruwimi River in a canoe, three of the rubber-taxed villages were visited. The conversations I had with the chiefs and natives tended to confirm the statements made to me by the missionaries at Yalimba. It may suffice to record the result of the enquiries I made at one of these villages, the particulars obtained in all three being identical in detail. At Babanga I was informed that each man had to produce to the State post one basket of rubber, similar in dimensions to the one described by the missionaries, every three months. To obtain the desired quantity they are obliged to remain out in the forest in all weather for a full period of three months at a time, and then they are allowed to return to their village for a month, after which they are again turned out for another three months' work. They affirmed that it was often difficult to produce the required quantity, and sometimes they had to make up deficiencies by buying rubber from other villages. As remuneration, each man receives a dot of trade cloth, measuring about 4 yards, and if the basket is a large one, a machette is sometimes added. Two of the villages seemed to be half empty at the actual time of my visit, most of the men, I was told, being at work in the forest.

Food Tax.

Bombana, one of the villages taxed in food visited by me on my way down the Aruwimi, affords an example of this form of taxation. According to the statements made to me on this occasion by the natives, each man has to provide the State post at Mongandjo with oil and fish. Ninety jars of oil, containing a little over a pint, and five baskets of fish—usually twenty to thirty smaller size fish—were delivered at that post every week. For this the chief of the village receives four strips (about 9 yards) of trade cloth every month.

Tribes and Villages.

The chief tribes inhabiting the district visited are—

(a) The Baso, whose villages are to be found at Basoko itself, on the lower Aruwimi and Lulu Rivers, as well as at Bondo and Barunson, on the south bank of the main river. This tribe is noted for its prowess, activity, and industry.

(b) The Bangalamas, who occupy the banks of the Aruwimi, extending inland from below Mongandjo nearly up to Panga and stretching across to the upper reaches of the Lulu. These people are great iron workers.

(c) The Turumbu tribe, who occupy the forest between the Congo and the Aruwimi.

The villages of all these tribes are numerous and thickly populated, the smallest being the Turumias.

The Bangalemas build a tall conical-shaped hut, chiefly of leaves.

The inland people have very defined landmarks, dividing off the forest that belongs to each village. Streams are a common landmark. The riverine people likewise mark an every island, creek, and the river bank that belongs to them, and jealously guard their possessions.

Basoko.

Basoko, the chief town of the Aruwimi district, is situated at the mouth of the Aruwimi River, the latter being a large northern tributary of the River Congo.

The town was formerly a penal settlement of somewhat doubtful repute, but it has since been abolished, and there is reason to believe that the natives are now treated with less severity. Surviving battlements, consisting of a wall and tower, show also that fortifications existed.

The commissure of the district is in residence, and has some fifteen officials under him, with the usual complement of soldiers, numbering about 100 men.

Above the end of the town there is a large cemetery consisting of over sixty graves, among which may be seen that of George Grenfell, distinguished explorer and missionary.

The wild rubber forests round Basoko are reported to be exhausted, but rubber is being cultivated in Basoko itself, where there is a plantation of 400 hectares, worked by 1,200 labourers.

Basoko was visited by me on the 23rd March.

INDUSTRIES AND ARTICLES IN DEMAND.

Palm Oil.

The palm oil industry extends throughout the districts through which the tour was made. The palm nuts are stripped from the bunch and well boiled. After boiling, they are put into a disused canoe and well trodden out. Water is gradually added until the oil becomes separated from the nuts; the fibre and the kernels sink, leaving the oil floating on the surface. The oil is then skimmed off and put into earthenware pots. After boiling again for a prolonged time it is ready for use. The kernel itself, which contains an oil of a higher grade than that produced, is thrown away without crushing, or burned to prevent it from taking root in the cleared spaces in which the oil is worked. This industry would seem to admit of development, and it is worthy of note that Messrs. Lever Brothers, the well-known soap manufacturers, have been granted a concession in the Kasai for the purpose of forming a company to produce this product on a large scale. A site has also been acquired at Matadi, the port from which the shipments will be made. Should the industry develop sufficiently to justify the existence of the company, the natives will undoubtedly derive great benefit from the work it will provide, and it will also be the means of introducing the money so badly needed for the betterment of their condition.

Fishing.

Fishing is the chief industry of the riverine people who are also clever at harpooning hippopotami and crocodiles. African hippo hide and crocodile skin should be marketable articles in Europe. The fish is preserved by smoking over wood fires, and in districts where food is scarce it becomes a valuable asset. A European master-fisherman has been sent to the lakes, where it was hoped to create an industry conducted on scientific lines. It should be possible to develop a fishing industry on the rivers also. At present the methods employed by the native fishermen are primitive. The fishing gear is varied, both small and large nets being used. These are weighted with pieces of burned clay resembling a large bead, while a very light willow-like wood serves as floats. Cane traps and large quantities of cane fencing are made every year for enclosing sandbanks and for damming up the little streams and creeks in which, at high water, fish shoal in large quantity; when the water drops the fish are secured. Spearfishing is also a common method of fishing. Many other less skilful methods of catching fish exist.

Earthenware Pots.

Earthenware pots are produced in great quantity by the riverine tribes. The industry is almost entirely in the hands of the women, who make utensils of various pattern and size for cooking and drinking purposes, and show some skill in their work. The pots are burned in an open place for a few hours, and while hot are glazed by passing gum copal over them. Enamelware is much appreciated by the native, and should find a ready sale.

Salt.

Salt is made from grasses collected from the riverside. After burning, the ashes are placed in a cone-shaped basket used as a filter. Water is then poured on the ashes and percolates through into an earthenware vessel. The water is then boiled until it crystallises, and salt in a very crude form is thus produced.

Salt has a monetary value in the Congo, and is still indispensable for travelling purposes. Bags of coarse European salt weighing about 30 lb. are sold at Leopoldville, the starting point of the up-river steamers, for 6 fr. With the spread of money salt is doomed to lose its monetary value, but the demand is not likely to decrease, as it will always be readily bought by the natives.

Iron Articles.

There is a quantity of iron in some districts out of which the people make their spears and knives. Iron in bars $\frac{1}{2}$ inch thick is obtained by the natives from a store at Bumba. When travelling a native usually carries a netted bag containing his most treasured belongings. These usually consist of trinkets made of brass rods, long pins made of copper, iron, or brass used for fixing on hats, and others more ornamental in design for adorning the hair, small triangular razors used for shaving and cicatrization, knives, looking-glasses, fish-hooks, safety pins, &c.

Native Demands for European Goods.

The object of the foregoing observations is to show that the native, like anyone else, values his personal belongings, and that a demand for European goods could be created if placed within his reach. The purchasing power of money would be brought home to the native mind and stimulate in him a desire to work, which he has hitherto done under compulsion only. To reach the localities far removed from the centres of commerce shallow-draught cargo steamers would be needed. Each steamer should be provided with a staff of native hucksters who would sell the goods in the more distant villages.

CONVERSATION WITH VICE-GOVERNOR-GENERAL HENRI.

The Commission for the Protection of the Natives, composed, among others, of M. Henri, Vice-Governor-General, the procureur général, Roman Catholic bishop, and legal representative of the Baptist Missionary Society, is at present sitting at Leopoldville for the purpose of considering the best means of applying the reform decrees to the natives and suggesting any modifications that may seem expedient in the interests of the people. M. Henri has been entrusted with the important mission of introducing the reforms, and has been making extensive tours into the interior districts with that end in view. I accordingly interviewed M. Henri on my arrival at Leopoldville on the 18th May. The Vice-Governor-General accorded me a friendly reception, and was good enough to explain, as far as the early stage of the deliberations of the commission would admit, the subjects that were being dealt with, and allowed me to discuss with him officiously the various matters upon which I was able to offer him my own observations based on the information I had been able to collect during my tour.

M. Henri explained that the Commission for the Protection of the Natives was deliberating at that moment on the hygiene, housing, feeding, and clothing, from the point of view of morality, of the natives; abolition of marriages, human sacrifices, trial by poison, slavery, and polygamy.

The new decrees of importance that were receiving the attention of the commission were:—

- (a.) Collection of products on domainial lands—a fundamental reform.
- (b.) *Chefferies*—suppression of domestic slavery.
- (c.) Native taxes.
- (d.) Hire of services.
- (e.) Adulteration of food-stuffs.

With regard to the first decree, the Vice-Governor-General appeared to readily concede the point that the old system of rubber and other taxes justified the criticisms levelled against the system, and added that considerations of a humanitarian and economic nature were favourable to its abolition. For this reason the tax in money had been substituted, bringing with it freedom of trade and liberty of the natives to dispose of the "produce of their forest lands."

The Vice-Governor-General defended the opening up of the country in three zones on the ground that any abrupt change might provoke dangerous disorders, and to allow time for the establishment of the "postes de perception," &c. He pointed out the disappointing fact that traders had been slow to avail themselves of the trading opportunities offered to them in the districts opened to free trade, and remarked that on the eve of the opening of the second zone (the 1st July, 1911) it had been found that merchants had not established themselves on any substantial scale in the first zone opened up nearly a year ago. M. Henri said that over a great area the price of rubber remained very low—a circumstance he deplored because some of the villages would have to make appreciable sacrifices in order to obtain the money for their taxes. Great leniency he claimed, had been shown them in the matter. No steps had been taken against those in arrears, and the natives had been allowed to pay what they could—or rather, what they would. The decree on the taxes had been applied with the moderation desired by the Colonial Minister. The money tax varies from 5 to 12 fr., but M. Henri named some of the districts, as, for instance, that of the Cataracts (with the exception of the country near Matadi and Leopoldville) and certain parts of the Kasai, recently inspected by him, in which the tax had been reduced from 12 to 9 fr. A further reduction had been granted to the natives in the Lubi-Bushimaya zone, and the Government were taking special steps to ensure leniency to the people in all the zones infected with sleeping sickness.

With regard to the tax on polygamy, M. Henri remarked that some considered the tax too small, but the *raison d'être* is to tax the wealth of the people, and wives constitute a form of wealth in the eyes of the people.

Chefferies.—The chiefs often have no authority, and their mental standard differs very little from that of their people. They must, M. Henri affirmed, be made to appreciate the importance of administrative and hygienic measures, and the advantages to be derived from the making of roads, bridges, &c. Many of the chiefs have not reached a sufficient stage of enlightenment to be expected to administer justice on contested cases. The prevailing idea is to give power to the "chef connu," and to designate him in a fitting manner to enable him to discharge his duties with skill and moderation. M. Henri also proposes to start schools for chiefs' sons. Besides French, reading, and writing, they are to be taught the decrees relating to their interests as well as hygiene, and are to live in specially-constructed villages answering hygienic requirements. On returning to their homes they would be able to educate their people and exercise police duties ("faire la police") better than Europeans can do.

With regard to impure food, measures are to be taken against traders swindling the natives with adulterated and damaged merchandise.

Improvements in agricultural methods are to be introduced. The natives are to be taught to derive all possible advantage from their soil and to cultivate new products, &c. The State is taking this question up, and is sending an expedition to study the conditions in Asia. The natives are to be encouraged to nourish themselves properly, and to rear cattle and live stock, &c., in their villages. Cotton cultivation is a further important suggestion made by the commission. It has been tried in the Lower Congo, together with palm trees ("elais"). Every means of developing native wealth will be considered by the commission.

Suppression of Alcohol.—Further measures, according to the Vice-Governor-General, were to be taken in this direction. The baneful effects of drink so marked in some other parts of Africa have always been held well in check in the Congo, and the instances of wine drinking recorded in this report will now be dealt with. The repression of drink and the efforts made to counteract sleeping sickness have never

met with adverse criticism in England. The amount of labour and expense entailed in combating these evils is too well known to those interested in the welfare of the native to call for any further comment.

The guardianship of children and reduction of the age limit were only briefly alluded to by M. Henri, who suggests that something should be done to help malarious children. These questions have still to be discussed by the Commission for the Protection of the Natives.

Among the questions put by me, and to which M. Henri was able to return definite replies, may be mentioned the recall of old money from circulation and the right of the natives to grow rubber and other produce on their plantations withheld from a native applicant at Ikoko.

With regard to the former, I drew attention to the recent warning issued by the Governor-General respecting the recall from circulation of silver coins of 5 fr., 2 fr., 1 fr., and 50 centimes of the former State issue, in which attention is called to the loss likely to be incurred by persons who fail to exchange these coins for coins struck since the Belgian annexation of the Congo by the 1st July, 1911. In dwelling upon the gratifying results that had attended the introduction of currency among the natives, I ventured to point out the unfortunate impression that would be produced in the minds of the natives, who could neither read nor write, by any loss they might incur should the old coins cease to be legal tender and not be accepted in the payment of taxes. Not realising the formalities attending the issue and withdrawal of coins from circulation, their confidence in money would be shaken, and the trouble taken by the British missionaries to teach them the advantages of European currency over the brass rods that formerly took the place of money among them would be lost. In fact, in some districts where money had been difficult to obtain for paying taxes and where no surplus remained in the hands of the natives after taxation, money was regarded as an article supplied to them merely for the payment of their taxes to take the place of rubber, and rods were still in demand.

Censorious traders who may have omitted to exchange their old money for new would find the native a ready means for disposing of worthless coins. His Excellency was kind enough to assure me that he fully appreciated the unfortunate impression any loss would create in the minds of the natives, and promised to see that the old coins would be accepted in payment of their taxes, as this arrangement would afford the means of withdrawing old coins from circulation.

With regard to the withholding at Ikoko of permission for a native to grow rubber on his village plantation, M. Henri stated that some misconception of the law had evidently arisen, as it was the intention of the Government to encourage and not discourage the cultivation of rubber by native communes.

Questions such as those referring to the ill treatment of the chief and natives at Bodala and the demolition of the school of the Congo Balolo Mission at Bokakata, to which attention has been called in the newspaper press in England, are matters that will have to be dealt with by the Governor-General at Boma.

ADOPTION OF FRENCH LANGUAGE.

The proposed adoption of the French language in lieu of Bangala, the *lingua franca* of the country, would seem to be a step in the right direction. It will enable the native to bring his grievances direct to the knowledge of the official, instead of through the medium of doubtful native interpreters.

MISSIONARY WORK.

In the opening up and development of the vast Congo area religious missions have taken a large share. Foremost amongst the numerous denominations at work in the colony are the British Baptist Missionary Society, the Congo Balolo Mission, the American Baptist Mission Union, the Swedish Missionary Society, and the American Presbyterian Mission. These various societies cover a great area, and are so distributed as to avoid overlapping. The Lower Congo and main rivers as far as Stanley Falls are well occupied by the Baptist societies, the American Presbyterians have occupied the Kasai, and the Congo Balolo Mission has its sphere on the Lolanga River and its affluents. Considerable benefit has accrued to the natives and the State through the educational and industrial work carried on by these missions. Printing-presses have

been established at suitable centres, where a large number of religious and school books, as well as printed matter for Government and other offices, have been prepared, thus giving employment and education to a large number of native young men. The need of residences for Europeans has necessitated a great deal of instruction in carpentry, brick-making, building, &c., and many who have availed themselves of the opportunities offered at a mission are now occupying positions under the Government and in trading offices, and the demand is constantly increasing. There is a marked desire on the part of the natives in the neighbourhood of European settlements to improve their dwellings, and it is now a common thing to find one or two native carpenters in a village working on their own account, and supplying at regular prices doors, window shutters, chairs, &c., to order. Similarly, in the steamer department youths are being trained in the working and management of engines and the navigation of the rivers, and here, again, the demand for skilled labour is ever increasing as the development of the country proceeds. Medical work occupies a very important place in the activities of all the societies, and well-equipped hospitals under the care of qualified medical men, are being established by the supporters of the various societies. These are some of the by-products of religious missions that must appeal to all. They are worthy of support, not only by those who regard the spread of religion as the highest end to be attained, but also by men who look only on the economic side of things. If the civilising influences of mission work were better realised than they are at present there would be a greater readiness on the part of this Government to accede to the requests of missionary corporations for the grant of new sites.

Annex.

Statement by the Rev. C. J. Dodds, of the Baptist Missionary Society, at Upoto, on March 3, 1911.

THERE is a marked improvement in the condition of the people since the annexation of the Congo by Belgium, and the country is evidently being administered with greater care and a real desire for the betterment of the people.

All irregularities which we have recently had occasion to report to the local officials have received immediate attention.

I consider that the introduction of currency is tending to improve the people by stimulating trade among them and awakening in them a spirit of independence.

Formerly the people abandoned their plantations in our district owing to the depredations of the State soldiers, but now, as a result of the improved conditions, they are losing their fear and resuming their farms.

CHARLES JOHN DODDS.

Statement by Mr. D. C. Davies and Mr. A. B. Palmer, of the Baptist Missionary Society, at Yalenda.

Speaking generally, we observe that in those parts of our district where francs are paid as tax to the State the condition of the natives seems to be improving, but regret to say that recent journeying in the hinterland of the Aruwimi district, where rubber is still being demanded as tax, has brought to light much oppression and injustice.

D. C. DAVIES.
A. B. PALMER.

March 8, 1911.

Statement by Mr. W. Millman, of the Baptist Missionary Society, at Yakusu.

Handicapped as the officials are with the past, it is yet obvious that they are making every honest endeavour to improve matters, and the new régime seems calculated to work out well. We look forward with confidence that the native will get a fair chance to progress along reasonable lines.

W. MILLMAN.

March 16, 1911.

Mr. Forfeitt to Consul Mackie.

Dear Mr. Mackie,
In response to your enquiry, I have much pleasure in expressing the opinion that, so far as my observation goes after an eighteen months' furlough in England, and without having made any residence in this district since my return, that there is a distinct improvement as the result of recent administration of Congo affairs, notwithstanding the one or two cases of alleged cruelties that have come to my notice recently. There is a marked lessening of the excessive taxation that once obtained in this district, and though my ideal has not yet by any means been realised, we are hoping that a brighter day has dawned for the Congo peoples, and an administration inaugurated which will continue to ameliorate the deplorable condition of things which obtained formerly, and to which we felt compelled to give expression to the civilised world.

Yours sincerely,
WILLIAM D. FORFEITT.

Mr. Armstrong to Consul Mackie.

Dear Mr. Mackie,
Bangandanga, April 9, 1911.
With regard to the condition of affairs in this district, though I have only been here a few weeks I have seen enough to convince me that the people are happy and contented with their present conditions. I have seen nothing to complain of with regard to their treatment by the authorities.
I have no hesitation in saying that the lot of the natives in the district I am familiar with has greatly improved during the past few years.

Yours very truly,
W. D. ARMSTRONG.

Statement by Mr. Welch, of the Congo Balolo Mission at Baringa.

So far as my own personal observation leads me to any conclusion, I am persuaded that the condition of the natives in this district is much improved. There is no such thing as systematic oppression, neither isolated instances of brutality. No severe pressure has been brought to bear upon the natives to make them supply their tax, 5 fr. per annum. The natives are extremely poor, and have no means of obtaining the necessary francs except by returning to what looks like the rubber régime. Internecine fighting is too lightly dealt with, and red-handed murderers are allowed to roam to the terror of others. This circumstance may be due to the inadequate staffs in the district.

No one can make any comparison between to-day and even five years ago without being struck with the improvement. The State, or rather Government, seem to be trying to redress grievances, and have met with some measure of success. The problem is the people themselves, their aversion to settled labour, and their dislike of the white man. The natives themselves admit that there is no longer oppression, and to them, no reason why they should work.

April 14, 1911.

W. R. WELCH,
Missionary in charge.

Statement by Messrs. John F. Skerritt and H. M. Whiteside, of the Congo Balolo Mission at Bompona.

We are of opinion that, as far as our experience goes, the conditions prevailing in this district are better than those which previously existed. We feel, however, that a kinder attitude on the part of the official towards the natives is essential to the more desirable conditions, and that, in consideration of the former oppression and present poverty of the people as a whole, large leniency should be exercised in imposing taxes.

JOHN F. SKERRITT,
H. M. WHITESIDE.

April 17, 1911.

Statement by the Missionaries of the Congo Balolo Mission at Bonginda.

We have noted a great improvement in the physical condition of the people surrounding us, especially among the young, due chiefly to the removal of the rubber tax in 1901. Previous to this they, and especially the young, were in a very poor condition, owing to the hard stuffs being sold mostly for rubber to pay the tax.

Since the introduction of the money tax there has been a still greater improvement in the attitude and bearing of the people in general. They are now able, when they have paid their tax, to find time to improve their own state of living. Of this we have evidence here. Better houses have been built, and better and more extensive gardens, &c., kept.

The appearance of the whole community has entirely changed within the last ten years, and we have heard of no brutality due directly or indirectly to the white man since 1906, the Government officials being seemingly very desirous of doing justly by the native.

MARY CORK,
H. WALLBAUM,
D. E. McDONALD.

Bonginda, May 1, 1911.

Mr. Charles Bond, of the Congo Balolo Mission at Lolanga, to Consul Mackie.

May 2, 1911.

Dear Sir,

There can be no doubt that the conditions under which the natives live at the present time in the district around Lolanga are almost infinitely better than those which obtained in the same district five years ago. There is, however, very much room for improvement, especially in the judicial affairs. One would desire that less power should be placed in the hands of medal chiefs, and that these chiefs should have power only in matters that affect native with native.

Yours very sincerely,
CHAS. BOND.

Lolanga, April 4, 1911.

To all whom it may concern,

I am very happy to make the statement that the conditions as regards the treatment of the natives by the State officials in the districts surrounding our mission stations of Bolenge, Longa, and Lotumbe are considerably better than they were five years ago.

Very respectfully,
R. RAY ELDRED,
Legal Representative of the
Foreign Christian Missionary Society.

Mr. A. E. Scrivener to Consul Mackie.

Bolobo, Haut-Congo, May 14, 1911.

Dear Mr. Mackie,
In reply to your request for an expression of opinion regarding the present condition of this district, I have no hesitation in saying that, speaking generally, there is great improvement.

The tax is paid for the most part quite willingly, and great satisfaction is expressed on the receipt of the aluminum tokens denoting their freedom from further taxation for the year.

This has been, however, somewhat discounted by the local officials calling occasionally on the chiefs to supply goods. These have been offered payment for the service rendered, but the money has been declined as altogether insufficient. The chiefs have also been called on to supply goats and fowls &c. at prices said to be under market prices.

That there is improvement is shown by the return of some of the refugees who had fled from the former régime to the French side.

Sincerely yours,
A. E. SCRIVENER.

Mr. J. A. Clark, of the Baptist Missionary Society, to Consul Mackie.

Dear Mr. Mackie,

Bolobo, May 14, 1911.

With reference to the matter we were discussing this afternoon, I should like to emphasize the fact that on all the western side of the lake in the district of Lake Leopold II there is only one small State post, where there resides one official only, who very seldom has the opportunity to leave his post. Naturally, therefore, the medal chiefs, messengers, and others have much too free a hand. I believe that any troubles that still occur may all be traced to this source. But for this I have no doubt that the great improvement of the last year or so would be still more marked.

The people of this district belong in the main to three tribes, the Basengele, the Balia, & Hauto, and the Baboma, the last being more to the south than the others.

I should mention that the State post is at Mbongo.

I am, &c.

J. A. CLARK.

Enclosure 2 in No. 14.

Vice-Consul Campbell to Consul Mackie.

Sir,

Boma, May 27, 1911.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith a report on a tour which I have just completed in the Moyen-Congo, Lake Leopold II, Oubangui, Equator, and Bangala districts of the Congo State.

I have, &c.

GERALD CAMPBELL.

Report on a Tour in the Moyen-Congo, Lake Leopold II, Oubangui, Equator, and Bangala Districts of the Congo State.

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Cataract District (Moyen-Congo).

A short tour in the vicinity of Leopoldville, where the natives have suffered grievously in the past, served to confirm the statement of a missionary to the effect that the survivors are now enjoying a more tranquil existence than they have done since the advent of the white man.

Mr. Theissen wrote in his despatch of the 31st December, 1907: “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 chiefwango 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 4 centimes a kilogramme in trade goods, thus apparently giving back in kind the full value of the tax of 24 fr. imposed. . . . As regards the time and labour necessary to produce these 400 kilog. of chickwange, 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.

The conditions indicated above have now ceased to exist. Male adults are taxed in currency at the rate of 12 fr. per annum, payable in half-yearly instalments, while, in accordance with the decree of the 2nd May, 1910, polygamists pay a supplementary tax of 2 fr. for every wife after the first; women are otherwise exempt from taxation.

A market is established at Leopoldville, where high prices rule for fowls, eggs, chickwanges, and other food-stuffs. Chickwanges are sold at 25 centimes a pudding, so that, reckoning the average weight of a pudding at 1½ kilog., a tax of 12 fr. represents the proceeds of the sale of 48 puddings, or 80 kilog.; this is tantamount to saying that it now suffices for the natives to render to the State 80 hours' work per annum in a zone in which they had formerly to render 100 hours' work per annum.

I endeavoured to ascertain from the natives who sell their produce direct to the State whether they were coerced in any way in the event of their supply being irregular, and the answers which I received convinced me that no force is employed, and that they are paid the full market price for their goods. They are evidently satisfied with the present state of affairs, and they are well pleased to be relieved from the appalling continuity of labour entailed by the payment of the chickwange tax.

Lake Leopold II District.

In his report on his tour in the Leopold II district, dated the 17th December, 1907, Vice-Consul Armstrong declared that the natives were called upon to supply 1,200 kilog. of rubber to the State per mensem, and that, considering the distances which they were compelled to travel in order to procure this amount, there was not the slightest doubt in his mind "that the average month's work of every native is not less than twenty days."

In crossing from Lake Ntumba to Lake Leopold II, and returning by a different route, I had ample opportunity of ascertaining the exact state of affairs in villages situated amongst the swamps and separated from each other by native tracks, and I found in every case that rubber is no longer demanded by the State. The Bolia villages which I visited include Behaki, Yumbi, Botulu, Nkele, Mpa, Ibeke, Benzali, Lombe, Ndongo, Iball Lokanga, and Ngele. The first seven villages are in the district of the State post of Bolia, the four latter in that of Mbongo, as are also the villages of Ilombe, Mokulu, Yumbu, and Botwali, through which I passed on regaining the country of the Ntumba tribe.

The tax in money is assessed at 5 fr. per adult per annum, in accordance with the ordinance of the Governor-General of the 20th August, 1910, but either the Bolia chiefs are extremely dense or they are expressly misleading their people, since, although all were aware that they would shortly be called upon to pay a tax in money, no one could give me an accurate account of the amount of the tax until I reached the last village, Botwali, where I found a chief of sufficient intelligence to understand what he, in common with the other chiefs, had been told by the State officer. Some of his people had, in fact, paid their tax for the latter half of 1910 in money, but he alleged that, on their presenting themselves at Mbongo, the "chef de poste" refused to accept the sum of 2 fr. 50 c., which was legally due, unless they added a further 10 centimes; the chief accordingly concluded that the full annual tax, calculated on the same scale, would be 5 fr. 20 c.; and this amount his people were preparing to pay. An independent witness, who happened to be present at Mbongo when the 1910 tax was paid, subsequently confirmed the chief's statement.

The natives of Benzali affirmed that they were still compelled to supply baskets of fish to the State at Bolia, for which they received payment in francs. They denied that they took them to a market, and declared that if they wished to sell on their own account to the workmen they would have to do so surreptitiously. In any case, they had no idea that they were free to sell their produce when and where they liked.

In order to obtain money the natives are selling rubber to the traders at Bokolo, near Bolia, and to the Société internationale forestière et minière established near Mbongo. I found many villages half empty, and on each occasion I was told that the

men had gone out of their own free will to gather rubber for sale to the traders, nor did I hear of any instance of compulsion on the part of either the State or the companies. Nevertheless trade in wild rubber can never be very brisk in a district in which the forest collection of the produce continued for more than three months after it had been ascertained that the forest was practically exhausted.

Oubangui District.

I travelled up the Oubangui River by steamer, visiting most of the riverine villages as far as Ndongo, at the mouth of the River Lua, whence I proceeded by canoe and overland to Ekuta, passing Maluba, Nkanda, Mangombe, Mosoki, Mbulu, Golosi, Bengamo, Odigia, and Mangui on the way. To the north this district is said to be comparatively rich and well populated, but the section which I traversed is undoubtedly poor and the villages are small.

This country has not been visited previously by a consular officer, but whatever the conditions have been in the past, they are now satisfactory, as far as I could judge. Rubber, copal, and food were formerly demanded from the natives, but they all expressed their preference for the tax in money, which is assessed at 5 fr. per annum. Some of the people living in the neighbourhood of Ekuta had paid their tax for 1911 by the end of March, and others were ready to pay, but it is a question whether the natives farther inland will be able to meet the demands of the State. The riverine natives, on the other hand, should find it possible to gain the sum required by trading with the passing steamers and the French posts on the right bank of the River Oubangui.

Traders are established at Ekuta and Bwado, on the River Lua.

Equator District.

Lake Ntumba.

Since January 1910, when I found the natives on the shores of Lake Ntumba employed in supplying fish to the instruction camp at Irebu, whither they were compelled to journey weekly, the situation has completely changed. The onerous fish tax has been replaced by a tax of 9 fr., payable in currency, and, to judge from the quantities of fish, poultry, cassava, &c., which they were selling voluntarily to the State, and still more from the canoe-loads of gum copal destined for sale to the traders established at Irebu, the people must have earned their year's tax before the end of February.

Oubangui and Ngiri Rivers.

The River Ngiri, tributary of the Oubangui, forms the dividing line between the Equator, Bangala, and Oubangui districts. The villages in the first-named district include Biangala (Bobangui), Mondjoko, Bokose, Ikeke, Bendo, Mampoko, Bokwokoto, Djundu, and Ngiri. Until the end of 1910, apparently, the inhabitants were compelled to pay a fortnightly tax in fish at Coquilhatville, involving an average of six to seven days' travelling on each occasion; now they are free to sell their fish where they please and pay a tax of 9 fr. per annum in half-yearly instalments. They are well satisfied with the change, but they continue to be suspicious of the white man, and many fled at our approach. I could find no reason for this behaviour beyond the fact that they are still mindful of past times.

"District des Bangalas."

For the purposes of administration this area is divided into the Bangala district proper and the Mongala zone, the tax in the former section being assessed, under article 5 of the ordinance of the 20th August, 1910, at 12 fr., and in the latter, under article 1 of the same ordinance, at 5 fr. per annum.

Bangala District Proper.

River Ngiri.

The natives of Bongos and Yombó, on the River Ngiri, stated that the fish and chickwange taxes had been discontinued for some three or four months, and no instructions had been issued as to the payment of a tax in currency. A messenger

from the State post of Bossora, who confirmed this statement, was unable to enlighten me as to the amount which they will be called upon to pay, but it is to be hoped that they will be treated leniently, since they are far too poor to afford the maximum of 12 fr. per head.

River Congo

On the main river I made enquiries at several villages, including Kamgola, Emati, Bolombo, Bobila, Ekwalangana, Bala, Labumba, Bongondanga, Bombata, Engumba group, Lobuya, Bostuta, Lower and Upper Bokakulaka, and Budja (1), all within the jurisdiction of Nouvelle Anvers; Bosojumba, Bobonga, Budja (2), and Lie, in the district of Lisala. In every case the tax in food had evidently ceased in July 1910, since when the natives have taken their produce for sale to the State posts and river steamers. During the latter half of 1910 they paid 6 fr. each as tax, and towards the month of July 1911, they are expecting to be called upon to pay 12 fr. for the present year. An official from Lisala comes down at intervals to Lie, where a market is held, and the natives in the neighbourhood are thus saved a journey to the post. At many of the villages wood fuel is sold to the passing steamers at the rate of 1 fr. per square metre, a square metre representing less than a day's work.

Lisala and Yambata Sections.

Proceeding inland from Upoto, near the instruction camp of Lisala, I visited a line of inland villages to the north of the main river, comprising Aica, the Bosu Gohoi, Mondingiri, and Bangou groups, and the first portion of the Bwela group. The natives had paid 3 fr. each as tax during the last months of 1910, and they were preparing to pay 12 fr. per male adult for 1911. They seemed well satisfied with the change from the old system of the forced weekly food supply, but none the less it is a heavy contribution to levy on inland natives who have few resources beyond the produce of their gardens. Chickwangués fetch 10 centimes per 2 kilogram, in the Lisala market, so that a tax of 12 fr. is equivalent to 360 kilogram, as against 80 kilogram, at Leopoldville. Naturally the possible advantages of one district over another must be considered, but when account is taken of the various processes, common to all districts, involved in the preparation of kwanga bread, which is mostly the work of women, it will be seen that the principle advantage lies with the man who has the greatest number of wives, in spite of the extra tax imposed on polygamists. The inhabitants of Gweli, situated to the east of Lisala in a rich palm forest, and Kamba, a fishing village in the same neighbourhood, are likewise taxed at the rate of 12 fr. a-year, and some had paid an instalment at the time of my visit in April last.

It was interesting to visit the Budja towns of Majalanga, Bokoto, and Bayenge, under the State post of Yambata, as it was in this district that the American consul-general, Mr. J. A. Smith, showed, as the result of an experiment, that the time taken by selected natives to collect the amount of the monthly rubber tax was eighteen days a month, or 216 days a year. Extracts from his report on this region are given in the memorandum annexed to Mr. Theobald's despatch of the 31st December, 1907. A great amelioration has recently taken place in the condition of the natives, who, I am told, had finally to journey to the river to seek rubber on the islands. They are no longer forced to pay a tax in produce, but of the total of 12 fr. at which they are assessed in common with the rest of the Bwela district, only half is being required of them. The natives themselves affirmed that they had paid 3 fr. each for the latter half of 1910, and had been asked for 5 fr. for 1911, but a Catholic missionary informed me that 6 fr. was the correct amount.

Mongala Zone.

Proceeding up the River Mongala as far as Likimi, I visited the villages and fishing camps of Bokanga, Bombomela, Libumba, Mahya, Akula, Molendo, Ngali, Bongcwaka, Hinga, Bosanga, Mongoba, Mumbia, Bolemba, Bokwa, villages administered by the "chefs de poste" of Mobeke, Akula, Moudjinge, Ngali, and Likimi respectively. I further visited the village of Ekonongo, on the main river, and the inland post of Ngali, to the north of Lisala. This zone has suffered considerably in the past from ruthless exploitation at the hands not only of the Société Anversoise du Commerce au Congo (S.C.A.), to which it was conceded, but also of the State, who lately assumed control over the district, collecting rubber on behalf of the company. Now the natives are enjoying a period of tranquillity and contentment. The tax is assessed at 5 fr. per

annum, and in no part, at the time of my journey, was rubber or food being demanded as a tax. The zone is still closed to trade.

District as a Whole.

In reviewing the "District des Bangalas" as a whole, it is difficult to see how the natives, with the exception of those living on the banks of the main river or the lower reaches of the Mongala River, are to obtain sufficient money wherewith to pay their tax, either in the Bangala district proper where the maximum, or in the Mongala zone where the minimum, is exacted. There is but little opportunity for trade in either case, since the greater part of the former district, namely, that lying to the north of the main river, is exhausted, while the latter remains nominally in the hands of the S.C.A. It is true that in the Yambata section only half the tax was levied in 1910, in accordance with the ordinance of the 21st October, 1910, but the natives are experiencing the utmost difficulty in procuring money, since they have a most restricted market for the food-stuffs which form practically their only means of acquiring wealth, their country, formerly rich, having been so impoverished that it offers little, or no, attraction to traders. In the Mongala zone, again, the natives are dependent for the circulation of currency on the State officials, whose wants are limited to a meagre supply of fresh food for their own consumption and that of their workmen, who are allowed 5 centimes per diem for rations. I calculated from data furnished by a "chef de poste" that he and his workmen spend, in a year, less than one-sixth of the aggregate sum demanded as tax from the natives registered in his books. This state of affairs was commented on by more than one officer, but I only make mention of it in the hope that it will not be found necessary to suggest to the native that, in the absence of money, rubber or ivory will be acceptable, as this will mean a reversion to the old system with many of the evils inseparable therefrom. A more reasonable solution of the difficulty would be the reduction of the tax or the opening of the zone to trade.

Treatment of Workmen constructing Telegraph Line.

At the time of my visit to Lulanga, my attention was called to the ill-treatment accorded to the natives working on the telegraph line which is in course of construction in the neighbourhood of Coquilhatville. Some of the men, indeed, who had escaped applied to me for work, while other fugitives were being detained at the State post of Monkero awaiting the return of the "chef de poste," who was on tour in his district. Anxious to learn the manner in which these men had been recruited, I subsequently made investigations in their homes in the Lisala district, and I am quite satisfied that they offered their services voluntarily. The only reported case of compulsion occurred elsewhere, namely, at Mbongi, a village lying between the Rivers Congo and Ngiri, where an officer from Nouvelle Anvers persuaded five or six men to serve against their will, and had one of them, who proved recalcitrant, chained by his soldiers and forced to accompany him; that he was probably acting against instructions, however, is suggested by the fact that he had the man released before reaching the main river. It is necessary to add that I did not actually visit this village, and that I am quoting from statements made by natives living in the neighbourhood. On my return to Lulanga I was given to understand that a magistrate had enquired into the matter, with the result that some fifty men had been allowed to sever their engagements and go back to their villages. As far as the Government are concerned, therefore, a genuine effort was made to recruit labourers without compulsion, and those who wished to terminate their contract before the expiration of their term were allowed to do so, but, from what I could gather, the Europeans in charge were incapable of obtaining work from their men without excessive use of the chicotte, and the Government defeat their own ends in continuing to employ such men, since it is doubtful whether volunteers will be forthcoming in future from the populous Lisala district when the Ngombe and Budja hear how their fellow-tribesmen have been treated.

Remuneration of Free Labour.

In connection with the question of free labour reference must be made to the inadequate remuneration fixed by the Government for portage and padding. It is conceivable that in the poorest districts the natives might be content with the State valuation of their services, but where they are keen traders, fully competent to earn

the amount of their tax without undertaking a task which is unquestionably distasteful to them, there is no incentive to carry heavy loads in swampy country for a trifling fee, nevertheless the State officials must obtain porters and paddlers by some means, and they will undoubtedly employ force unless they are authorised to offer the natives a reasonable wage. In a case of forced portage which was brought to my notice near Nouvelle Anvers, the natives alleged that they had appealed to the judge for help in this matter, but he had refused to listen to them.

Free Trade.

In former days traders were informed that trade was free throughout the country, but on attempting to profit by this assurance they were promptly warned that they were trespassing on land conceded to companies or included in one of the vast "domaines." The situation is now considerably improved; grants of land for the establishment of factories are made far more readily than was the case eighteen months ago, and traders are free to buy the products of the soil from the natives in the area opened to trade in July 1910. Among the more enterprising firms are the Nieuwe Afrikaansche Handels-Vennootschap of Rotterdam and the Société anonyme belge; the former company is pushing ahead into the 1911 area in order to be ready when the zone is opened to trade in July next. The larger number of independent traders are Portuguese and West Coast natives, the latter being the only active representatives of British trade that I encountered. In Lake Leopold II district, on the Rivers Oubangui and Lua, at Copulbatville, Irebu, Lisala, and other places on the main river, new trading factories have been established where formerly traders would have found it useless to intrude. As already stated, the Mongala zone remains closed to trade, and a Portuguese trader whom I met at Eikimi was intending to leave the zone by the first steamer.

There are signs of a keen desire among the natives to return to the commercial activity of former days. A striking example of this is afforded by the natives of Lake Ntumba, who have sold some hundreds of tons of copal to the traders at Irebu during the first four months of the present year, without any coercion whatever. Fifteen months ago these people would not have had the time or the inclination to furnish the smallest quantity. In many districts the natives, especially those who understand the main advantages of competition, are eager to welcome as many traders as possible in their midst, but the country is in a sadly exhausted state, and there is practically nothing beside gum copal to attract responsible companies in the districts with which this report deals.

Native Markets.

Domestic trade might well be encouraged by the establishment of proper markets, which in time would develop into well-known centres where natives and traders might congregate to their mutual advantage and the laws of supply and demand have free play. At present those which have been established at the principal State posts are markets in name only, where the natives bring chickwagues, plantains, fish, &c., for sale to the soldiers and workmen at a fixed price.

Conclusion.

As the result of a tour within the limits of the 1910 area, with the exception of the Mongala zone, I have no hesitation in recording a marked and radical change in the administration of the country and in the treatment of the natives, and I am convinced that the reforms are not merely "paper reforms," as were those of June 1906, but that the Government intend that the new laws shall be carried out. Not only on the main routes, but also in the less-frequented regions, the improvement in the condition of the people is apparent, and many instances could be given in support of this statement. Natives who, little more than a year ago, were spending from ten to twenty days monthly in an exhausted forest searching for rubber, and inhabitants of riverine towns, compelled to labour five and six days weekly in supplying State posts with fish, are now left in peace to gain in their own way the money for the payment of the tax which is levied by the Government. Not infrequently on former tours I have been surrounded by an excited crowd, composed of well-nigh all the males of a village, protesting against the hardship of the rubber or food tax and the impossibility of continuing to cope with the demands of the State; on no occasion has this experience befallen me

during my present tour. The natives, in short, are no longer harassed continually, but they are returning to their normal condition of existence, a sign of which is to be found in the remarkable number of babies-in-arms to be seen in every village.

No atrocities or cases of systematic oppression were reported to me, and investigation of complaints of unjust treatment showed, as a general rule, that the fault lay with the individual agents, rather than with the administration as a whole, though it is impossible entirely to exonerate the Government from blame so long as officials, both high and low, who have clearly proved themselves incapable of dealing sympathetically with natives of Africa remain in the Congo. Exception must also be taken to the retention in office of upstarts as "medal chiefs." They are men who have no hereditary claim to the chieftainship, and their main qualification at the time of their appointment was the skill which they had shown as extortionate rubber collectors. They served their purpose well in the past, but now that they are called upon to help in the genuine administration of the country, and especially in the dispensation of native justice, it is to be hoped that they will be replaced by men who are likely to deal in a disinterested manner with the affairs of those over whom they exercise authority.

D.O./26966/1911.

DRAFT.

The Under Secretary of State
Foreign Office.

Downing Street,
26 August, 1911.

MINUTE.

- Mr. Butler. *Aug 24* Sir,
- Mr. *at once*
- Mr. Fiddes.
- Mr. Just.
- Sir C. Lucas.

Lord Lucas.

Mr. Harcourt.

A.P. Courts Ordinance 1907
Section 34 (1)

Native Courts Ordinance 1905
Sections 9, 10, and 16.

Native Courts Ordinance 1907
Section 11.

Proclamation as to
Native Courts in Uganda
dated 29th Jan. 1909.

Proclamation as to
Native Courts in Usoga
dated 11th Aug. 1909.

*at four each series
in volume for
Capt. G. Hardy (Kampala)*

I am directed by Mr Secretary Harcourt to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 32165/11 of the 15th of August relating to references, in the papers which are being prepared for Parliament, to powers of flogging conferred on Native Chiefs by a recent Congo Law.

I am to request you to lay before Secretary Sir Edward Grey the accompanying copies of the East Africa Protectorate Courts Ordinance 1907, and of the laws relating to

the

the administration of justice in Uganda.

It will be seen from the sections of these laws to which reference is made in the margin that certain Native Courts in these Protectorates do possess power to inflict corporal punishment, in some cases up to the legal maximum of twenty-four lashes. In the circumstances, the Marquess considers that the reference to the powers of flogging given to Native Chiefs in the memo in Vice-Consul Armstrong's report, in Sir E. Grey's despatch to Sir A. Hardinge of the 3rd of March, and in Sir A. Hardinge's reply, had better be omitted from the papers about to be published.

I am, etc.,

(Sd.)

(Signed) H. W. JUST.

In any further communication on this subject, please quote

No. 33963

and address

1911.

The Under-Secretary of State,
Foreign Office,
London.

SEP 27 1911
OFFICE

The Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs
presents his compliments to the Under Secretary of
State for the Colonies, and begs to return
herewith the Volumes enclosed in Colonial
office letter of the 26th ultimo (No. 26966) on the
subject of the proposed Congo Blue Book.

Foreign Office.

September 27. 1911.