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# THE CHURCH IN UGANDA

A CHARGE TO MISSIONARIES OF  
THE UGANDA MISSION

1913

BY THE

RIGHT REV. J. J. WILLIS, D.D.  
BISHOP OF UGANDA

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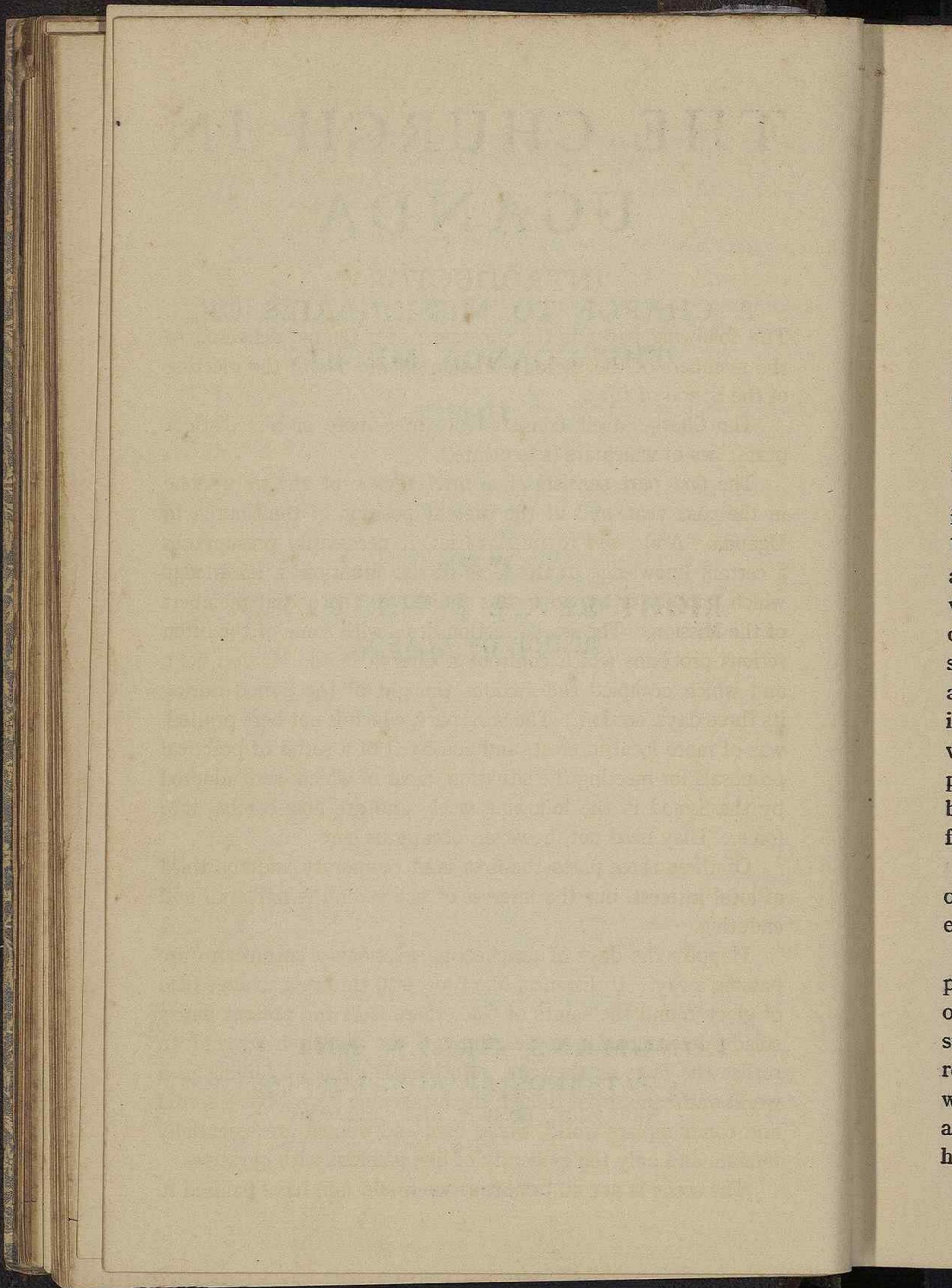
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## INTRODUCTORY

THE following paper is the substance of a Charge delivered to the members of the Uganda Mission on the eve of the meeting of the Synod of 1913.

The Charge itself consisted of three more or less distinct parts, two of which are here printed.

The *first* part consists of a brief review of the work done in the past year, and of the present position of the Church in Uganda. Addressed to missionaries, it necessarily presupposes a certain knowledge of the facts of the situation, a knowledge which happily is by no means limited to the actual members of the Mission. The *second* section deals with some of the often serious problems which confront a Church in the Mission field, and which occupied the anxious thought of the Synod during its three days' session. The *third* part, which is not here printed, was of more local interest, and consisted of a series of practical proposals for meeting the situation, most of which were adopted by the Synod in the following week, and are now coming into force. They need not, however, occupy us here.

Of these three parts the first is of temporary and the third of local interest, but the interest of the second is universal and enduring.

Happily the days of unreflecting missionary enthusiasm are passing away. If distance, like time, still throws a strange halo of glory round the saints of God, there is in the present day a steady determination to see through the golden haze, and to realise the facts as they are. Nothing is gained by living in a world of dreams, even though the awakening reveal but a sordid and commonplace world, whose men and women are essentially human, and only too evidently of like passions with ourselves.

The scene is not all bright, as we would fain have painted it.

No one, who thinks seriously of what *must* be, when the very foundations of a nation are shaken, and its whole social life changed in a single generation, will be surprised at the result. But neither is it all dark, as the superficial critic would have us believe ; and a careful study of the actual condition of Christian life in Uganda leaves one profoundly conscious that God is in it of a truth, and expectant of the future with a hope which is born not of blind enthusiasm, but of reasoned conviction.

But a study of the Church in Uganda after thirty years of its course have been run leaves one with a deep conviction of the danger of leaving a young Church *too soon* to its own resources. It is too commonly thought that our responsibility ceases with evangelisation, and that with the consequences of that evangelisation we have no necessary concern. Such a policy is disastrous. It is to bring children to the birth, and disclaim all responsibility for their future maintenance. It is to sow a field, and care nothing about the harvesting of the grain. It is to buy, at great cost, a flock, and to leave it un-shepherded.

If the labour and the sacrifice of the past are not to be lost, and if the work done is to be conserved, we must do more. We dare not, having gone so far, stand aside, and leave the immature native Church unaided to work out its own destiny. We, more than any others, have created the present situation in Uganda : it is our bounden duty to see the matter through.

If the following pages, in throwing a clearer light on the often devious path of native Christianity, call forth a greater sympathy for them in their struggling, and more earnest prayer for their final triumph, they will not have been published in vain.

The Charge is printed as nearly as possible as it was delivered, with the necessary elimination of local allusions, to persons or places, which would be of no special interest outside Uganda. It should be noted that *Buganda* stands for the *kingdom*, while *Uganda* stands for the Protectorate or Diocese of that name, which covers a very much larger area.

## THE CHURCH IN UGANDA

**Progress of Civilisation.**—Looking out over the crowded streets and busy factories of Kampala, we are bound to confess that the romantic days of Uganda and of the Uganda Mission, like the days of childhood, have passed for ever. The glow and beauty of early dawn have faded, and in their place has come the clear, cold light of day, and we are called to face the stern reality of things as they are.

For good or for evil England and Uganda have become indissolubly joined together. The gain to the latter, in point of development, has been immense. Commercially, Uganda has never been more prosperous. The honour conferred on His Excellency at the beginning of the year was not only a tribute to Sir Frederick Jackson personally: it was a recognition of the growing importance of that Protectorate over which he has been called to rule. The visit of His Highness the Kabaka to England has riveted, as nothing else could, the link that binds this country of our adoption to our native land.

Every year serves to draw closer the bonds that unite the two countries. The commencement of the new railway, from Kampala to the Lake, brings us to the eve of the day when, by rail or steamer, the last mile of the journey between London and Kampala shall have been covered. A bi-weekly service of Lake steamers; the extension of the Busoga Railway; the development of the waterways through the upper reaches of the Nile; the construction of metalled roads in Busoga, in Bukedi, and through Bunyoro to the Congo—all tend to bring Uganda and its remotest districts into touch with the world without.

The development of Uganda within the last year has indeed

been remarkable. Companies have been floated, thousands of acres have been planted with coffee, rubber, and cotton; ginneries have been set up; everywhere is bustle and activity. The whole aspect of the country is changing.

Most remarkable has been the rise of the hitherto unknown primitive tribes beyond the border of Buganda proper. A few years ago Buganda occupied a dominant position in the Protectorate. To-day, slowly but surely, these other tribes are rising. The removal of the Baganda Agents from the more uncivilised parts of the Protectorate may be taken as an indication of the conviction of the Government that the work of the Baganda as pioneers of civilisation in the surrounding tribes is done, and that the native-born chiefs are now in a position to assume the reins of responsibility. Industrially these peoples bid fair to rival, if not to surpass, the Baganda. Coupled with the steadily declining birth-rate in Buganda proper, this levelling up of the Nilotic tribes points to a possible reversal of their relative positions in the near future.

**Effect on Missions.**—The most important question from the missionary point of view, and that which most clearly concerns us at the present moment, is the position of the native Church in Uganda under these changing conditions. That it should be affected by them, deeply and permanently, goes without saying. It was inevitable, not only that the country as a whole should be affected by the change, but that they whose minds, in virtue of the education they have received, are most alert and susceptible to new influences should be the first to feel it.

There can be no question that, even from the purely material point of view, Christian Missions have a supremely important part to play in the development of a country. It is interesting to note how far, in Uganda, the Mission has been able to respond to what, from this point of view, is expected of it.

**1. Industrial Training.**—There is one department of missionary work which, because it is visible and produces tangible results, appeals to many to whom missionary work on its higher planes is unintelligible. *Industrial* Missions find a point of contact with the general life of the country, and, when efficient,

command universal respect. In this department it must be confessed that we are as yet only at the very beginning of our work. Much of the industrial training is now being undertaken by the Government. Yet it would be most unfair to assume that little or nothing had been done by the Missions. Master builders, carpenters, printers, are at work to-day who owe all their early training to them. Considerable tracts of Church land have been put under cultivation with coffee and rubber. At different stations indentured boy apprentices are being trained as carpenters and builders. Industrial work, of one kind or another, forms an important part of the routine in many of the Schools. The Weavery in Toro, burnt down on Easter Sunday, represented an attempt to build up an industry in which the native women of Toro could find permanent employment. In the first *School Guilds Competition*, held this year, the best specimens of the industrial work of the Schools were brought together, and it is hoped that the result will be to inspire a very much further development in this direction. The present condition of the country brings to us a demand and an opportunity to which we should not be slow to respond.

**2. Education.**—In a second direction Christian Missions are called upon to face a great demand. It may be the fashion to decry *Mission Schools*, but the finished product of those Schools is everywhere in request. The Government asks for interpreters and clerks; the settler requires head overseers who can write, and builders; the chiefs require trained assistants in the ever more complicated work of native government; the trader eagerly engages one who can speak English and keep accounts. No educated boy need stand idle and unemployed, for the demand is as yet far in excess of the supply. No other body apart from the Missions attempts the work of education. And the Government, officially by a small annual grant, and individually in many a sympathetic message and kindly act, makes plain its appreciation of the work of the Missionary Societies.

Two new High Schools for sons of chiefs have been opened during the past year. Three other schools have been enlarged

by new buildings. The cause of higher education has been furthered by the provision that boys over eighteen, who are still in regular training in Mission Schools, may be excused the Poll-tax. The visit of His Excellency the Acting Governor to the schools in Mengo did much to stimulate the cause of education.

But indeed the work, so far as it concerns the boys, stands in little need of outward stimulus. We are dealing with a nation in a formative stage; they realise something of their limitations, and are keenly anxious to be taught. The increase in the number on the school registers of some 9000 names, in spite of the demand and opening for child labour on the plantations, is decisive evidence of a desire for education.

Speaking generally, the numbers in the schools tend, in the more settled districts, to remain stationary, or to decrease, while in the more remote districts they are rapidly increasing. On the other hand, the standard in the older districts is very distinctly higher.

The supreme need at the present time is the formation of *Normal Schools*, especially one for the Western Provinces, and one for the districts east of the Nile. The accommodation in the Normal School at Mengo is totally inadequate. I hope that as soon as possible that School may be reserved for the training of senior schoolmasters, the junior masters being trained in four local centres.

3. **Medical Missions.**—A third point at which the life of the community is touched by the Mission is one of which we are all justly proud. The Medical Mission in Uganda, especially that hospital with which the name of Cook will ever be associated, has done a service to the cause of Missions and the cause of Christ for which we cannot be too thankful. In that one hospital 2078 in-patients, and 63,278 out-patients, have been treated in the year; 1077 operations have been performed, and 76 per cent. of the patients have left the hospital completely cured. In the new hospital at Toro, under Dr. Bond, 554 in-patients have been treated. In the Branch Dispensaries, affiliated to Mengo Hospital, 29,242, of whom 10,017 were at Iganga, have received treatment. Apart from these recognised dispensaries, almost

every Mission Station carries on a similar work, the patients in some cases averaging 150 a day. The European hospital in Mengo, the Annie Walker Hospital, exercises an increasing influence far beyond the borders of the Protectorate.

**Missionary Work of the Uganda Church.**—While these three great departments of Missionary work, Industrial, Educational, and Medical, attract, in the nature of the case, a wider attention, in other directions, in at least as deep a sense, Christianity is touching and moulding the inmost life of the people.

Broadly speaking, we are confronted, in view of the rapid development of the country around us, with two great problems—the problem of entering, before it is too late, the as yet unevangelised portions of the Diocese, and the yet more difficult problem of maintaining, in the already evangelised District, the position we have gained.

With regard to the former, we do well to bear steadily in mind that, according to the last census returns, only one-eighth of the population of the Diocese is even nominally Christian. Two new centres have been opened or reopened during the past year. The Rev. A. B. Fisher, after twenty-one years of Missionary work, started in February for Gulu, to open afresh the work started by Mr. Lloyd and Mr. Kitching, and temporarily abandoned for want of men; and the Rev. W. Chadwick has made an encouraging start in the Mumia's district, with its 400,000 Bantu-speaking people. The growth in Ng'ora and Kavirondo districts has been peculiarly rapid. In the latter, where there are now some 150 baptized, and over 500 catechumens, with regular readers numbering from 2000 to 3000, the work is entirely in the hands of the natives of the country. It is unique in the Diocese in being carried on apart from all help from the Baganda. The long-projected *Missionary College*, for the training of native missionaries, has at last been started at Ng'ora, and is doing well, with some thirty students.

It is a matter of regret that, in the other extremity of the Diocese, the appeal for Kigezi or South-West Ankole, with its 100,000 people, has so far failed to meet with a response.

**Pastoral Work.**—With regard to that more difficult problem,

the consolidation of the work done, certain definite steps have been taken. With the present shortage of the European staff the pastoral work must be done, to a very large extent, by native clergy. It is our especial work to secure a continual supply of native pastors, and to maintain in a state of efficiency those already ordained. The new *Theological Hostel*, under the charge of the Rev. G. H. Casson, has been brought into use this year, and eight candidates for ordination, with some forty men reading for Lay Readers' Licences, have been in regular training. For the first time the entire body of native clergy met in a Retreat at *Budo*, and spent a happy and most useful three weeks. The first ordination to the priesthood of *Bunyoro* clergy took place at Hoima in November 1912, and was a historic occasion in the life of the Bunyoro Church.

The supervision of the clergy is becoming an increasingly important work; Archdeacon Baskerville has thrown himself energetically into this, and his lectures at Budo will prove of the greatest value in guiding the native clergy through perplexing questions, and in unifying the use throughout the different districts. Archdeacon Buckley has added to his charge the whole of the Nyanza Province, so that the two Archdeaconries now cover the entire Diocese.

**Church Building.**—The year has been marked by considerable activity in the direction of building permanent churches; five new churches have been consecrated since the last Synod, as well as the School Chapel at Budo. After a long and most trying series of delays, chiefly owing to the persistent want of labour, the Cathedral, thanks to the untiring efforts of Mr. Rowling, at last shows signs of a real beginning. Other important churches are still in course of construction. Practically at the centre of every pastorate a permanent church has been erected or is in the course of construction.

**Literature.**—As regards literature, on which the mental and spiritual stamina of the Native Church so much depends, very little has been possible during the past year. A commencement has been made in the revision of the Luganda New Testament. The completed Bible in Lunyoro, a standing monument of the

work of Mr. Maddox in Toro, has been received from the Bible Society. Mr. Rowling's *Guide to Luganda Prose Composition* has been published by the S.P.C.K. The familiar *Uganda Notes* has developed into an official *Diocesan Gazette*. Translation work has been carried on, so far as their pressing duties allowed, by pioneer missionaries, in five fresh dialects; but so far as Luganda is concerned we still stand in urgent need of a permanent translator.

**The Staff.**—It is not too much to say that in every department of the work, with the possible exception of the Medical Staff, the shortage of men is making itself acutely felt. Archdeacon Walker, Mr. Clayton, Mr. H. W. Weatherhead, Mr. Hattersly, and Mr. Phillips have retired, and each has left a wide and dangerous gap in our ranks. The Rev. E. Millar, whose experience of the inner working of the Uganda Mission and knowledge of the people and country stands unrivalled, succeeded as Secretary of the Mission. The hospital staff has been recruited by the addition of Miss Harvey and Miss McMinn, and in Toro of Miss Godfrey. The place of Mr. Phillips at the C.M.S. Office has been taken by Mr. J. S. Hunt, but as yet no single recruit has come in the place of four of our most able men. From the ranks of the native Christians the oldest and best-known leader has been taken. The death of Rev. Henry Wright Duta leaves a gap which no living Muganda can quite fill.

**Women's Work.**—There is abundant evidence that the work among the women and girls is going forward steadily. The increased number of women delegates at the women's central conference and its far more representative character point to a development of organisation and of interest. The work among the women in Busoga and in the newly awakened missionary districts east of the Nile is still very small, but at the two extremes of the Diocese, in Kabarole, where Miss Pike's School now numbers over 1200, and at Nabumali, where Miss Pilgrim and Miss Morris have a School of 215 girls, the women's side of the work has been developed to a remarkable extent. In all the old districts the tendency, as shown by the Confirmation

statistics, and by the ordinary Sunday congregations, is for the women slowly to overtake, and eventually to outnumber the men. In point of intelligence they still show marked signs of the effect of centuries of subjection, but the younger generation, as is shown by Gayaza, or the Mengo Girls' School, are intellectually far in advance of the earlier converts. One of the happiest signs for the future is the filling up of the Teachers' training classes under Miss Furley and Miss Chadwick in Mengo. The increasing hold of Christianity on the girls of this country is evidenced by the numbers under instruction, the names of girls on the School registers throughout the Diocese having increased from 5525 in 1901 to 24,037 in 1911-12, and to 28,577 in the current year.

**Relations with Government Officers.**—The relations with the Government have been most happy; their prompt readiness to meet any known difficulty on our part was seen in the appointment, at our request, of a commission to inquire into the question of native marriages, in their bearing on Christian Baptism. A similar courtesy and consideration has been met with on every occasion in which it has been necessary to approach the Government. In Sir Frederick Jackson and in Mr. Wallis, the Chief Secretary, the country has—and we as a Mission have—firm friends, and the attitude of those at the head of the Administration has been reflected throughout all ranks of the officials.

#### A. NATIVE CUSTOMS

**The Passing of Paganism.**—The striking Report presented to the last Synod by the Rev. G. H. Casson revealed some curious anomalies. Nothing, perhaps, is more remarkable than the apparently total collapse of heathenism in Uganda within the last thirty years. One might pass from end to end of the country to-day and be scarcely conscious even of its existence; everywhere schools and churches and Christian congregations; everywhere the most uneducated peasant eager to dissociate himself from the despised creed of his fathers. And yet, at the same time, there is not only a survival, but a recrudescence, in a

hundred forms, of that Pagan faith which is openly repudiated by all. This passing of Paganism and survival of superstition is a remarkable anomaly.

**Islam in Uganda proper.**—Again, there was a time when Mohammedanism bid high for the possession of Buganda; for one brief period it was actually dominant. To-day it is represented by a weak minority; it has few chiefs of influence in the country; its inability to educate dooms it to failure among a people, above all, eager for progress. It has had its day, and it has failed. And yet Islam, beaten and discredited, is still a force in Buganda; and the superstitious terror that once drove the heathen Baganda to their witch doctors, is to-day sending nominally Christian men and women to Mohammedan doctors for the charms which they had cast aside.

**Persistence of Superstition.**—And it is certainly an anomaly that, at a time when education is spreading into every home in the land, and Christianity is dominant as never before, there should spring up a crop of superstitious practices, fresh shoots from the stump of a Paganism so lately and so triumphantly cut down.

Some of these practices are confessedly and openly heathen: some so apparently innocent, or even laudable, that they well might pass without suspicion. There is a dim borderland between Paganism and Christianity into whose depths *we* can never penetrate. It is peopled with dark phantoms of a heathen imagination, so unreal to us, so intensely real to them. Through that dark, mysterious region every soul must pass in its journey from heathenism to a purer, higher faith. We on the higher ground can do little to help; we can but lift a warning cry, or stretch out a helping hand from the farther side. Only dimly can we discern what lies within those shadows, never can we ourselves feel their terrors, or know with what timid, uncertain steps they must often tread who feel their way towards the light.

Within that borderland is a very labyrinth of bewildering paths. There are paths which lead unmistakably in the wrong direction; there are paths where the foot may tread firmly, and

the pace be quickened with perfect confidence ; but there are paths which perplex, and on which no certain light falls.

It is these broad questions which we are called upon to help our brethren to face at this time. And in facing them there is an evident danger of falling into one of two opposite dangers.

The native is, in the first place, by nature invincibly *conservative*, with a blind and unreasoning conservatism. His tendency is not to judge a question on its merits, but to act according to precedent. Even if, as an enlightened individual, his will may lie in an opposite direction, the whole force of the influence around him compels him to the beaten track. This conservative spirit is most stubborn among the old women of the tribes ; in them heathenism finds its last stronghold ; and their influence is immense. Hence the persistence of the power of superstition. The fear of offending influential relations, the dread of arousing unseen powers, the existence of which was only yesterday called in question, the stress of an unaccountable illness, all strongly reinforce that innate tendency to keep things as they are, that spirit of conservatism which has so long paralysed and sterilised the life of Africa.

On the other hand, once freed from this the native convert frequently goes off in the completely opposite direction. Nothing that formed a part of his past life can be otherwise than bad ; and what is wrong for him is equally wrong for everyone else. There is a strong touch of fanaticism in every true convert, and a danger of a reaction that shall sweep away the good with the evil. And there is a real danger in this ; there is danger of an intolerant spirit condemning the innocent with the guilty ; danger of exaggerating little things while passing over things immeasurably greater ; danger of casting off, with the follies of the past, all its restraints and repudiating even its most sacred relationships.

Alike in the blind conservatism and in the unreflecting radicalism there is danger. We need to rouse the one and to check the other. African life, like the great ice masses of an Alpine glacier, frozen and sluggish, moves slowly ; with all its immense potential force it accomplishes so little. Yet it is

travelling, working its way with painful slowness into the warmer altitude, until beneath the growing warmth of the sun the great mass dissolves, and the pent-up streams burst forth.

It is then that the other danger appears, lest the torrent, uncontrolled in its wild energy, work havoc in its mad rush down the mountain valley. It is then that the controlling banks are so sorely needed, to confine and to direct, until the first wild rush is over, and the strong, steady river flows on to fertilise and beautify the thirsty lowlands.

Let us, in all our consideration of these vexed questions of native customs, bear steadily in mind these two fundamental tendencies. There is ice here, the frozen product of centuries, in the face of which we are powerless; we may, with our tiny picks, with much labour detach little blocks from the glacier; but never, until the Sun of Righteousness arises upon it in His might will the age-long mass of heathen superstition be broken up. Let us attack the evil as we may, ventilate the question, produce our reasons, deal hard blows at the giant mass. But let us never forget that the power which alone can break up a heathen superstition is with God and not with us, and that power is not force, but love. But while, with all the strength that is in us, we seek to remove the evil, let us be careful indeed lest in our intense anxiety to root up the tares of social evils we root up the wheat also. Let us deliberately conserve all of the past that may be redeemed. For to the native convert the intellectual and moral upheaval has been so tremendous; almost every known landmark has been swept away; he is flung into a new world, with new standards and ideals, and what wonder if for the moment he is bewildered and staggers as in a dream. It means much for him if, at such a crisis, he has by him one who can take him by the hand, and, pointing once more to the old familiar landmarks, steady and reassure him. When a custom can be satisfactorily explained, and its sting withdrawn; where it is possible to eliminate from it the objectionable feature, by all means let it be retained. Only when the most careful examination has proved it to be utterly worthless and incapable of regeneration, let it be set aside.

I would add one word of caution with regard to that profound belief in departed spirits that lies at the very root of African Animism. There is no doubt, in my own mind, that God has overruled and used that belief where none higher yet existed; He has spoken as men were able to hear, by dreams or omens, using with Divine skill the best weapon that was to hand. And there is no doubt that even the most abject superstition has played its part in the primitive morality of the tribe, restraining, protecting, softening. To remove that belief in an unseen spirit world, potent for good as it is also potent for evil, before a higher, clearer faith has been put in its place, is a dangerous course. I believe the dread of coming again under the power of spirits, from which, through the gospel of Christ, he had escaped, has, in the Providence of God, kept many a young convert from yielding in the time of temptation. Disillusion him prematurely, and you have removed from his life one of the most powerful of motives. I believe that very much of the prevailing laxity in the present day in Uganda is due to this simple fact, that the earlier motives for restraint, once so effective, have been swept away, and nothing higher has taken their place.

#### B. CHURCH DISCIPLINE

**Changed Conditions.**—There is, to my mind, something most pathetic in the rushing of a quick, impressionable, intelligent people through all the stages of civilisation within the lifetime of a single generation. That momentous decision to build a railway into the heart of this continent has been followed with startling rapidity by consequences, logical, inevitable, necessary, but none the less pathetic. Within thirty years the whole fabric of this country, social and political, has been upheaved; perhaps never in any country has there been seen a more sudden and more complete reversal of the whole national life within so short a time. No people, and certainly no African people, could stand the shock of such an upheaval without serious loss. It is pathetic that the loss should have come in the advent of some of the best blessings of civilisation—industry, prosperity, education,

above all, liberty—blessings undoubted, but perilous when they come too soon.

I would ask you to consider first how far, and in what directions, that loss has been felt ; and then how far, and in what way, it may yet be possible to recover.

**Investigation.**—You will remember that it was resolved, in the Synod of 1912, to ask the Bishop to inquire into the moral conditions of the Church in Uganda at the present day ; and you are all aware that, since January, a series of special inquiries have been held in all the large centres of missionary work in the Diocese. Those inquiries have been attended by the clergy and teachers, the Chiefs and leading Christians in each District ; and a considerable amount of valuable evidence has been given. That evidence has been often painful hearing ; but, I believe, will help very materially towards the solution of our problem.

I propose to consider (1) the actual condition of the Church at the present time ; (2) the contributing causes by which that condition has been produced ; (3) certain hopeful features in the situation ; (4) some suggested remedies, and the specific measures to be brought forward at the Synod.

There can be no doubt that there are within the Church itself weaknesses which afford grave cause for anxiety.

There is an absence of adequate *supervision*. The work has grown to an extent with which it has proved impossible to keep pace. The retirement of experienced Missionaries, and the failure of recruits, could not have occurred at a more inopportune and unfortunate time. Our staff has been reduced below the limit of safety ; converts are being baptized in thousands, and new fields are opening up ; whether we will or no the work of evangelisation grows. The number of native clergy is as yet too small, even the teachers are too few, to cope with the work. And the result is that many are lost because no effort is made, or can be made, to follow them. It is this need of shepherding which is one of the primary causes of our loss.

**1. Moral Condition of the Church.**—Apart from the matter of the return to Pagan habits of thought and action, of which I

have already spoken, there are two (I believe only two) dominant evils in the field—drunkenness and immorality.

These are not new, in the country or in the Church. Records of earlier minute-books of Church Councils bear sad and unmistakable evidence of their existence among the Baganda Christians from the earliest days. But of late, within the last six or seven years, there has been a recrudescence on an alarming scale. In view of the native recklessness in the use of language, and strong tendency to speak in exaggerated superlatives, it is difficult to speak exactly; but there seems, unhappily, no reason to question the statement all but universally made, that a very large number of the Christians, at one time or another, fall under the power of one or other of those two evils. Some place the percentage of failures very high indeed, but exact figures are—in the nature of the case—impossible.

There is one conspicuous exception to the above finding. Where the Protestant Church exists as a minority in a Roman Catholic country, where they have no Protestant Chiefs to give the lead, and men are Christian by conviction and not from interest, there, and there only, has the result of the inquiry reversed the general verdict. Budu stands out in fine contrast with Koki, and Bwekula with Singo.

It is necessary to go further. In some respects the state of the country would appear to be even worse than in the days of Mwanga. The passing from a nominal Paganism to a nominal Christianity will not, at once, produce morality, and we must not assume that the establishment of Christianity will, of itself, necessarily regenerate a country. The period when the Christian Church was absolute in Europe is known, and rightly known, as "the dark ages." The Byzantine Empire was never more corrupt than when the Eastern Church was in supreme authority at Constantinople. The Churches of Asia Minor and of North Africa had utterly failed to regenerate the lands from which their candlestick was finally removed. The fact that we have in Uganda our Churches, our Schools, our ecclesiastical organisations, our Christian Chiefs, does not necessarily imply that Uganda is, in the deepest sense of the word, Christian.

With regard to *drunkenness*: within the last few years its area has been extended, and its intensity has been increased. Ankole and Bunyoro have followed the example of Buganda; Busoga seems to be relatively free of this particular evil. Boys, women, and girls have followed the example of the men; drunkenness on their part is practically a new thing. In spite of the efforts of the Government to prevent its sale, whisky is frequently obtained, and this, mixed with the native beer, has led to a dangerous increase in the violence and force of intoxication. Cases of moderate drinking are, of course, not unknown, but the unanimous conviction is that they are the exception. It is in this absence of the power of self-restraint among a people unaccustomed to moderation, coupled with the fact that the excitement of the intoxication so often predisposes to other sins, that the really grave evil of drink in Uganda lies.

With regard to *immorality*: adultery seems, happily, to be rare. The chief evil threatening the Church lies in a return to polygamy. This is widely justified by an appeal to the heroes of the Old Testament; to Abraham and Jacob, to David and Solomon. Monogamy is by many regarded as a purely European institution, without Divine sanction or command, and a physical impossibility to the African. At the same time, they are aware that, as the law stands, marriage by native custom, after marriage in church, and during the lifetime of the wife, is liable to five years' imprisonment: such marriage is, therefore, almost always secret, and evidence of it exceedingly difficult to obtain.

Apart from this return to polygamy, the main evils may be briefly said to be—on the part of young men and women—a reluctance to face the responsibilities of married life; mixed marriages between Christians and heathens; the easy expulsion of wives by their husbands, or abandonment of husbands by their wives, in either case without redress; and a general relaxation of all moral obligation, past or present.

**2. Causes of Decline.**—The *contributing causes* to which this condition of affairs may be traced are not difficult to find. They are many, and perfectly adequate to explain the declension. Some are inevitable in the changed conditions; some are

blessings, only given too soon; some are matters for the sincerest regret and shame; some are remediable and temporary.

**Liberty.**—The root cause, I would say, is an inevitable accompaniment of Christian civilisation, and in itself the highest blessing—*liberty*. For this blessing men have fought and died, but to a people who have not *won* it, to whom it comes unsought, with startling suddenness, it may come as a curse. The people of Uganda have been brought up under a stern tutelage; their feudal system was complete to an extraordinary degree, and pitilessly cruel; but it had this advantage, it controlled men, it taught all, from the highest Chief, to respect and to obey. No one dared to do otherwise. Everyone felt the yoke, and none more heavily than women and girls.

Suddenly that yoke was removed. Barbarous punishments were abolished; it could not have been otherwise. Parental control was withdrawn. The power of Chiefs began to wane. All restrictions were relaxed; all, men and women, boys and girls, were free to wander where they liked, to take up work or to leave it at their will. A demand for labour far in excess of the supply, a sudden access of wealth and luxuries, aggravated the situation. The down-trodden peasant found, or is finding, himself master of the situation, free to name his terms, and for the first time independent of his feudal Chief.

**Towns.**—Towns are another inevitable concomitant of advancing civilisation. They are a visible sign of industry and commercial prosperity; and they have a supremely important part to play in the development of a country. They unify the country, they stimulate the individual, they make for progress. But they are blessings dearly bought. I think I am right in saying that no single Inquiry was held without spontaneous reference made to the influence of Kampala and Entebbe. Certain it is, if statistics may be taken as a criterion, that the influence of the Church in the townships is waning, and that Christian life is purer in the remote districts and among the poorer populations. The poorest peasants are morally the purest. The far-reaching influence of native servants, partly

caused by their relatively high wages, has been to me a revelation ; with minds, sharpened but not deepened by their direct contact with European and Indian life, they have often returned to their homes spoilt and unmanageable, knowing enough to despise their former associates, too little to know their own limitations.

**Education.**—*Christian education* is a blessing difficult to exaggerate. To possess and to study the Scriptures in their own tongue is to any nation an unspeakable privilege. But with a really extraordinary ingenuity and research the Baganda have made the Bible one of their most important weapons in defence of a larger liberty, or laxity, of life. Justification for polygamy is found, as I have said, in the examples of Old Testament heroes, and in many an obscure passage diligently searched out ; justification of drinking in the feast at Cana, in the reputation of Our Lord as the friend of publicans, in the institution of the Holy Communion, in St. Paul's recommendation to Timothy. There is, one must recognise, a distinct party in the Church in favour of licensed polygamy, and it takes its strongest ground in Scripture.

**Chiefs.**—The examples of Chiefs have contributed, more perhaps than we can realise, to the decline of national morals. The feudal system is unquestionably waning, but its force is by no means spent. The fact that Chiefs can sin with virtual impunity, that so long as their work for the Government is done their position is secure, has led to the impression that ability is everything, character nothing. And in the main, in every case, the character of a Chief is mirrored in his followers ; "like master, like man," is nowhere more true than in a feudal state. The universal testimony has been that any disciplinary measures, to be effective, must begin with the Chiefs.

**Absence of Discipline.**—A further cause is the absence of a discipline which is feared. Suspension from the Holy Communion for a term of months is scarcely regarded as a punishment by many. It is as ineffective as a deterrent as is the civil fine of five rupees as a check on drunkenness. Public opinion is still unformed ; its voice has scarcely yet been heard, and

the general feeling is that so long as the nominal position is retained in the Church, and official respectability maintained in the State, anything else is tolerable. Compared with the barbarities of the past, present-day punishments may well seem too trivial to be regarded.

**Intolerance.**—The Christians themselves are in part to be held responsible for their fallen brethren. Christian charity is the ripe fruit of a matured Christian character, zeal and earnestness are the blossoms. And often in the younger converts that zeal is intemperate; the indignation against the evil finds vent in unqualified condemnation. Common report stamps the character of a man, and the verdict is accepted unexamined. Too often the man sinks permanently into the position to which the barest rumour in the first instance had relegated him. This indiscriminate condemnation, labelling everyone not an abstainer as drunkard, taking every suspicion as established proof, defeats its own object.

**Prayerlessness.**—But behind all these causes—and I am far from having exhausted them—there is the deepest cause of all—*alienation from God*. When we think how entirely the whole spiritual life depends upon our communion and contact with God; how difficult is private prayer in a land where privacy and quiet are hardly known; how few and how inadequate are the opportunities of spiritual help in the native Christian life; with what appalling force the traditions of the past, and the environment of the present, drag him downwards, our wonder is not that many fall, but that any stand.

**Hopeful Features.**—I have drawn a sombre picture; to do otherwise might have conveyed a false impression; we gain nothing by closing our eyes to facts. And yet a close study of these leaves one emphatically hopeful as to the future. I would point out—very briefly—certain distinctly hopeful features in the situation.

In the first place, our problem is comparatively *simple*. The evil lies on the surface. The sins are essentially sins of the flesh; they are those which dog the footsteps of every heathen people in its upward climb. We have in Uganda no heresies,

no direct antagonism to Christianity. The enemy is plainly visible, and the fight is in the open.

Secondly, there is, so far as I have been able to see, no desire to leave the Church. There is no intention of making any deliberate return to Paganism. The evil is admitted with perfect candour; but its cause is very much more often *weakness* than vice.

Thirdly, the Baganda are a peculiarly *malleable* people, quick to respond to good influence as to bad. They are not yet set in anything like hostility to the cause of Christ; they rather welcome than resent the sincere effort to help them. The evils in their acute form are of very recent date, and a strong, loving effort at the present time might result in untold good.

And whatever may be said of defections, it leaves untouched the great outstanding fact that we have in the Church of Uganda the 7000 who have not bowed the knee to Baal. Nothing has been more cheering, in the course of this inquiry, than the revelation of the strength and intensity of genuine love to God, and earnest desire for better things, among the native Christians. That spirit will find expression in this Synod, and so long as that spirit remains we may look forward with assured confidence to the future of our beloved Church in this land. That spirit will not fail, for it is inspired by the Spirit of the living God Himself.

I close with one word. For me this past year has been one of extraordinary interest. It has been a privilege such as few men have enjoyed to visit the widely-scattered stations of the Uganda Missions, and to enter as far as might be into the life of the workers, and the infinitely varied details of the work. I come to the close of this year and the eve of another Synod with a deep feeling of appreciation of what I have been privileged to see, and in a sense to share, and with a very real and lasting sense of gratitude for the unnumbered acts of kindness, and the welcomes that have more than made up for sometimes wearying rides. I can only say that I am proud to be at the head of such a mission,

even while humiliated by the thought of the overwhelming responsibility.

But when I think of all the work done—the pressing needs of education and pastoral supervision, and the unprecedented openings for evangelisation within and around Uganda—there is one need which stands out as supreme. I dwelt upon it in speaking to the native clergy at Budo; I would close with speaking of it to you to-night. It is the need of *shepherding*. “Feed My lambs. . . . Tend My sheep. . . . Feed My sheep.” I know of no part of our multitudinous work at the present time more vitally and urgently important than this duty and sacred privilege of ministering to these our brethren in Christ. They are passing as a Church and as individuals through supremely difficult times; they need now, if they ever needed, all the help and all the friendship that we can give them. I commend this to you—I lay it upon myself—as the greatest need that lies before us in the coming year. God grant we may not fail in this, the highest of all the lessons we are called to learn, “By love to serve one another.”