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NOTE.—There are many subjects in Africa, such as Racial Characteristics, Political and Industrial Conditions, Labour, Disease, Currency, Banking, Education, and so on, about which information is imperfect and opinion divided. On none of these complicated and difficult questions has Science said the last word. Under these circumstances it has been considered best to allow those competent to form an opinion to express freely in this Journal the conclusions at which they themselves have arrived. *It must be clearly understood that the object of the Journal is to gather information, and that each writer must be held responsible for his own views.*

THE BEGINNING OF NATIVE ADMINISTRATION IN NORTHERN RHODESIA¹

NORTHERN Rhodesia is that part of Rhodesia which lies north of the Zambezi and stretches from this river to Lake Tanganyika, a distance on the present route of about 800 miles. It is in area nearly 300,000 square miles and has a population of 3600 Europeans and a little under a million natives. Originally Northern Rhodesia was composed of the two territories North-Eastern and North-Western Rhodesia. The former was the first to be occupied and was entered from the east coast and through Nyasaland, there being then no open route from the south through North-Western Rhodesia, which, though nearer to South Africa, was at the time looked upon as being less accessible. The discovery of copper, lead and zinc and the building of the railway through from the south soon caused it to outstrip in development the North-Eastern part, which is now less easily accessible and less

¹ This paper was read at a Meeting of the Society held on January 26th, 1922. For report of other proceedings on this occasion see p. 224.

known. The two territories were later united under one Administration as Northern Rhodesia.

It is not of the very early agreements, obtained by eminent explorers for the British South Africa Company, and by reason of which the Territory came into the British sphere, that I wish to speak this afternoon, nor of the general administration of the Territory, but only of the start of the Native Administration, in reality the gradual assumption of Government in a new country where no Government existed except as the arbitrary will of a number of tribal chiefs who were at enmity among themselves; of the way in which that Government began and how its acceptance gradually spread. It seems to me to be a good example of influence gained by a very few firm but sympathetic men over a barbarous people and gradually extended and developed into a Government willingly accepted even by those who at first threatened to oppose it with violence: a Government begun without armed force, carried on and developed with very little more than a show of it, and in its development changing the barbarous state of the country, where life was never safe and tribal wars were the rule, into an ordered Administration under which these once quarrelsome tribes settled down as peaceful and loyal subjects of the king. In the limited time at my disposal I shall have to keep to a bare outline sketch of the change, and as I was not officially connected with the Administration until after it was well established, I feel that I can speak without undue prejudice.

It was early in 1896 that I first visited the Tanganyika plateau, the highest and most northern part of Northern Rhodesia. The occupation of the country had been started only three years before, and there were then four small Government or Consular stations along the northern border on a distance of over 300 miles. Missionaries of the London Missionary Society and of a French Algerian Mission, the White Fathers, had for some time before been established amongst the weak and friendly tribes on this border. They had built good stations and had done good work amongst the natives, starting the good relations with them which the Administration officers, with more authority, carried on and

extended into a complete administration of the whole Territory.

It was the existence of weak tribes that determined the line on which the missionaries could best enter the country and where later the Administration could begin. That line happened to be on the direct route from Lake Nyasa to Lake Tanganyika on the extreme north of the British sphere. These tribes were then greatly feeling the need of protection; they had suffered much from slave-raiding, some of the effects of which could still be seen in ruined stockaded villages with numbers of human skulls stuck on the pointed stockades, or scattered bleaching around the ruins. They were dominated by a powerful warlike tribe to the south which occasionally raided them with savage ferocity. They had no strong paramount chief to bind them together, they were themselves broken up into sections, and but for the arrival of the white man they might soon have been wiped out.

The raiding tribe (the Awemba) was under the rule of an hereditary paramount chief who was held in great awe, and who used his power with extreme cruelty. Mutilation was a common form of punishment, and everywhere one saw men with fingers or hands, noses, ears and lips cut off or eyes gouged out, and women were even more brutally injured and disfigured. The dominant position of this tribe made them object to come under a civilised Government which would, they thought, reduce them to the level of their neighbours, whom they looked on as their natural prey.

That was the state of the country when, in 1893, Sir Harry Johnston, then Consul-General in Nyasaland, acting in agreement with the British South Africa Company, sent three men as Consular Judicial Officers, now called District Officers, to Tanganyika and Mweru to gain what influence and control they could, and without taking any violent measures to prepare for some form of Government. The two who went to Mweru died within a few months of their arrival; the third, Mr. Hugh C. Marshall, who built his station not far from the south end of Tanganyika, was the first to start the work, and he it was who gave the lead in the way in which that work was done. Another officer was sent to Mweru, and later another was

stationed about half-way between Nyasa and Tanganyika. These men had no administrative authority and their judicial powers under the African Order in Council were almost restricted to dealing with Europeans. They were alone, except for a few natives from Nyasaland, and with little to guide them but their own common sense and their knowledge of, and sympathy with, the natives. Sir Harry chose his men well, men who knew Central African natives and how to deal with them. They too established themselves amongst the weak tribes who knew what they had come for, and were glad to have them for the protection which the mere fact of their presence undoubtedly gave. It was this desire and need for them that enabled these first District Officers to assume an authority and within a very short time to exercise a power which increased as their influence spread.

The country was not a conquered territory, and this power could not, of course, be exercised at once except in the immediate neighbourhood of the newly-arrived officers, where it was welcomed, as I have said, for the protection it gave. Tribes more distant, without being really hostile to it, held off awaiting developments. The Awemba in the centre of the Territory defied it. Its acceptance over the whole country had to be won. Chiefs continued to carry on their affairs and settle native disputes; some of these, however, came quite naturally to the new Consular Officers, and as these became better known, many things came to them for settlement in increasing numbers and from greater distances, and their authority soon became more generally acknowledged. There was no attempt by asserting this authority to break down the prestige of the chiefs, endeavour was made to work through them, and their authority was upheld provided their decisions or actions were not repugnant to civilised custom.

Every case or dispute was patiently discussed, from trivial cases between women for slander to feuds generations old, and crimes arising from superstitions which, according to native custom, demanded the sacrifice of perhaps quite innocent lives. A life was usually demanded for a life, even if the first life had been taken by accident; but the life taken in payment or in revenge was not always or of necessity that

of the supposed culprit, sometimes any innocent relative would do. Such crimes were difficult to deal with whilst natives looked on them not as crimes but as duties. In the settlement of these cases the District Officers had no laws or regulations to guide them, nor were they men versed in English law; happily so perhaps, or they might have been embarrassed in many of their decisions. They had fortunately no European cases to try; native cases they could settle as far as possible by native custom, and crime they punished as best they could. It was greatly by the influence gained in the fair and tactful settlement of all these questions that the foundations were laid for the ready acceptance of an ever-increasing exercise of authority.

When I arrived at Abercorn in 1896 the influence of these men had already had a very great effect, and under it more security was felt by the weaker tribes, amongst most of which their authority was undisputed; it had in effect developed amongst these tribes into a benevolent form of paternal Government which the natives understood and appreciated, and looked on with pride as their own, and which was gradually extending further and further, no single small chief being strong enough to oppose it, if the tendency of his people was to come under it. There was no forcing of the pace, but the safety and content that came with the new Government, and especially the feeling that it was gathering power, were strong forces acting in its favour. There was still some sitting on the fence by some of the more distant chiefs, and by some of the Arab villages, remnants of the old slave-trading stations. The Awemba, though they still would allow no European to visit their country, showed some respect, and had evidently become afraid of raiding. Rumours and alarms of raids were not uncommon, but no more raids came off. The people of this tribe too, without the excitement of successful war, were getting tired of the cruelty of their chiefs and, seeing the safer conditions near, were beginning to desert, a few at a time, and to ask to be allowed to settle near the Europeans. This was within three years after the arrival of the first Consular Officer. It was on the north only; in the east near Nyasaland, where there was a section of another warlike tribe, and on the south

nothing had been attempted, and little probably could have been done then without some force whilst these two raiding tribes blocked the way.

During the next two years I travelled over the greater part of the Territory in which travelling could be done, and also in the neighbouring part of German East Africa, and visited every European station several times. As in this travelling I shifted my camp almost daily I always needed a goodly number of carriers, who were of various tribes and usually included some of the refugee Awemba. They were a happy lot, and no day's journey, however long, was enough to prevent them dancing and singing the night through when we camped near a village. The villagers were very friendly to the traveller, willingly bringing food for his carriers, which was supposed to be offered as presents, but was in reality bartered for return presents of calico and beads. Cultivation, even far from the villages, was becoming quite safe, and food was plentiful. During these years I saw the steadily growing feeling of security and confidence in the Government. The rebellious state of the Congo soldiery was well known, and at times there was fear of incursion into British Territory; there were rumours of German methods, the British rule in Nyasaland was also well known, and there was some feeling of relief from more than their own old tribal troubles. The Awemba during this time too were changing fast, they had allowed the White Fathers to build a station some distance within their borders. The Consular Officer at Abercorn was in touch with the chiefs, and before leaving I accompanied him on a journey into their country on a visit to this Mission; from the way in which he was received and the great attention paid to him, I had little doubt that they were thinking of submission as possible and perhaps not altogether undesirable.

Life in the Territory then was far from unpleasant for anyone who did not much object to be at times quite isolated from his fellows, with a Home mail only once a month which took three months in coming. It certainly seemed to have a charm for those who were there, they travelled often between stations and, as carriers were plentiful and very cheap, travelling could be made very comfortable and pleasant,

and with the ever-present chance of meeting elephants or lions it could be exciting too.

As a starting-point for my various journeys through the Territory I had made my headquarters at Abercorn, the station built by Mr. Marshall, whom I have already mentioned as having started the work there. This officer had had much experience of natives in the very earliest days of Nyasaland, even before there was a Government there, where he had been a British Vice-Consul. He spoke fluently one or more native dialects and had an intimate knowledge of native character. From him I got help to travel where I wanted, and it was on these journeys that I recognised the great influence he had amongst the natives, their love for him, and the respect in which he was held, even by the hostile Awemba. When, after five years, during which time he had by his own personal influence changed a great part of the Territory from chaos to a willing obedience to the new Government, he was leaving for home for a much-needed rest, I came away with him on a walk of 900 miles through Nyasaland and Portuguese Territory to the railway, which had then reached Bulawayo in Southern Rhodesia. The morning we left his station was crowded with people who had come to bid him good-bye, and for miles along the road hundreds of men and women accompanied him, rushing round him to shout their farewell wishes and to load him with small souvenirs. Many were in great grief because it was said that he would not return, and threw to him lucky talismans which would compel him to come back. There could be no doubt of the reality of the regret at his departure, nor of the grief at the thought that he would not return. This to me was a very striking illustration of the successful preparation which I had seen going on for the more definite form of Administration which was soon to follow.

It was two years before I again visited the Territory and I did not see the next steps in its advance. Much progress had been made at increasing speed, and nearly the whole of the Territory was occupied. Administrative powers had been given by a new Order in Council, the British South Africa Company had appointed an Administrator of North-Eastern Rhodesia (Mr. Robert Codrington) who had established his

headquarters at Fort Jameson on the eastern border near Nyasaland, amongst a warlike tribe called the Angoni. This tribe was an offshoot of the Zulus or Matabili; it had some years before come in from the south, waging war on the tribes it passed through, and had ultimately settled partly in Nyasaland and partly in Rhodesia, taking the best of the country, killing or evicting the occupiers, and reducing the neighbouring tribes to a state of vassalage. It was at first inclined to be hostile, but with help from Nyasaland opposition at once gave way, and the tribe has ever since been one of the most loyal in the Territory and gave great help during the war.

In the north two small demonstrations of force had been made, one against a section of the Awemba, the other against a western tribe which lived more in the Congo than in Northern Rhodesia; neither resulted in fighting. These were the only occasions on which force was shown or used, and they broke the last remnants of a dying opposition which had lingered in sections only of the warlike tribes. The last slave caravan which attempted to get through the country had been broken up by Mr. McKinnon, who had been Consular Officer for the last three years at Fife, the station half-way between Abercorn and Lake Nyasa. He was a man in whom the natives had placed the greatest confidence, and was looked on by the Awemba, when later he took charge of their country, almost with the reverence for a father.

Besides these assertions of authority, which can almost be looked upon as police affairs, there were other more peaceful happenings in the north. A German steamer had been carried through from Nyasa to Tanganyika, a British steamer soon followed, and the African Transcontinental Telegraph was being erected on the same route. All this created movement, brought in more Europeans, and gave the Government an appearance of greater material strength. The demand and the prices for carriers soared high and the Awemba came in to carry. Their old paramount chief died, and perhaps for the first time for generations such a chief was buried without the sacrifice of scores of his followers in order that they might attend to him in their shadowy other world. The tribe had begun to come in before his death, and the time had passed

when his successor could win by war the old ascendancy over his people, so that the new Administration spread and was welcomed over their country almost as a matter of course.

This submission of the Awemba left North-Eastern Rhodesia free from opposition, and the Administrator at Fort Jameson was in a position to extend the Administration as one system over the whole Territory. He had brought with him a few experienced men. The British South African Company later selected at home and sent to him well-educated young men who, working with the original District Officers, learnt their methods, imbibed their sympathy, and passed these on to those who came next and learnt from them. The Territory was divided into districts, each with one of the older men in charge, and the paternal form of Government continued for some time longer, changing only gradually into one of fixed Regulations, and to-day when these Regulations fill a bulky volume, and have their necessary complements of police and prisons, the old spirit in which the work began remains unchanged.

To the original start which I have tried to describe, and to the subsequent sympathetic rule of the District Officers, is due the continued loyalty of the natives to the Government, a loyalty that was not shaken by the very hard tasks that were placed on them by the war, which twice entered North-Eastern Rhodesia. To them is due also the willingness of the natives to take up those tasks which at times needed more than a third of the adult male population to act as carriers on the lines of communication to the troops, arduous and sometimes dangerous work which during the long years of war was loyally done without complaint; and not only was this work done, but the Awemba and the Angoni between them found for the King's African Rifles, the Northern Rhodesia Police and the Rhodesia Native Regiment nearly 3000 fighting men who took a very active part in the East African campaign.

Such were the foundations on which the Native Administration of North-Eastern Rhodesia was built. I shall not take up much of your time with the start of Administration in North-Western Rhodesia. It did not come from the North-Eastern part and at first had no connection with it. As in

the north, there was no conquered territory, the right of administration being based on a definite agreement with Lewanika, the paramount chief of the Barotse.

The Barotse tribe were confined to a part of the upper Zambesi, but they ruled over or took tribute from the surrounding tribes. Lewanika was a good chief and a shrewd man, pleasant to deal with and not given to abuse of his power; he had the interests of his people at heart and was assisted by an extremely able Prime Minister. Their form of government was in advance of anything in the north; the paramount chief had a council of headmen which acted as a general Parliament and High Court. Barotseland was divided into areas, over each of which was placed one of the headmen, who also had his council and smaller court; these courts were not perfect, but they were a long step towards an organised means of dealing out justice. The subject tribes which covered the bulk of North-Western Rhodesia were, like those in the north and probably from the same cause, split into small sections with no paramount chief over any one tribe.

In the north-western corner near the Portuguese and Congo boundaries slave-raiding had been so bad and the people there had suffered so much that they had become almost nomadic. They were suspicious of and hostile to any stranger coming near them, they ambushed, shot at and wounded badly the first District Officer who tried to get into contact with them, and it was amongst these people later that the only case has occurred in the whole Territory of the murder of a white man by natives. The general conditions under which all these native tribes lived was not very different from those in the north. Tribal quarrels might at any time occur and the life of a strange native was safe nowhere.

Lewanika had seen enough of war and was possibly somewhat in fear of the Matabili; he long petitioned the British Government for protection and to have a British Resident stationed with him, and in 1897 Mr. Robert Coryndon (now Sir Robert, Governor of Uganda) was appointed Resident Consular Officer at Lealui, Lewanika's capital. During his term as Resident he completed an agreement with Lewanika by which the chief in council gave to the British South Africa

Company (whose charter included this Territory) the right of administration in return for protection, but he reserved to himself a certain area (now called the Barotse District) which was not to be used for European settlement, nor for prospecting. He retained also the right to try cases between natives; this right, however, by tacit agreement became limited to the Barotse District, where his courts try most native civil cases and some minor criminal ones; but they have no jurisdiction over Europeans. All this is in great contrast with North-Eastern Rhodesia, where it was the weak tribes who asked for protection against the dominant ones, who were only gradually won over, whereas in North-Western Rhodesia it was the ruling tribe that asked for British protection and administration, and all the subject tribes accepted Lewanika's agreement without a murmur. Mr. Coryndon, as first Administrator, commenced his administration in 1900. Owing to the agreement this had to be begun on different lines, and the conditions were rendered, I think, rather more difficult than in the north, and were made perhaps more difficult still by the influx of Europeans for the mines which had been discovered and were to be developed, and for the railway which soon arrived at the Victoria Falls, and within the next five years was carried on to Broken Hill, 375 miles from the Zambezi. The Territory was occupied more rapidly than was North-Eastern Rhodesia, but just as peacefully, and it has as peacefully been carried on. In 1911 the two Territories were united into one as Northern Rhodesia, with the Governor as High Commissioner.

During the whole time of the war and until last year our President, Lord Buxton, as Governor-General of South Africa, was His Majesty's representative as High Commissioner of Rhodesia, and the Administration owes him a great debt of gratitude, not only for the keen interest he took in the Territory, but for the very great help he gave during that very anxious time. His expression of appreciation of the Chartered Company's Native Administration in both Northern and Southern Rhodesia was read with real gratitude, and was a source of great encouragement to every officer in the Service. I am glad to have this opportunity to thank him for it here.

What has been done and what is being done for the natives is only the beginning of what has to be done. Under the British South Africa Company they have passed through the first stage of their development, and in their passage their interests have been carefully considered and their rights guarded. They have been helped out of the old barbarous unrest into a state of ordered peace. This was the more easy because of their general readiness for the change; they cannot rest stagnant where they are, and the problem now is how to guide their further development for their good. Education is what they clamour for and every village wants a school. The Missionary Societies have done and are doing a great deal, the greater part, and the Administration has a central school which is spreading its trained teachers out to the villages. The education of natives, moral, manual, clerical and even political, will have to be undertaken on a much larger scale, but it is not probable that much more can be done before the country develops sufficiently to find funds for the work, and an outlet for a large amount of trained labour. The lines on which their further development will proceed may depend much on the political future of the Territory. North-Eastern Rhodesia for many years is hardly likely to have more than a very small European population, unless more minerals should be found. Its affinities are more with Nyasaland and the Tanganyika Territory than with the south. North-Western Rhodesia, with its larger and increasing European population and its known mines and mineral areas, has its railway communications, all its business connections and much of its blood-relationship with the south, and can never quite be separated from it. Should its fate be to come into the South African Union, its native problem will be no new one there, where the solution of this problem is in a far more advanced stage than anywhere yet in Central Africa; where it is one of vital importance, and where it is closely studied by all its statesmen and native administrators who have to live their daily lives right up against it. Should its fate be with the south, the future of the nation can be left with confidence in South Africa's hands.

LAWRENCE WALLACE.