

But the experience resulting from European colonization has shown that in this respect the European as a rule does not materially differ from the African. Yet in spite of this, monogamy has been established and maintained as the ideal in Europe. And the gradual elimination of polygamy is one of the most important problems which colonial governments will have to deal with ; for thus only can law and morality be placed on a secure foundation, and the serious economic evils connected with polygamy be remedied. So far as I can see, it cannot be to the advantage of any colonial government to preserve polygamy. It is, like slavery, one of the worst hindrances to true civilization and economic progress.

What, then, has hitherto been the attitude of missions towards Islam in Africa? Throughout a great part of the continent—the north and east—Islam is in possession and is quickly advancing, less, however, through the agency of individual propagandists than by means of the social influences already mentioned, whose action is further emphasized and reinforced in a religious sense by the activity of the Moslem teacher. It has often been said that the transition from paganism to Christianity is very much more abrupt than that to Islam. But in addition to this, the Mohammedan recognizes, in religion as in other matters, a variety of intermediate stages. He is satisfied, especially at the beginning, with a very slight degree of adhesion to Islam. It is by no means all converts, but only a few individuals here and there who pay any attention to the deeper religious requirements. No abrupt break with polygamous conditions is demanded, as is the case in Christian missions ; while magical practices and other superstitions are tolerated. The convert thus loses nothing, but on the contrary gains in social position and consideration, so that his adhesion is almost a matter of course.