

like an unsurmountable barrier. The degredation of the race—the natural result of the downward tendency of mankind—was beyond description. The adverse influence of Mahomedan teachings and morals added to the darkness of the already dark picture. The slave trade, the despotism of the native princes, the treachery of the natives themselves, the hostility of the Roman Catholic missionaries, the natural climatic dangers, the difficulty of access to Uganda, all tended to discourage the hardy and persevering Mackay. Roads must be hewn out of the jungles; bridges must be constructed over morasses and rivers; implements and provisions must be conveyed from the coast to the interior; the slave trade must be discountenanced, often at personal risk; the most delicate diplomacy must be used in dealing with native princes; the Romish missionaries must be conciliated; schools must be established; medicine must be dispensed with the greatest care and judgment; elementary lessons in morals and Christianity must laboriously be given to the savage and ignorant natives. All these things was Mackay willing and anxious to undertake for a thankless and barbarous people. Surely the heroic spirit has not departed with the death of the early Christian martyrs.

The manses of Scotland have sent forth many great and good men. Mac-

kay's early life in a Scottish manse forms the basis of his character. One fact seems to stand out in the history of his boyhood, viz.: he was able to appropriate the good from everything about him. A process of absorption and elimination is evident. The good is retained, the bad cast off. Standing beside the anvil, watching the glowing iron take form under the strong hand of the village blacksmith, he must have come in close contact with rough and illiterate men; but he comes forth from these associates free from moral taint and with a mechanical knowledge afterwards, in the heart of Uganda, to be turned to good account. Environment can never be wholly bad; even the worst carries its lessons with it. Again in his contact with the Roman Catholic missionaries, uncongenial and often aggressive as they proved themselves to be, Mackay appropriates all that is beneficial in their methods. He seems, at times, altogether to lose sight of religious differences, in the thought that both he and they are preaching a gospel infinitely above anything that pagan Uganda can offer to her children. Be circumstances as dark as midnight, there is always some ray of light, some visible token of God's sustaining hand. Amid scenes such as we find pictured in his Journal, surely his early Calvinistic training stood him in good stead and tended to greatly strengthen his confidence in God's spe-