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Colonial  
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Last previous Paper.

CROWN COLONY RAILWAY POLICY

Letter to the "Times" reposed

Dr. G. Fiddes

dated in 1913 Report

I thought that it wd be  
as well to have these registered  
No matter may be referred to  
Part 5

Part 5

Part 5?

4.2.14

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Next subsequent Paper.

see  
Journal  
2570

ORAN COLONY RAILWAY  
POLICY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.  
SIR.—The question of railway development and the completion of the Orange River Colony is a subject which has been discussed in your columns for some time past. It is a matter which has been discussed in your columns for some time past. It is a matter which has been discussed in your columns for some time past.

When the last one decides a main line of railway to be built in the Colony of Orange River, it is a matter which has been discussed in your columns for some time past. It is a matter which has been discussed in your columns for some time past.

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### CROWN COLONY RAILWAY POLICY

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Mr. ... in a long letter on the above-mentioned subject in The Times of Monday Mr. J. Sheffield states: "The Government of Chile merely expresses a wish that a railway from A to B shall be made, and it is made, and moreover, the railway is constructed at the out-of-pocket expense of the Government at all. The railway pays from the start, and the Government never have to meet shilling towards its cost."

I believe this to be quite incorrect. The Government does guarantee 5 per cent. interest and, so much, 2 per cent. amortisation, which amounts to paying the cost. Secondly, I believe the Government railways do not pay. The *Financial Review* of May 10, 1912, quoted in the *Financial Review* of January of June, 1912, page 72 says: "The railway companies for there are no profits being earned on any of the Chilean State railways" will certainly not suffice to repay these without.

Yours faithfully,  
A DISWELL HERVEY IN STATE RAILWAYS,  
January 2.

REC-  
7 JAN 14

CASE OF BRITISH EAST AFRICA.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—As Mr. Shelford expresses such surprise at the condition of the Uganda Railway in particular and at the attitude of the Government towards railways in Crown Colonies and Protectorates in general, I can only conclude that his experience of railways in Crown Colonies is slight. I fear that some persons, including myself, have long ago got over the stage of being surprised at the action, or more often inaction, of Colonial Office policy regarding railways.

Mr. Shelford devotes a considerable portion of his letter to the condition of the Uganda Railway and to the pressing need of money for permanent way, rolling stock, stations, extensions, locomotives, maintenance staff, &c. May I, Sir, be allowed to welcome Mr. Shelford as a recruit to the ranks of those who for years have tried to improve the road, or rather the rails of the Colonial Office, that has established and controlled British East Africa and Uganda, which were being rapidly developed and which need a more efficient and adequate means of transport.

CRITICISM OF MR. SHELFORD.

In the year 1903 I ventured to contribute an anonymous publication, which was included in a chapter to the "Journal of the Royal Geographical Society" of papers of reference I had with me at the moment, and I regret to say that it is a paragraph. Writing of the district about the Uganda Railway I said— "The Government have, for a long time, been following a policy of building a railway into the heart of Africa. A track, increased in width, improved in construction, and the traffic without a larger wheel will be a considerable gain needs to be expended upon rolling stock, &c., while in my poor opinion of East Africa as a country, since the present metre gauge line will be quite inadequate to handle and convey the produce, and the Government and the taxpayer having, I fear, not heard the best of the unimproved Uganda Railway."

I have, more than one occasion, raised my voice on the subject in the House of Lords, the last time as lately as June or July last, and if Mr. Shelford will turn to the pages of Hansard he will see that the picture I drew of the state of affairs existing on the Uganda Railway was described by Lord Chamberlain as slightly exaggerated, but that nothing was denied.

It will be seen that large engines have been recently bought and have been afterwards found to be too large to run over some of the viaducts and bridges, and that therefore the most powerful engines cannot be used between Nairobi and Kisumu, where the only really bad gradients occur, and that a different type of engine, a tank type, has had to be ordered, to operate the only difficult part of the line. This is only one instance. The rolling stock and engines always have been bad, they have always been antiquated and seldom have existed in sufficient quantities. The increase in traffic, as Mr. Shelford says, been enormous and is rapidly growing. The line for some time has been hopelessly congested, and with the large increases which are daily growing, even without the Lake Tanganyika output of soda, which will, I fancy, double the traffic one way over one portion of the line, there appears to be no reasonable hope (outside officialdom) of the state of congestion being relieved. Mr. Shelford contrasts the policy of the Colonial Office with that of China. Why, even the Chinese have recently granted a concession to Messrs. Peking at 3 per cent. on the outlay. Mr. Shelford wonders why the British Government keep everything in their own hands; so do many other people. But is there not great pressure put on the Government? I would point out that there are a number of members of Parliament who, for some reason best known to themselves, evince great jealousy and fear of any concession to build any railway being given to any firm or

company.

Again, to quote Mr. Lloyd George, are we not up against vested interests?

The permanent officials, I gather, much prefer the present system, and so I imagine do the Civil Service, and I do not blame them.

What do the Crown Agents say when it is proposed to allow a railway in a Crown Colony to be built by a private firm or company? Are there not solicitors to the Crown Agents, and are not all these gentlemen, equally with the aforementioned, somewhat opposed to the giving of concessions or contracts to private firms to build railways within their sphere of influence?

THREE COURSES OPEN.

The Treasury cannot now, of course, find sufficient money out of annual revenues; it is impossible. They cannot be blamed now for not finding the money. But the Treasury and the other Government Departments have a great deal to answer for not having adopted their big-in-the-manger policy, which has resulted in to-day Mr. Shelford's expression of a state of asphyxiation in British East Africa and Uganda. Also, the policy of the Government Departments in putting other people's brains, allowing them to make and send in plans for railways, docks, &c., and then saying, "we will do the work ourselves," is not a pretty one.

The Government have, if they wish to develop an African possession properly with railways, three courses open.

1. They can pay 5 per cent. on the cost.

2. They can issue securities, trustee or other, and build themselves.

3. They can allow a firm or public company to build and manage, forming the railway into a company and keeping the majority of the common stock in their own hands, hold control.

This was the policy of the late Mexican Government and, I believe, not unimpressful.

May I, Sir, without undue presumption, welcome Mr. Shelford as a valuable addition to those who have been "preparing for years, and I hope that his experience and his letter may lead, and authority to that of repeated and well-considered appeals?"

I hope I have not taken up too much of your valuable space, but on the Uganda Railway alone more could be written.

I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

HINDSLEY

Dover House, Hall, Dorset, Jan. 4

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Rf: 7 JAN 14



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