

EAST AFR. PROT.

C O
1507

15077



5 MA

number
248
1913
April
of previous Paper.

VISIT TO UASIN GISHI PLATEAU

Submits report. LONDIANA - ELDBRET CART ROAD. States as to condition of. Further total expense required estimated at £2,800. Will be met from Roan Vote. AGRICULTURAL PROSPECTS. Favourably impressed. Steps being taken for analysis of soils. TOWNSHIP OF ELDBRET SETTLERS. States more especially as to Boer Settlers. EDUCATION has received representations respecting Quarantine Station on Plateau, Postal Facilities, increase of Administrative Staff and road to Nzola

River.

Dr. G. Fiddes

I got as far as Eldoret. When I was there it was only Farm 64 & there were not more than 5 or 6 houses of ~~the~~ sorts.

ask: & say that Mr. Hancock has read with much interest & ask, with refer. to para: 19. ^{what} ~~whether~~ steps are being taken to have the township laid out on sound lines - & ask - particularly whether it is proposed to place the Indian quarter ^{at a distance} away from that of the Europeans, reminding him of the trouble which has been caused at Nairobi by the presence of the European quarter to grow up around the Indian bazaar? H. J. R.

Mr. Reed & I saw Mr. Flood last
yesterday by Mr. Harcourt's desire - He expounded
at length his views, and among other things
the desirability of ~~the~~ constructing a
Kisumu-Gisborne R.R. & his readiness to construct
it on a ~~joint~~ guarantee. I told him that
in my opinion there would be least chance
of such a guarantee being given either
for that R.R. or (his other point) for a
line extending to Thika "tramway" to
the Kenia forest. I promised however to
put the question to the S. of S. which he might
have a definite answer, and I ~~will~~ be
able to know what I can finally tell Mr. Flood.
My own opinion is that even if we had
the power to push the Great & the Small
into assenting we would not be justified
justified in doing so in view of other &
more urgent financial requirements of the Govt.
As regards the present asp. proposed as
proposed?

Dec. 9. 5. 13

I agree with Sir E.

Edg. 5. 13

15077

12



GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
NAIROBI,
BRITISH EAST AFRICA.

PRISON PROSECUTOR.

No. 248.

April 10th, 1913.

532



Sir,

I have the honour to transmit for your information the following account of my recent visit to the Uasin Gishu Plateau, together with my observations on certain matters of local interest which were brought to my notice during the course of my tour. I took the earliest opportunity of making this visit, because I was given to understand that no complete round of the Plateau had been made by my predecessor, and that development in this comparatively newly opened area was rapidly advancing. It was therefore apparent to me that no time should be lost in attempting to obtain such personal knowledge of the situation as would enable me to satisfy myself regarding the immediate needs of the district and its community.

Itinerary

RIGHT HONOURABLE

LEWIS HARCOURT, P.O., M.P.,

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES,

DOWNING STREET, LONDON, S.W.

15077
GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
NAIROBI,
BRITISH EAST AFRICA.

April 10th, 1913.

582

AFRICAN PROTECTORATE.

No. 248.



Sir,

I have the honour to transmit for your information the following account of my recent visit to the Uasin Gishu Plateau, together with my observations on certain matters of local interest which were brought to my notice during the course of my tour. I took the earliest opportunity of making this visit, because I was given to understand that no complete round of the Plateau had been made by my predecessor, and that development in this comparatively newly opened area was rapidly advancing. It was therefore apparent to me that no time should be lost in attempting to obtain such personal knowledge of the situation as would enable me to satisfy myself regarding the immediate needs of the district and its community.

Itinerary

RIGHT HONOURABLE

LEWIS HARCOURT, P.C., M.P.,

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES,

DOWNING STREET, LONDON, S.W.

ITINERARY.

2. Having left Nairobi on the evening of February 12th, I arrived the next morning at Londiani Station, and, as some hours' work was necessary in order to complete preparations for a start across country, I utilised the 13th to pay a visit to the Station of Lumbwa, where I met the neighbouring settlers by arrangement and discussed with them and the Provincial Commissioner the lines on which improvement of the town site should be effected, and other details of local importance.

3. I left Londiani on February 14th accompanied by the Provincial Commissioner, Naivasha Province, the District Commissioner, Eldoret, and the Executive Engineer, Public Works Department, our method of progression being riding, with occasional recourse to a mule cart. I carefully followed the new cart road between Londiani and Eldoret for the first three days in order to make myself acquainted with its condition, regarding which I propose to express my views in a later paragraph of this despatch. Having arrived at the end of the continuous earthwork, I gave certain directions to the Executive Engineer and absolved him from further attendance.

4. Thence we worked our way, by stages varying from fifteen to twenty miles a day, in a northerly direction through the Eastern part of the Plateau, visiting the farms en route and conversing with the settlers. This part of the district is the Dutch and South African location, and only a small percentage of the farmers were able to speak English. As however intimation of my coming had been given in advance, small informal gatherings had assembled to meet me, among whom were always a few who were competent to act as interpreters.

5. Having reached the extremity of the Plateau to the north of Sergoit, on February 21st we proceeded thence to the bank of the Nzoia River, and therefrom by a circuitous route to Eldoret, calling at various farms on the way.

6. Having reached Eldoret on the evening of February 27th, the whole of the next day was spent in the Station, where most of the settlers on the Plateau had assembled to meet me. I accorded interviews to all who wished to see me, and took advantage of a public luncheon to express to the assembled company my impressions of their district, with observations on matters to which my attention had been previously invited.

7. Leaving Eldoret on March 1st, the

355
4.

Nandi border was reached on the same evening. Here I took leave of the Provincial Commissioner, Naivasha, and proceeded the next day to Kapsabet, the administrative station of the Nandi country, where I was joined by the Provincial Commissioner, Nyanza Province. March 3rd was spent at Kapsabet, where the Nandi chiefs and their followers had assembled in force. I addressed this concourse at some length, commenting upon certain deficiencies of tribal administration which had been brought to my notice by the Commissioner.

8. Leaving Kapsabet on March 4th, the night was spent at Kaptumu, the site of the first post of occupation in the Nandi country. On the following day the descent of the Nandi Escarpment was effected in the early morning, and Kibigori railway station was reached about midday, thus completing a tour in the course of which some three hundred miles were traversed.

I arrived in Nairobi on March 6th after an absence of twenty one days.

THE LONDIANI-ELDORET ROAD.

9. When, in comparatively recent times, the productive and promising area of the Uasin Gishu Plateau was thrown open for settlement, a large number of farms were allotted and occupied in all parts of the district, and the

necessity

necessity of some reliable means of wagon communication between the Plateau and the Uganda Railway became obvious. At first the farmers did the best they could by trekking across the veldt, which in the upland country was no very difficult matter in the dry season, but the troubles attendant upon wagon transport through the wooded areas of the lower country, and the utter impracticability of getting wagons through at all in the wet season, soon brought home to all concerned the imperative necessity of providing a route which should be reasonably negotiable for the greater part of the year, if the settlers were to be expected to comply with the development conditions of their tenure and were to be given a chance of getting their produce to market.

10. It was accordingly decided, in the year 1911, that a cart road should be constructed between the railway station at Londiani and the headquarters of the Plateau at Eldoret, a distance of 54 miles, and at the time of my tour a sum of £7,500 had been expended, and work had stopped owing to lack of further funds. Criticism in a great variety of outspoken terms was being levelled against the alignment of the new road, the grades and corners, and generally against its insufficiency and inutility, and expressed

expressed public opinion was to the effect that the money expended had been thrown away.

11. I examined the work carefully from Londiani station to Lake Narasha. A distance of 17 1/2 miles, and found that it has not yet been termed a road as it is not more than a length of partially completed earth work, for the most part traversing heavy and hilly country, and it is unfortunate that the public have been permitted to make use of it while in this incomplete condition, as considerable additional expenditure will be necessary in order to make good the damage caused by heavy wagens and ox



to the extent of 32,000 ... order to effect these ... over the length of road above mentioned.

12. On arriving at Eldoret I at once issued instructions that this section of the road is to be closed to traffic until further notice, and

I propose to obtain a further report as to its condition when the present season of long rains has ended. I fear there can be no question but that, owing to the absence of essential precautionary works, the damage resulting from the rains will be such as to materially enhance the total of further expenditure referred to in the preceding paragraph.

14. Beyond Lake Narasha the country becomes somewhat easier, and such earthwork as has yet been commenced appears in the form of short non-continuous sections. The cost of construction per mile over the section lying between Lake Narasha and Eldoret will probably therefore be somewhat less than that of the first section. The Director of Public Works furnishes an approximate figure of £8,480 as the cost of completion of 23 miles of road beyond Lake Narasha and construction of the remaining 12 miles, as yet not commenced. I am however able to accept this only as a rough calculation, as no sections have yet been taken, and it is not therefore possible to take out the quantities upon which such an estimate should be based.

These figures indicate that a total further expenditure of about £8,800 will be required in order to complete construction, which sum

I propose to provide from the road vote for the current year.

Additionally it will be necessary later on to erect permanent bridges over six rivers, four of 24 feet span and two of 48 feet span, at a cost of \$1,550, but this work can stand over until the next financial year.

15. Such further expenditure as is fore-shadowed in the preceding paragraphs will not of course provide a road of permanent utility. It will only be possible to add a metalled surface for a portion of the total width on certain short sections where its presence is necessary to ensure any degree of stability. I do not propose to attempt to do more than provide a thoroughfare which shall be reasonably passable for heavy wheeled traffic during eight or nine months of the year, but as such means of communication is essential to the future of the Plateau, and represents the least that can be done to meet a most pressing need, it is my intention to provide from the road vote during the current financial year such a sum as will enable the Public Works Department to proceed uninterruptedly with the work of construction, but doing no more than will leave it at the lowest standard which is compatible with practical utility and comparative permanency.

16. Before leaving the subject of the road I think it right to say that I deem it unfortunate that so important a work was put in hand without that preliminary examination of the ground and presentation of plans and sections upon which alone a reliable estimate of expenditure can be based; also that I realise that much of the imperfection which is apparent in the work is due to the fact that the call of duty in other directions rendered it impracticable for the Executive Engineer to visit the work at reasonably frequent intervals. Having the whole of the Naivasha Province to attend to, and being unprovided with any trained assistance owing to the paucity of the Public Works Department staff, he had no alternative but to leave the supervision to an untrained foreman, endowed with no sort of qualification to warrant his being left in charge. The remainder of the construction will be done under the supervision of an Assistant Engineer resident on the work.

AGRICULTURAL PROSPECTS.

17. It is not too much to say that I was profoundly impressed with the exceptionally favourable natural conditions which have already implanted in the minds of the farmers of the Plateau a firm belief in the agricultural future of the district and a determination to spare no effort

respond to local conditions. Also I am assured that a large amount of capital is available and as soon as it is needed it can be obtained alongside the railway at reasonable rates of transport.

In order that the farmers may be placed in possession of such information regarding the soils of the Plateau as is obtainable by means of the resources at my disposal, I have instructed the Director of Agriculture to send the Chief of the Economic Plants Division to the Plateau to take samples of soil in different areas and furnish a report on their characteristics, with advice as to the crops which may with more propriety be planted.

THE TOWNSHIP OF ELDORET.

It is difficult for the traveller approaching Eldoret for the first time to realise that he is arriving at a station. After traversing a series of treeless downs, he tops a ridge and observes in the middle distance a valley bounded by undulating slopes, on the sides of which are scattered, apparently without system and certainly without regularity, a variety of unpretentious buildings, in the composition of which galvanised iron is most apparent. The impression which arises in the mind of the new arrival-

arrival-

arrival is that those responsible for the situation of the buildings have been at pains to scatter them over as large an area as possible, and the only instance in which there is contiguity of buildings is in the case of the Indian trading shanties, which are placed in the rows in which they are always erected.

Though no sort of system has yet been followed in the arrangement of sites, the defect is of no great importance, as the number of buildings is not large and the majority of them are of a temporary description. A series of business sites, surveyed to meet the requirements of the local trading community, have been offered for sale since the date of my visit, and the buildings to be erected thereon will represent the first step in the formation of a regular township.

20. The selection of the township site was a matter in which the selectors really had very little choice. When the time came for making election, practically all the suitable land on the Plateau had already been alienated, and it was only by a fortunate chance that the block which was chosen happened to be available, having recently been resumed by Government owing to non-payment of rent. The advantages of the site are that it is practically in the centre of the Plateau and is traversed by the stream known as

the Eldore River. The main disadvantage is that there is no timber available for fuel within a distance of seven miles or more from the Station. This deficiency may be to some extent made good by a process of re-afforestation, but many years must elapse before such remedial measures can afford relief.

21. The existence of the water supply is an asset of much value, but I regret to learn, as the result of recent inquiry and consequent analysis, that the water is already contaminated. It will therefore be necessary to incur expenditure to effect its purification before it can be accepted as a reliable source of supply.

THE SETTLERS.

22. I took every possible opportunity of conversing on local topics with all classes of the community and was gratified to find on all sides an implicit confidence in the future of the Plateau, which I am personally disposed to share. I had of course to listen to a multiplicity of representations for the amelioration of existing conditions, but I recognise that these were put forward, not by way of complaint against administrative inaction, but as an indication of the means by which the further development of the district might best be assisted and

enhanced.

fully grasped the situation, and when I was on the Plateau the rate per acre for a ploughing contract was already from two to three shillings higher than that prevailing in the previous season. The Boer on the Plateau is on the way to amass money, but he will never do any good with the extensive areas of land which have been allotted to him, and I would put no obstacle in the way of his disposing of it to the bona fide farmer.

EDUCATION.

25. Education is a question regarding which much interest is evinced by the settlers, and the further assistance of Government is sought with anxiety. The situation is that few, if any, of the parents are financially in a position to incur the expense of sending their children to the boarding school at Nairobi. Most of them, particularly the Dutchmen, profess inability to face any educational expenditure which includes the cost of board, and the general desire is that schools shall be established at local centres which the children could attend as day pupils.

26. In the current year we are providing a boarding house in connection with the central school at Eldoret, and I have little doubt that its existence will go some way towards meeting

local requirements. I therefore consider it unnecessary that facilities additional to those already arranged shall be provided at present, but I am in communication on the subject with the Director of Education, and should it be shown to my satisfaction later on that reasonable requirements are not being adequately met, I shall not hesitate to recommend extension, as it is unquestionable that Government must take its share in arranging for the education of children who cannot be sent beyond the plateau for that purpose.

I have been given to understand that the community will be willing to pay an education rate in consideration of such further assistance, but the time has not arrived when the question of imposing such a charge can with propriety be discussed.

27. In furtherance of the desire for educational opportunity the Dutch community have established and equipped two small day schools at their own cost. It was natural that they should take advantage of my presence to urge that Government should relieve them of this work. I happened however to be aware of the fact that on a previous occasion they had insisted that Dutch, not English, should be the language of the school, and that matters had

come to a standstill in consequence of that insistence. I therefore made it clear to them that as members of a community settled upon British territory they are not entitled to make differentiation between themselves and others residing under the same rule, and that no assistance of the nature requested would be given unless it is accepted that the English language shall be the basis of all teaching.

GENERAL.

28. In addition to the subjects to which specific allusion has been made in the preceding paragraphs, and to the matter of game preservation, which has been discussed in my despatch No.207 of 29th March, 1913, I have received representations regarding other matters of local importance, into which I am making inquiry but which cannot advantageously be considered in detail until I am in a position to offer definite recommendation.

29. Such subjects include:-

- (i) The establishment of a Quarantine Station on the border of the Plateau to obviate the present inconvenience of following a circuitous route to the Lumwa Reserve.
- (ii) The re-arrangement and improvement of postal and telegraph facilities.
- (iii) Certain administrative changes, including increase in the executive staff and the re-arrangement of at least one inter-district boundary.

Kenya 1917



DRAFT.

15 May 1913

George Lloyd, Esq., M.P.

MINUTE.

- Mr. Acland 14.5.13
- Mr. Buxton 14.5.13
- Mr. Clegg
- Mr. G. Fiddler
- Mr. H. Junt
- Mr. I. Anderson

[Handwritten signature]

Dear Mr. Lloyd,

I promised at our interview on the 8th of May to put before the Secretary of State your suggestions as to the ~~the~~ ^{the} construction of a railway to the Usin Gisher plateau and of the extension of the Nairobi - Thika railway to ~~Mount~~ ^{the} Kericho.

For a Government guarantee I have made an ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~fact~~ ^{fact} ~~has~~ ^{has} ~~not~~ ^{not}

15077

532

15077 Sat



DRAFT.

Est No 370

Gov. H. Conway Belfield, Comd.

(No. 370)

15 May 1913

MINUTE.

- Mr. [unclear] 1.3
- Mr. [unclear] 14
- Sir G. Fiddes
- Sir H. Just
- Sir J. Anderson
- Lord Emmott
- Mr. Harcourt

Have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your disp. No 202 of the 10th of April * ^{reporting on} ~~detention~~ ~~an~~ account of your recent visit to the Usin Gishu Plateau & to inform you that I have read the dispatch with much interest.

* No 15077

2. With regard to paragraph 19, I have to enquire what steps are being taken to ensure the