1911

652

MASAI

The reports by [illegible] Hill of the trans-Amala country. Mr [illegible] submitted a separate report but states [illegible] agrees with all [illegible] has said.

Mr. [illegible]

[illegible] seems to [illegible]

over the religious [illegible] the trans-[illegible] It is [illegible] his conclusion [illegible] in the East Africa Protectorate, and [illegible] point of view it is [illegible] natives. It will be noticed that [illegible] cattle-carrying capacity [illegible] Macdonald's [illegible] Macdonald would not go further [illegible] Gov. [illegible] that to say that the land would carry one beast for each six or seven acres, with the exception of one, [illegible] which would carry one beast for every four or five acres. Mr. Hill says that much of the land will carry a bullock to two acres, and that a very large area will carry a bullock to three or four acres. The mean of course, accepts the more conservative estimate. It will be noticed also that although [illegible]

here

Subsequent Papers

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There is, according to Mr. Hill, water in any quantity, in many instances it is not in a form to accommodate thousands of cattle or sheep drinking at the same time, and that to make the bright water ~~available~~ useful for pastoral purposes certain works will be required.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
NAIROBI,
BRITISH EAST AFRICA.
November 21st, 1911.

EAST AFRICA PROTECTORATE.

No.552.

Incl.1.

Sir,

With reference to my despatch No.624 of November 3rd forwarding a copy of a report by Mr. A. L. MacDonald on the trans-Amala country, I have the honour to enclose herewith a further report on the same area by Mr. J.K.Hill. Mr. C. O'N.Chaplin has not submitted a separate report and he informs me that he entirely agrees with all Mr. Hill has said.

Mr. Hill
Oct. 22nd, 1911.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your humble, obedient servant,

GOVERNOR.

N 35/30

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
LEWIS HARCOURT, P.C., M.P.,
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES,
DOWNING STREET,
LONDON, S.W.

Gilgil,

October 22nd 1911.

The Chief Secretary,

E. A. P. Administration.

Sir,

In response to His Excellency's request to inspect and report on the Trans-Amala [illegible] regarding the suitability for accommodation of [illegible] I have the honour to [illegible]

[illegible] accompanied by the Hon. the Director of [illegible] the Director of Public Works, and [illegible] proceeded via Kericho and Kisii and [illegible] the North bounding the Kuja River [illegible] practically on the boundary of [illegible]

Travelling in a Southerly direction [illegible] uninhabited land we passed across grass country, well watered and lightly bushed down, to the river Gori, crossing the Gyanian route, another stream of considerable proportions.

From thence travelling North East we worked up the valley of the Gori which, over a small area, is somewhat densely bushed, becoming more open and parklike at short intervals on either side. There were no signs of fly or any biting insects although on the lower reaches of the River tsetse fly is reported to exist. The presence of the Isurian Masai in small number in the neighbourhood of this part of the Gori would appear to negative any fear of fly being prevalent on the higher reaches.

The Isuriian Masai, once an important branch of the tribe, were practically wiped out some years ago by small pox, whilst their cattle were at the same time decimated by rinderpest.

Previous to these disastrous times the district was thickly populated with Masai, traces of the old Kraals being everywhere in evidence. The small number of cattle we saw in the hands of this impoverished sub tribe were without exception the finest I have seen in the hands of Natives and this together with a large preponderance of young animals from calves to three year olds effectively stamps this part of the country as second to none in the Protectorate.

The parklike bush country we passed through is capable of carrying a heavy head of stock, being well watered throughout. Its carrying capacity and grazing area will increase under occupation year by year as the clumps of bush will be grazed into and further kept in check and diminished by fires.

Leaving the bush dotted country we passed into the unmapped area spoken of as the Yellow Plains, but in no sense and from no pint of view can this vast area of untimbered land be called a plain.

It consists of rolling hills and valleys as far as the eye can see interspersed with well drained flats and smaller hills, the whole being heavily grassed with luxuriant vegetation. Its carrying capacity stock is difficult to estimate but an idea can be taken from similar country under occupation by the Kisii, which is grazed down into a thick uniform turf, also at the beautifully kept Government Station at Kisii where extensive lawns of the natural grass, mown and rolled, which eclipse anything I conceived

possible

possible in British East Africa, go far to demonstrate the grazing capacity of the so-called Yellow Plains when tamed out of its wild condition under occupation. My apparent hesitation in stating definitely the carrying capacity of the land is prompted solely by the greatness [illegible] yet I can say that much of the land [illegible] to two acres and a very large area [illegible] 3 of an acre such representing [illegible] lower [illegible].

The [illegible] the [illegible] Kedi [illegible] with, our [illegible] of [illegible] cattle country [illegible] although incidentally [illegible] grass down [illegible] finer varieties and [illegible] fact as a stock [illegible] me strongly [illegible] an ideal [illegible] cattle raising.

Throughout this vast area of beautiful [illegible] there is hardly an acre of waste land and [illegible] every valley there is permanent water. For the Masai however the water question is one that requires looking into. The water is there in any quantity but in many instances it is not in a form to accommodate thousands of cattle or sheep drinking at the same time.

The "Yellow Plains" is the water shed of the country, roughly the southern point containing the sources and head waters of the Sori and the Northern those of the river Kuja. These head waters have their being in springs and narrow swamps in the valley. There is water in abundance but large mobs of cattle would tramp up the swamps and springs and make

them useless as watering places. Under white occupation this would represent no difficulty whatever but the Masai are notoriously unthrifty and unhelpful and unless supervised will not make an effort to develop their own water supply.

In view of the fact that the country as a whole is eminently suitable for the accommodation of the Masai and that it is vastly superior alike with regard to area, general character and intrinsic value to the country which for political reasons they are vacating, it would appear [illegible] a simple administrative feat to set up the water [illegible] where necessary.

This unmapped area [illegible] His Excellency specialized for careful inspection in badly timbered, [illegible] would be only a minor drawback and here again it should be possible to [illegible] the Masai [illegible] Kisii and [illegible] untimbered [illegible] if Government are [illegible] and [illegible] fast growing trees. In the meantime it would be [illegible] for the [illegible] to carry their requirements for fuel fr[illegible] timbered [illegible] country which is not so impossible [illegible].

From information obtained from the Naurian Masai there are numerous salt licks which constitute a very favourable feature.

In submitting this report I have refrained from giving laborious details as to names of rivers, streams, hills, etc., together with minor observations en route and beg to summarise most emphatically to the effect that apart from its present day inaccessibility it is the finest and best watered country in the East Africa Protectorate, and from a Settlers' point of view it is sad to see it pass into the hands of Natives.

I have etc.,
(Sd.) John K. Hill
General Manager, E. A. Syndicate.