

DISPATCH

EAST AFR. PROT.

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30 JUN 06

No.

1906

previous Paper.

(Subject.)

Agricultural Dept.

Hopes an expert will shortly be sent out to report on Agricultural prospects. Suggests that Colonel Owen Thomas now in Protote be asked to take up whole matter of Agricultural Dept and report his views. Asks for wire as to suggestion

(Minutes.)

Mr. Antrobus

In a subsequent letter dated the 25th of May, Col. Sadler says that Col. Owen Thomas "is here for a few days & then leaves for Siemen East Africa, he will not return till next year, so my proposal to get him to report on the Agricultural Dept. falls to the ground".

The question of the reorganization of the Dept. is being ~~discussed~~ considered on other papers.

Let Mr. Lambert see - & then papers to come back to me.

W. J. R.

24/6

W. J. R.

27/6

23rd June 06

to see [unclear] [unclear]

subsequent Paper.

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Commissioner's Office

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Nairobi,

May 9th 1906

REC-30

Dear Mr. Read,

Paragraph 7 of your despatch No.173 I am in accord with everything Mr. Smith says about Agriculture and its prospects in this Protectorate in his note to you, copy of which you sent me.

I hope an expert will be sent out to report on these questions as early as possible. If there is any difficulty, how about asking Colonel Owen Thomas, who is now in the Protectorate and is an expert on Stock and Agricultural matters in South Africa, to take up the whole matter of our Agricultural Department and report his suggestions? He is engaged in looking round the country on behalf of private financiers, but would probably do what I suggest for a fee, and his opinion would be a valuable one.

As soon as I could find time after my appointment here, I spent a fortnight in the Kikuyu and Dagoretti districts among the white settlers, making myself acquainted with them and noting what each one was doing, how long he had been on his farm, and getting all the information I could as to work, results, and prospects in each case. In all I visited 35 farms, and interviewed 55 settlers. Later on I visited Delamere's and Hindlip's estates and other holdings in the Naivasha Province, and a fortnight ago I returned from a tour to the northern ports, getting

far as Kismayu, and getting up the rivers and creeks to see land and conditions for agriculture. On all these trips I accompanied by Colonel Owen Thomas, and I was thus enabled learn a great deal about land, stock, and agriculture under exceptionally favourable circumstances. I have deferred writing specially on these tours because Thomas has promised to favour me with some notes which will be far more valuable than any remarks of mine, these I will send you when received. I really think it would be worth our while to pay a fee and get him to take charge of the re-organisation of our Agricultural Department. I have not broached the subject to him. He will be back here in fortnight; and I should be glad if you would wire to me your views. He is now in Uganda looking into prospects for development in that Protectorate.

Briefly the results of the tour amongst the white settlers Kikuyu and Dagoretti were not very favourable. It is here that the bulk of the White Settlers are located on Homesteads. I was greatly surprised with the class of families I met; quite different from the Nairobi Politicians. There were no complaints against the Government, and all were pleased to see us and see an interest taken in their welfare. But the conditions for agriculture are not hopeful, and unless something can be done to help the Settlers, such as a system of cold storage, which would enable them to dispose of dairy produce and pigs to a central factory near that many of them will not be able to hold out for long.

Colonel Thomas' return I am going to discuss such a scheme.

I am to-day to receive a deputation from these Settlers regard to the Land Regulations; briefly they wish the agricultural conditions on the Homesteads done away with so that they may keep stock. I shall report on this later. In the meanwhile I would observe that this disposition on the part of the Settlers, who do not find the land and prospects for Agriculture what they anticipated, is in accord with the observations made by us during our tour.

Yours very Sincerely,

