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Governor
Belfield 383

1915

7th May

Next previous Paper.

SUGAR GROWING

The report by the Chief of the Economic Plants division.

*Mr Powell
Mr G. Fisher }*

I assume that the Report enclosed in Mr Powell's L^r has been sent direct to the W. J. C. & that no action on our part is required.

With regard to the proposal that I have marked on p. 6, the question of indentured labour for the S.S.P. has been discussed before & I think that our view is that ~~it is~~ ~~unpractical~~ any scheme of the kind is impracticable.

Put by

Put by? H. J. R.

Next subsequent Paper

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GOVERNMENT HOUSE, 21 MAY 1915
NAIROBI,
BRITISH EAST AFRICA.

EAST AFRICA PROTECTORATE

No. 393.

7th May, 1915.

Sir,

I have the honour to transmit herewith
a copy of a report by the Chief of the Economic
Plants division on the subject of sugar growing
in this Protectorate.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your humble, obedient servant,

H. Lindsay Beji

GOVERNOR.

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

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

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES,

DOWNING STREET,

LONDON, S.W.

V ENCLOSURE

In Despatch No. 388 of 7th 18th

28/61

Department of Agriculture,

Mombasa,

27th April, 1916.

The Hon. G. J. Bowring.,
Chief Secretary,
NAIROBI.

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Sir,

with reference to your letter No. 11409/4 of 8th March and to my acknowledgment of the receipt of same of the 12th March, I have now the honour to forward a report as to the extent of land considered suitable for sugar growing in the East Africa Protectorate, also remarks as regards the local labour supply; cost of sugar factory etc.

2. It is highly pleasing to me to think, that at last, there is a prospect however remote, of sugar growing being taken up on a good scale in the Protectorate. For years past I have endeavoured to arouse the interest of several of our planters in the subject, by means of my annual reports, and occasional bulletins as well as by discussing the matter during my inspection tours.

3. It was purely with the intention of supplementing my West Indies experience of sugar growing that I approached His Excellency the Governor through the Hon. the Director of Agriculture and the Under Secretary of State, to grant me a month's extra leave to admit of my enquiring into the sugar industry in Natal.

4.

With

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4. With a similar desire to be of service to prospective sugar planters in the Protectorate I obtained an introduction through Mr. John S. Sheldries, 96, Gresham House Old Bond Street London to the London representative No. 1712 Victoria Street of Messrs. Fawcett Preston & Co. Limited, Phoenix Foundry 17 York Street Liverpool which firm very courteously caused to be prepared and supplied me with an Estimate Specification and Plan of a sugar factory, designed for the special conditions of British East Africa.

5. The varieties of sugar cane named below are under trial at the Government Experimental Farm, Mazoeas.

(a) Striped Ribbon	Mauritius
(b) Transparent	"
(c) Uba	Natal.
(d) Sealey Seedling	West Indies.
(e) B.2922	"
(f) B.1628	"
(g) B.A.596	"

are also under trial at the Government Experimental Farm, Kabete.

I have the honour to be,
 Sir,
 Your most obedient servant,
 H. POELL.

CHIEF OF THE ECONOMIC PLANT DIVISION.

Report in connection with the West India Committee's enquiry as to the extent of land suitable for sugar growing in the East Africa Protectorate, labour conditions etc.

From a purely sugar growing point of view the Tana River Valley far transcends any other part of the Protectorate known to the writer. In the lower part of this valley there are extensive areas of rich alluvial land eminently suited to the sugar cane as is evidenced by the patches of cane grown here and there by the natives.

On the section of country between Kipini and the old Tana, bounded by the Belazeni canal, it is estimated there are about 11,000 acres adapted for sugar cane from 4,000 to 6,000 acres of which are on the Belazeni Estate of the British East Africa Cotton Company, who have carried out extensive developments in the matter of reclamation, irrigation and general experimental work.

On the left bank of the Tana River and the Belazeni canal in the direction of Aitu, is another stretch of rich alluvial land, probably 10,000 to 20,000 acres in extent, and seemingly, very suitable for canes. Again, on the right bank of the Old Tana River is a much more extensive area of rich alluvial soil approximately estimated at 150,000 acres, the greater portion of which is regarded as a sugar cane growing proposition.

In estimating the quantity of land available and suitable for sugar cane in the Tana River Valley

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I have had the valuable help of Mr. T. Gule the experienced manager of the British East Africa Jotton Company's Estates.

SABAKI RIVER VALLEY.

Extensive stretches of highly fertile alluvial land exist here, and the sugar cane is flourishing on numerous native shikas. The greater part of the land in the Sabaki Valley is in the hands of natives and provided the people could be induced to take up "cane farming" such as is done by small land holders in parts of the West Indies, and a Central factory were established for treating the canes the development of a sugar industry here could be made practicable.

The writer finds difficulty in estimating the area of land adapted for sugar cane in the Sabaki River Valley, but from personal observation, is of opinion that at least from 15,000 to 20,000 acres are suitable.

JUBA RIVER VALLEY.

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H. On the highly developed Bahwalood property of Mr. Charles Gabriel cotton has been fairly extensively grown under irrigation and it is likely that the sugar cane would also thrive under similar good treatment. Higher up in Goshu even as far as Alexandra the prospects, for sugar cane culture are considered good and there are probably 50,000 acres suitable. Practical experiments are however needed to determine the suitability or otherwise of the Juba River Valley for sugar production before a definite pronouncement can be made thereon.

(b)

VOI SWAMP. This fertile area of alluvial land perhaps 1,500 to 2,000 acres ~~in extent~~, is for the most part well suited to the sugar cane patches of which there have been, and are still being grown by natives and Indians.

KIBWEZI DELTA. In connection with a recent visit to the Kibwezi estate of the British East Africa Fibre and Industrial Company Limited, I reported under the heading of sugar cane trust- In the event of a second staple crop being needed for the Kibwezi estate the cultivation of sugar canes should be worthy of consideration. A year and a half ago one of the headmen employed on the property was allowed to plant an acre of canes in land which got the overflows of the Canal. The growth of the cane is exceptionally vigorous and the indications are that with the facilities for irrigation and the undoubted suitability of the soil the cultivation of up to date varieties of cane could be profitably carried on. It is estimated that there are 1,000 acres of irrigable land on the above estate suitable for sugar cane.

It is also suggested that facilities are available for irrigating 1,000 acres of good sugar cane land on this property. A few miles lower down the Kibwezi river Messrs. G. and S. Long have established several acres in sugar cane from plants supplied by the Government Experimental Farm Mazeras, a little over a year ago. The planting of the canes was witnessed by the writer who also ins-

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inspected the plot again in February 1907, the growth of the canes at this time being in every way good.

Probably 200 to 300 acres could be established under irrigation on Messrs. G. and A. Lean's property. There are further large areas of land of ^B quality suitable for sugar growing but the cultivation is restricted to the amount of water available in the Kibwezi River for irrigation.

KIBOS AND KIBIGORI DISTRICTS.

Ever since the establishment of an Indian settlement at Kibos several of the allottees turned their attention to the cultivation of sugar cane for the production of common sugar, or jaggery, for which there is some local demand. The sugar cane flourishes at Kibos and Kibigori under good treatment and in these two districts it is estimated there are from 7,000 to 10,000 acres of land suitable for its cultivation.

U P L A N D S .

Sugar canes do surprisingly well in certain parts of the highlands, but the prospects for sugar growing are much more favourable in those parts of the coastbelt, enumerated in this review. Mr. E. W. Vestruwe Bunbury has taken up sugar cane growing on the property known as Kiboko Flats (Mwa Limited) and reports very highly on the promising condition of the canes there in particular the "Ribbon" variety which he obtained from the Government Farm, Lazeras. The same variety of cane, obtained from the same source, is

doing-

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is doing splendidly on Messrs. G. and A. Lean's property, in the Masongaleni district. A nine-acre plot of canes, to serve for nursery purposes is established on the Kiboko Flats and at the end of current year Mr. Bunbury hopes to have 50 acres planted up in canes.

Through the kind help of Mr. Vesturme Bunbury the writer is in a position to state that the approximate area of land irrigable from the Athi River and other sources in the Donyo Sabuk and near districts is 2920 acres. By means of costly schemes of conservation of water by highdams on the Athi river, Mr. Bunbury says very much larger areas of land might be irrigated, but thinks that such schemes will not come within the sphere of practical politics for many years to come.

SOLEIL VALLEY. Canes are planted experimentally in the Soleil Valley and are said to be thriving. The area considered suitable for sugar growing in the Nakuru and surrounding districts is not known but from an irrigable point of view can scarcely be extensive. The table given below summarizes the approximate maximum areas of land classed by the writer as suitable for sugar growing in the various districts enumerated:-

(a) Tana River Valley	241,000 acres.
(b) Sabaki River Valley	20,000 "
(c) Juma River Valley	50,000 "
(d) Voi Swamp	1,200 "
(e) Kiwazi District	2,200 "
(f) Kiboa and Kisigori	10,000 "
(g) Donyo Sabuk District	2,920 "
Total	<u>327,760 acres.</u>

For -

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For the purposes of this report only such areas as are immediately suitable for sugar growing have been taken into account.

Labour Supply. In the case of the coast districts, and especially in the Tana River and Juba River Valleys, practically all the labourers have to be obtained from up-country, and in the event of sugar growing being taken up on any scale the difficulty of obtaining a sufficient and reliable labour supply in such parts would become still more pronounced.

In the sugar growing islands of the west Indies also in Demerara Mauritius and elsewhere, the local labour supply is supplemented with indentured coolies from India, and perhaps a similar arrangement could be made in British East Africa.

Also in countries where sugar growing is being newly established the services of managers, overseers and sugar boilers skilled in their respective branches are sought for from the older established sugar growing colonies.

Sugar Factory. It is often supposed that the erection and equipment of a sugar factory is an exceedingly costly undertaking and in the case of a large central factory this is indeed true; nevertheless the writer is in a position to state that a completely equipped and up to date factory capable of dealing with 30 tons of canes per day of twelve hours (upwards of 2 1/2 tons of sugar) can be supplied by Messrs. Fawcett Preston and Company Limited.

Phoenix-

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Phoenix Foundry 17 York Street Liverpool for £.5020
plus building and staging.

The price for the building and staging is given
by the firm named as £.1050, and the probable cost of
erection of the factory including foundation £.2250
or in all £.9220, F. O. B. Liverpool.

Imports of sugar to British East Africa.

The quantity of sugar imported into the East
Africa Protectorate during 1914, amounted to 74484 cwts,
of the value of Rs.822,417.

H. POWELL.

CHIEF OF THE ECONOMIC PLANT DIVISION.