

E. AFRICA

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Lesson 1 C

Wild Baobab Tree Concession

348

1919

22. spl

previous Paper

C 863

States districts in Nyasaland, B.E.A. and German C.A. where he wishes to operate. Gives further details.

Mr. Buthaly

? One copy to E.A.P. in letter to Nyasaland asking for views on the proposal generally & for a draft of the conditions on which a concession might be granted, if desirable; & inform E.A.P. what the Commission

JH  
26.6.19

D.H. for comment

W.S. 26.6.19

Shown to Sir A. Byatt.

He is glad to take a number of the fact that we cannot propose to deal with E.A.P. later - as it is not at present possible to take up

any concession. I will be looking for the necessary communication with E.A.P. & Nyasaland.

W.S.

10.5.19

copy of letter sent to Mr. Buthaly  
22.6.19  
W.S.  
22.6.19  
W.S.  
22.6.19  
W.S.

subsequent Paper

52407

21, Ranelagh Gardens,  
Stanford Brook,

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24539

W. 6.

22nd April, 1919.

Sir,

Referring to previous correspondence (your letter No. 17862/1919) and to an interview with Mr. Bottomley on the subject of my application for a concession in East Africa to cut and export the Baobab trees, I beg to submit the following further information in regard thereto.

2. In Nyasaland I desire to operate in the Lower Shire, Ruo and West Shire Districts, and possibly a portion of the Blantyre District, which runs along the River Shire.
3. In British East Africa I desire permission to select two blocks of country in the coastal area, each to extend fifty miles along the Indian Ocean and fifty miles in depth inland, or alternately a block extending twenty miles on both sides of the Uganda Railway to a distance of one hundred miles along the railway from a point near Mombasa to be determined later on.
4. At some future date, if and when possible, I desire a similar concession in (late) German East Africa, either in the coastal area or along the railway from Dar-es-Salaam.
5. The above applications apply only to Crown lands.
6. In each instance it would also be necessary to have a small plot or plots of land at one or more of the ports of exit in each Territory: this is a detail which could be arranged later on.
7. I enclose three copies of a print from the "African World", which will afford some information as to the value of the Baobab tree for the manufacture of paper.

The Under Secretary of State,  
Colonial Office,

S.W.1.

8. As it would take time to locate the blocks of territory in East Africa after the granting of permission to do so, I propose to ask for a period of one year therefor from the date of such permission.
9. In any grant or concession it could be stipulated that development should begin within a fixed period after the actual concession is granted and that a fixed minimum sum be spent during the first twelve months on development of the enterprise.
10. I enclose two additional copies of this letter.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

J. B. Casson

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## THE BAOBAB TREE.

### ITS VALUE FOR PAPER-MAKING AND FOR GUN COTTON.

the utilization of the use of certain of the baobab tree was recently made known to a gathering of leading men in London, by Mr. George Twycross, who presided, and largely owing to the energy and assistance on the part of Mr. W. B. Thomson, who had been secured from the Government over a large area in East Africa, trying a charter for the concession for the exclusive right to exploit the baobab tree in that tree grew to a great size, and in enormous numbers.

#### Value for Paper-Making.

Mr. Twycross directed attention to a report by Mr. Bertram, of Edinburgh, who was an authority on the subject of paper. This report, he said, consisted of about like forty pages, and in it he expressed it as his opinion that there was other material yet found in nature which in value for the purpose of paper-making, that they considered the use of the fibre at least equal to, if not superior to, the linen of hemp, and in any case, as paper of a similar quality produced at an low a cost, while the paper that could be produced from the fibre was of the highest class.

There was the difficulty of shipment, but he said the value of the London firm of starting had made a price of \$30 per ton for the raw delivery to London. The Zambesi basin ran through part of the area by this chapter was negligible, and his inspection it was found that the tree abounded in this neighbourhood, reaching a radius of fifteen miles on all sides of the Zambesi River, there was at Zibon tons available. The nature of the tree was such that once the outer bark was removed the tree could be stripped of its labour was known to be

plentiful and very cheap, so that little difficulty was anticipated in collecting the raw material. If there were any who still doubted that this fibre could be converted into high-class paper, he would ask them to have a look at the several samples made by Messrs. Albert Reed and Co., who were the owners of several large mills in England. Among the range of samples shown there was an unprinted ream of excellent high-class printing paper for books.

Several samples of the raw material were exhibited and created a good deal of interest. Mr. Twycross said that, as far as the technical side was concerned, Mr. Thomson could do without that, because he was probably as good an authority on paper as could be found in South Africa, as he had gained his experience in paper mills in England.

Mr. W. B. Thomson mentioned that the fibre of this tree, from the outer to the inner, was capable of producing the finest grades of paper with the same strength, durability, and purity were matters of importance, and this fibre could be used in smaller proportion as a base in conjunction with inferior products such as Tambookee, Bergholm, and high grasses, which combination would produce very good grades of paper of commercial value. The baobab had a 50 per cent. to 65 per cent. paper-making producing fibre, according to its manipulation, whereas Tambookee and like grasses only contained 30 per cent. to 35 per cent. It was of course, understood that the baobab fibre was far too high a grade to be made into paper for newspapers, which was made from coniferous trees, such as pine and the like. These grow in large tracts of country situated more particularly in Sweden, Norway, Canada, and Newfoundland. One of the remarkable qualities of this fibre was that when it was disintegrated it resembled cotton flax so closely that it was very hard to tell the difference under a microscope. This made the fibre possible for use in certain branches of the textile trade. The seeds of this tree contained cream of tartar, hence the tree being known as the Cream of Tartar tree.

#### A Substitute for Gun-Cotton.

After Mr. Thomson had spoken, Mr. Twycross introduced Mr. W. D. Severn, an Associate of the Royal College of Science, London, and Fellow of the Chemical Society, and asked Mr. Severn to give the audience some particulars of the fibre utilized as a substitute for cotton in the manufacture of explosives, which Messrs. Twycross, Thomson, and Severn had patented in connection with the manufacture of the explosive.

Mr. Severn stated that by using fibre of the fibre, and especially when he saw the fibre under the microscope, he at once began to consider its possibilities in the direction of the manufacture of explosives, and started experiments in this direction. He said he did not intend to inflict on the meeting any chemical formulae, or a lengthy description of the experiments which he had made, but briefly and lucidly explained the utilization of cellulose and the making of gun-cotton, nitroglycerine, and finally cordite, and pointed out that the samples of cordite which he exhibited had been made from the fibre without any cotton at all. Small samples of the gun-cotton prepared from the fibre were ignited, and its extremely ready solubility in acetone was demonstrated. Mr. Severn pointed out the additional importance of the matter at the present moment, when there was such a serious shortage of gunpowder that the military authorities were experimenting with gun-cotton charges for blasting instead of dynamite or gelatine.

After the meeting the party proceeded to Mattland Police Camp, where cartridges filled with the new cordite were fired over the range and there was left no doubt in the spectators' minds that the qualitative qualities of the new material compared well with the ordinary military powder now in use.

The proceeding terminated with an explosion of some of the cotton, which was used and buried in the soil. The effect of this was very much like that shown in photographs of shells exploding on the Western front.

The death occurred at Accra, on September 26, of Mrs. Sophia, widow of Mr. F. C. Ogle. Mrs. Ogle was loved by the bant residents by reason of her dignity, and her loss is greatly felt by that community and elsewhere. The burial took place the day following her passing in the presence of a large gathering.

# WEST AFRICAN TRADE TOPICS

## ANGLO-AFRICAN TRADE.

### Future of German Colonies.

Mr. T. George Jones, chairman, presided at the annual meeting of the African Section of the Imperial Chamber of Commerce, held recently. He expressed the prevailing sympathy with Messrs. Walter Dimpster and Co. in the case of the "Baruta," together with so many valuable officers and men. He also paid a tribute to the services of the late Mr. Hamman, manager. Having stated the intention of the society to continue to try to secure a better return for African produce than had been received during the last two years, he said he trusted that both shippers and merchants would be guided by patriotism and self-interest in regard to after-war charges for freight and goods, and that the needs of the home market rather than abnormal profits in foreign markets would be considered. Foreign merchants should be treated on reciprocal terms. Having warned British traders against a resumption of the undue influence of German control of the banks, he declared that return of African colonies to Germany could not be thought of for a moment. Under a new form of commercial prosperity and civilisation the Germans had treated the African as a mere chattel. Whoever might win the future of the German colonies, they must never again be placed under German rule. In conclusion he urged the overhauling of British ports in order to secure that they should be at least as good and efficient as any other ports in the world.

The report was approved and the sub-committee reconstituted.

Mr. Edward Partington, representing Messrs. John Walker and Co., Ltd., is preparing to return to Lagos.

## MR. HOUSTON re HOLT'S

Mr. Houston, M.P., has another long detailed question addressed to the Shipping Controller (says the "Liverpool Echo"), in which he alleges that the West African business of Messrs. John Holt and Co. (Liverpool), Ltd., was practically ruined by the treatment they had received from the Admiralty and the "inadequate consideration shown to rival firms and competitors," and shown to rival firms and competitors, and ising up by asking whether, in view of the injury done, the Shipping Controller will consider the position of this firm with a view to more considerate treatment, so that they may not be driven out of their trade to the benefit of their rivals and competitors.

## ADO TRADE.

It is hoped shortly to complete the road from Erwa Road through Lanlate to Ado. This should mean the centralisation of the trade from Iseyin, Igana, Okaba, and the smaller towns in their vicinity at Ado. The distance from Ado to Erwa Road is approximately thirty to thirty-two miles, or the same distance as Ibadan-Oyo, while the distance from Iseyin to Ado is seventeen miles, as against twenty-six or twenty-seven from Iseyin to Oyo. The trade, therefore, in my opinion, should follow the shortest and cheapest route via Ado. The population of the towns which will be served by the new road is large. It will be necessary also to construct a road from Aiyetoro through Igana to Ado, with a branch from Okaba. It appears to me, therefore, that Ado should become a large and important trading centre which will be well served, connected with Erwa Road by motor and transport. I wish it were possible for merchants to introduce bullock carts. It is a very cheap form of transport, and would act as an admirable method of feeding motor transports. The

main difficulty appears to me to be that the Yoruba is of little use in the management of cattle, but this difficulty might be overcome by employing Hausas or the cheap Indian cart could be made to work. The oxen could be trained; the native cattle thrive in this area, and indicate the absence of the tsetse fly.

## NATIVE OIL CRUSHING.

The "African Echo" has already been made a plantation of oil palms near Oyo, and hopes to get 20,000 trees established in the year. I have every hope that many will follow this example, and the new establishment of small factories for the production of oil from the berries and the use of hand- or machine-presses may not be far distant. A good deal of oil is present taken from Igana, Okaba, and Saki, and its dependent towns. It is the waste of time involved in its transport will be necessary in plant oil palms in Saki district, and arrangements made to start this work. This should increase the amount of oil available to merchants in the area near the railway.

## GERMANISING THE CANALS.

A correspondent from the "Western Echo" informs me that the London office of the "Liverpool Daily Post" has been informed that the islands are rapidly becoming Germanised. Whether the Germans wish to take these islands and the only plan they will be permitted after the war, is uncertain, but what is quite obvious is that the islands are being purchased by the firms are being purchased by the firms on a long lease by German banks, and falling under the control of Germany, and that the German Consul is doing all he can to induce the natives to sell their land to the natives, that owing to the large number of the natives who depend on German commerce, the English residents on the islands are finding their estates surrounded by a man inferior and they are not noticed in the islands of the islanders.

# FRAME & CO.

(G. Macgregor & Co. Stephen King)

Inv. 54932

SA

30 April 1919

U

Sir,

EAP

No 368

Gen. Northey

Nyasaland, No. 111

OTG

29. 4. 19

Folder 21

24. 4. 1919

2 April 1919

Copies

For reasons

Receipt

I have the honour to transmit to you the enc. copy of a letter from Mr J.C. Casson, late Supt of Native Affairs, Nyasaland, in the subject of his application for a concession in the East Africa to cut and export hardwood trees.

I shall be glad to receive your observations on this proposal generally, and also a draft of the conditions on which a concession might be granted if thought desirable.

(3) Mr. Casson has recently returned from the appointment of Superintendent of Native Affairs, Nyasaland.  
(Signed) G. H. H. H. H.



*Ind*

DRAFT.

*to Leasson*

*15th May 1919*

*Sir,*

MINUTE.

- Mr. Stanley May*
- Mr. Calder 13.5/2*
- Mr.*
- Mr. Grindle.*
- Sir H. Lambert*
- Sir H. Reid.*
- Sir G. Fiddes.*
- Cpl. Amory.*
- Lord Milner.*

*I am in receipt of the sub of  
 your letter of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Sept & to  
 inform you that he is in con-  
 sideration with your of the case  
 & correspond with regard to  
 your application for a licence  
 to catch & export baccharis  
 in these Provinces*

*Signed G. HINDLE*