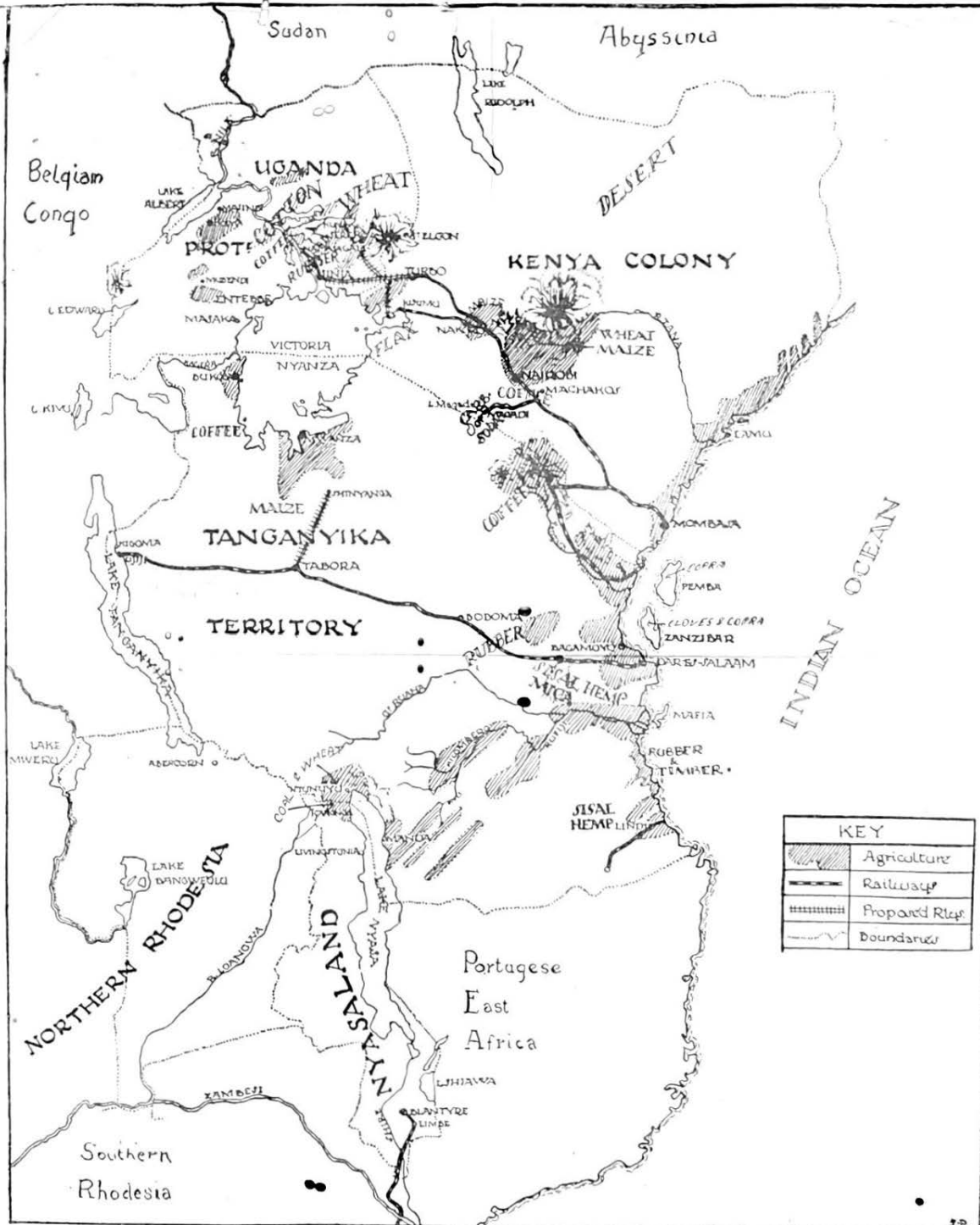


EAST AFRICA

BRITISH



| KEY | |
|-----|---------------|
| | Agriculture |
| | Railways |
| | Proposed Rly. |
| | Boundaries |

BRITISH IMPERIALISM IN EAST AFRICA

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OTHER volumes in this series will include studies of Malaya, West Africa, Hong Kong, Egypt and the West Indies. Each will contain a description of the methods and results of imperialist exploitation in relation to conditions in the various colonies.

Introduction

IN East Africa the capitalist system of production is a very new and a completely foreign development. In no sense can it be regarded there as a spontaneous development growing up out of changing economic conditions within the country itself.

Capitalism has been violently forced on East Africa in a single generation. Thirty-five years ago there were no railways, no mines, no factories, and practically no wage-labourers in the country.

The very fact that the system has been suddenly introduced from outside means that its results are more plainly apparent than in countries where it has grown up by slow stages. There is perhaps no country in the world where the working of the capitalist machine is more nakedly revealed than in East Africa.

These countries, covering an area of a million square miles, provide all the conditions that capitalism demands for its expansion ; an immense field for constructional work on railways, harbours, bridges and buildings ; supplies of raw material including copper and coal ; " a vast area of the most wonderful land, adequately watered and capable of yielding economic crops of almost all tropical, sub-tropical and temperate varieties " ; and a native population which has been described as the most docile in the world.

The whole organisation and administration of Government is directed, as we shall show, towards compelling the African inhabitants to work for European masters, and is based on the absolute subjection of the native population. Labour is recruited and controlled by the Government, and every possible device, including actual conscription, is used to force the natives into the labour market.

INTRODUCTION

All land, except what has already been sold to Europeans, belongs to the Crown, and, with the exception of one district in Uganda, Africans have only been allowed to occupy certain limited areas on terms of extreme insecurity. Railways, harbours, mines and factories are owned either by the Government or by Europeans.

In these conditions of absolute control, both of the means of production and of labour power, it would seem that the capitalist system in East Africa, if anywhere, should be able to carry on successfully the business of production. Imperialist pioneers like Sir Frederick Lugard saw in East Africa the promise of enormous wealth for British investors and large new markets for British manufacturers.

What has been the result of a generation of British ownership?

Parts of East Africa, before Europeans took control, used to export grain. Now it is necessary for the Government to import food into countries which are extraordinarily fertile in every kind of crop. There have been periods of actual famine.

Diseases, both those which are native to the country and those which have been brought into it by Europeans, have spread with fearful rapidity, and the population in nearly all parts of East Africa is declining.

These, so far, have been the actual results of capitalist exploitation. What they mean in the lives and conditions of the African natives, and to what extent the new wage-earning class is waking to political consciousness, we shall describe in the chapters that follow. But there is another aspect of the exploitation of East Africa which will have finally to be considered; for whatever

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profits companies and individuals are making, or expect to make, out of the labour of African natives, the country is still important to capitalism chiefly as a field for the operations of loan-mongers and as an outlet for the products of British heavy industries. †

The £10 million loan for the development of East African transport, which was announced at the opening of Parliament in February, 1926, will be paid for in the next ten years by British workers in the form of taxes, while the profits from the large orders for steel and engineering products, which this loan is expected to create, will go to British employers at home. Whether the proposed railways and bridges and buildings ever produce an adequate return in any sense; whether, indeed, they are ever built, matters very little to the people who draw interest on the loan and profits from contracts for materials. What they are concerned with is not the future exploitation of Africa, but the present exploitation of the workers at home.

Thus capitalism itself unites the workers of this country with the natives of East Africa in a common struggle against a system which, in its final stages, means for us a continually falling standard of life and for them conditions that are very little better than slavery.

With regard to the sources from which this study has been compiled, we have drawn the main outlines from *Empire and Commerce in Africa* by L. S. Woolf, and *Kenya* by Norman Leys. Other books have been consulted, and in particular official publications and reports, besides files of the East African Press. References to shareholders in African companies are based on returns filed at Somerset House.

British Imperialism in East Africa.

CHAPTER I.

SEIZING THE LAND.

IN 1886 the British and German Governments came to an agreement to partition East Africa. The British were to work inwards from Mombasa, and the Germans from Dar-es-salaam, and eventually the whole of the territory between the sea and the line of the Belgian Congo was to come under their "influence." The map, which is given as a frontispiece, shows the character of this country of more than a million square miles. The coast line of Kenya (first known as British East Africa) and Tanganyika (originally German East Africa) gives access to the sea for something like a thousand miles, with natural harbours at many points. The inland country is mainly fertile and well watered, except in the North-Eastern part of Kenya, which is desert. The whole area is tropical, but in the extensive high-lying districts the climate is suitable for Europeans.

In 1886 the nominal ruler of this wide area was the Sultan of Zanzibar, and the first step was for the British Government to force on the Sultan an agreement authorising exploitation of the country by British influence. At later stages the British interests were confronted with other native rulers and tribal assemblies and from time to time it was necessary to secure the sanction of these rulers to the infiltration of the white merchants and settlers. At every stage, therefore,

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the prestige of the British Government has been used to extend the British sphere of influence; but most of the definite military operations involved have actually been carried out by groups of mercenaries employed by private companies.

The private company which carried out the preliminary operations was the East Africa Company, which received a royal charter in 1888, authorising it to administer and exploit certain territories "with a view of promoting trade, commerce and good government." At the same time a German Company started operations to the south and the development of British and German influence was more or less parallel in their respective territories.

The agents of both companies, when they arrived in the country, met with open hostility from the African inhabitants. Both the German and the British Government sanctioned the use of troops; but in view of the political position at home it was considered advisable that the expeditions, which were financed by the Home Governments, should be sent out on the pretext of suppressing the slave trade. The details of the operation were never made public, but after a blockade and months of fighting, the Africans were forced to accept European rule—that is to say, the rule of a chartered company, working for private profit.

Nevertheless, the establishment of the East Africa Company in the coastal area was only a first step. The company found that the products of the interior were finding their way out of the country through the formerly existing channel organised by Arab traders, and they considered it essential to drive forward into the more prosperous producing areas of Uganda. The company

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therefore proposed to the British Government that a railway should be built from the coast into Uganda and that the Government should guarantee interest on the proposed new capital of $1\frac{1}{4}$ million pounds. When the Government refused, the company threatened to withdraw altogether, and the Church and the Press in Britain united in a campaign, brilliantly organised by the agents of the company, against the refusal of the British Government to help, which they declared would almost inevitably lead to "an immediate massacre of the native converts and European missionaries." After considerable negotiation the company actually withdrew from Uganda, which was then taken over by the Foreign Office and declared a British Protectorate. In the following year, the company also withdrew from the coastal area (now known as Kenya), receiving compensation from the British Government to the extent of £250,000—the amount of its original capital.

Thus Uganda and East Africa (Kenya) were added to the British Empire. The opening up of these new fields for investment began in earnest the following year when work was started on the Uganda railway. According to Knowles ("Economic Development of the British Overseas Empire"):

"The Government was even then not prepared to say that it would build a railway to develop a colony. It would only say that £250,000 a year had to be found to put down the slave traffic."

The original estimate of the cost of the railway was £2½ million; up to 1921 the actual cost was £6,658,112, of which £5½ millions has been found by the Imperial Government. No repayment was arranged for, and interest is found by the Imperial Government. The story of the subsequent development of the area is told in later chapters.

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Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia were also acquired as a result of the operations of private companies. In Nyasaland the African Lakes Trading Corporation (which according to the *Encyclopedia Britannica* "grew out of" the missionary societies) carried on an unofficial war lasting for over ten years with the Arab settlement on the East and West coasts of Lake Nyasa. Among the volunteers who fought for the Corporation was Captain Lugard; the same Lugard who was employed later by the East Africa Company in Uganda and by the Royal Niger Company in West Africa; who, as Sir Frederick Lugard, became High Commissioner and Commander in Chief of Northern Nigeria, and finally Governor-General of Nigeria from 1914 to 1919. In 1925, Lugard was a Director of the Colonial Bank (now owned by Barclays) and the Kassala Cotton Company, operating in the Sudan. The military adventures, for which he was personally responsible, were decisive in forcing Uganda and Nyasaland to accept the rule of British capitalists, and he is now reaping his reward.

By 1891 the operations of the company were sufficiently advanced for the British Government to establish a formal Protectorate over the region round Lake Nyasa, but it was years before the struggle, first with the Arabs and afterwards with African tribes, brought the country into a state of submission to the British settlers.

The conquest of Rhodesia was achieved by the British South Africa Company. The long story of the expeditions carried out "by the armed forces of the company," mainly under the leadership of Jameson, belongs rather to the history of South African development. But it was as a direct result of these campaigns that the territory,

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now known as Northern Rhodesia, came to be added to the British Empire. In all these operations the dominant figure behind the scenes was Cecil Rhodes, a fact which was recognised by the British Government when it named the territory Rhodesia.

The last of the territories, Tanganyika, was also added to the British Empire by violence—a violence which formed only one tiny section of the struggle with German capitalists known as the Great War. The record of violence in Tanganyika is described by the Ormsby-Gore Commission of 1924 :—

“ No part of Africa suffered more severely from the ravages of the Great War than the Tanganyika territory. Fighting took place more or less continuously over the greater part of the territory for over four years, and the loss of life, especially among the native population, and the destruction and decay of property was severe.”

On this occasion the territory was formally added to the British Empire under a mandate given by the principal Allied and Associated Powers at a meeting of the Supreme Council at Paris in May, 1919.

Thus the record of force is complete. But it must not be supposed that the use of force ended with the formal incorporation of these territories in the Empire, whether as Colonies, Protectorates or Mandated Territory. British capitalism could do nothing with the land and the mineral riches of the country until it had created a proletariat to do the work of bringing the potential wealth into the actual goods which could be sold and exported by the capitalist interests. The later chapters of this book tell the story of the methods by which the proletariat is being created. But it is necessary to describe briefly the conditions with which the British were faced.

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When British settlers began to arrive, they found a number of Arab trading settlements, and the traffic was not only in the natural resources of the country but also in slaves, who were shipped to various Eastern countries and, in the remote past, even to America. The strength of the Arab settlements, and incidentally the traffic in slaves, was crushed by Indian troops brought over by the British Government. But slavery was only made illegal in Uganda and Kenya in 1907 and in Zanzibar in 1910; and the whole strength of the operations was devoted to crushing the Arab trader as such, that is to say, as a rival to the Europeans. Nevertheless, experience showed that the British traders were unable to deal efficiently with the African population, and a certain number of Arabs—altogether about 25,000—have been allowed to remain. The trading rivals of the Arabs were originally the Indians; and in the early stages the British settlers utilised the Indian settlements, not only as trading intermediaries, but also as a means of getting labour. At all stages, too, Indian troops and police have been used for the purpose of keeping the natives in submission. Apart from the victims of military operations, the earliest victims of British capitalism in that area were the Indian labourers brought over to build the Uganda railway. It is stated that 32,000 labourers were brought from India; of these, 6450 were invalided as unfit for further work before their contract was finished, and 2490 died during the operations.

But the main source of exploitation is necessarily the African population. At the time of the British invasion the land was occupied by a great number of separate tribes, who can be divided into two main groups—the pastoral tribes, owning

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immense herds of live stock, and constantly moving about within large areas of the inland country, and the agricultural tribes, living in more or less permanent settlements, where crops were grown for their own food supply and to some extent for export.

The total population is now estimated at rather more than 12 millions, of whom 99·2 per cent. are Africans, 0·62 per cent. are Arabs and Indians, and 0·16 per cent. are Europeans. The area and population of the various territories are roughly as follows:—

| Territory. | Area. sq. miles. | Population. | | |
|--------------|---------------------|-------------|----------|----------|
| | | African. | Asiatic. | Europ's. |
| Kenya, ... | 245,000 | 2,500,000 | 23,500 | 10,300 |
| Uganda, ... | 94,000 | 3,000,000 | 5,600 | 1,250 |
| Zanzibar, . | 1,000 | 186,000 | 30,300 | 250 |
| Tanganyika, | 365,000 | 4,107,000 | 15,000 | 2,450 |
| Nyasaland, | 40,000 | 1,200,000 | 600 | 1,500 |
| N. Rhodesia, | 290,000 | 980,000 | — | 3,600 |
| Total, | 1,035,000 | 11,973,000 | 75,000 | 19,350 |

The British territories in East Africa are nominally controlled by different authorities, and are of varying status. Kenya is a Crown Colony; Zanzibar, Uganda, Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia are Protectorates; and Tanganyika is a Mandated Territory. Until lately, Protectorates were administered under the Foreign Office, presumably with the object of showing that they were not British colonies; but recently Protectorates have been brought directly under the Colonial office, on practically the same basis as a Crown Colony. In the case of a Mandated Territory, the nominal authority is the League of Nations.

The status of a Protectorate is, however, one of very considerable disadvantage to the inhabitants. According to Sir Frederick Lugard—

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“ In practice the natives of a Protectorate who do not already enjoy the status of British subject have apparently no rights or privileges either within or beyond the limits of the Protectorate.” (The Dual Mandate).

This position is very useful to the British capitalist, as the Masai tribe found to their cost just before the war. An agreement had been made with the local British authorities guaranteeing their right to certain land; when later on they were actually turned out of their territory, the leaders of the Masai brought an action against the Crown for the enforcement of the treaty. The case was dismissed, with costs, in the Court of Appeal, on the ground that the Masai were not British subjects and that therefore the treaty, being a compact between two Sovereign States, was beyond the competence of any British Courts.

The actual administration of the various areas is in the hands of the Governors appointed by the British Government, who carry on the administration with the help of Legislative Councils and Executive Councils. On none of these Councils has the African population any sort of representation. In Kenya the Legislative Council is composed of eleven elected European members, five elected Indians, two Arabs, and a sufficient number of nominated official members to secure an official majority. In Nyasaland and Tanganyika, the Councils consist entirely of nominated members; in the other areas there are some elected whites, but in each case there is an official or nominated majority. Legislation in all the territories takes the form of ordinances made by the Governor, with the advice of the Legislative Council, if there is one, and subject to the veto of the Colonial Office.

In part of Uganda and in Zanzibar a nominal measure of native control is recognised; native

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kings and assemblies deal with strictly limited native questions in some districts of Uganda, while the Sultan of Zanzibar is allowed to issue decrees which are binding on all persons if they are countersigned by the British resident.

Such is the machinery of Government which maintains the essential principle of the administration established under the chartered companies—that is to say, the rule of the white settlers, modified only from time to time by the intervention of the Colonial Office on high grounds of expediency for the wider interests of British capitalists.

The first necessity of the British invasion was that the nominal rights of the African population to the land should be abolished, and an arrangement made whereby British settlers and companies could secure a legal title to it, enforceable by the British Courts and, when necessity arose from time to time, by the armed forces of the Crown.

As early as 1898, the whole of the land in Kenya, whether desert or fertile, occupied or unoccupied, with the exception of certain small areas recognised as belonging to Arabs, was appropriated to the British Crown by an Order in Council. Another Order, three years later, established the right of the High Commissioner to—

“make grants or leases of any Crown land on such terms and conditions as he may think fit, subject to any directions of the Secretary of State.”

The expropriation of the natives was made still more definite by later Orders, and the position was summed up by a decision in the Kenya High Court in 1921, quoted in the Ormsby-Gore Report. In the judgment of the Court—

“The effect of the Crown Lands Ordinance, 1915, and the Kenya (Annexation) Order in Council, 1920, by which no native rights were reserved, and the Kenya Colony

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Order in Council 1921 . . . is clearly to vest land reserved for the use of the native tribe in the Crown. If that be so, then all native rights in such reserved land disappeared, and the natives in occupation of such Crown land became tenants at will of the Crown of the land actually occupied."

Thus the first definite act of the British authorities "with a view of promoting trade, commerce and good Government" was to expropriate the holders of land throughout the whole territory, without compensation.

In all other parts of East Africa the same principle has been adopted, with only minor modifications. (Land which had originally been seized by the agents of chartered companies was acquired by the Government and afterwards sold or leased to European owners.) Only in Uganda are the Africans allowed to retain the legal ownership of any portion of the land. Everywhere else they are "tenants at will" either of the Crown or of private owners who have been given rights by the Crown. In one district of Uganda, the Kingdom of Buganda (which is said to be the most advanced native group in East Africa) native freeholds are recognised, and there are roughly 7000 independent landlords owning estates which vary from a few acres up to 50 square miles. This area is the basis of the native production of cotton to which reference is made later.

In Tanganyika freeholds were granted under the German administration to Europeans, and within these estates certain areas were set aside as native reserves. A British Ordinance of 1923 declared all land not previously acquired to be public land; 99 years' leases of public land are granted to settlers; but the natives are excluded from all rights of ownership.

In Nyasaland, according to the Ormsby-Gore

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report, the Crown lands, which include about five-sixths of the area of the Protectorate, are chiefly lands formerly held by natives over which the Crown has assumed rights. The balance of the land has been granted at one stage or another to companies or private settlers who charge rent to natives living on these lands and claim the right to turn them out at any time. Such rent is usually paid in cash, but in some cases by labouring on the landlords' estate for a certain number of days in the year.

In Northern Rhodesia, natives occupy land on sufferance from the Crown and have no right of ownership, while powerful companies have enormous estates. The British South Africa Company, for example, now holds 4000 square miles of freehold land and all mineral rights, and is entitled to a half share in the net proceeds of any land in North-West Rhodesia which the Government may dispose of up to 1964. Another 10,000 square miles belongs to the North Charterland Exploration Company, Limited.

To sum up, the policy of the British Government has been to expropriate the natives and to establish legal rights of ownership for the benefit of British Companies and individual settlers. The African tribes are allowed to occupy certain areas but the Europeans have been given all the best land, and the native reserves have been steadily reduced. The net result is that while the population in East Africa averages 12 per square mile and hundreds of square miles of land are lying empty, some of the native reserves are so crowded that they can no longer produce enough food for their own use.

But the question of securing labour to develop the land remained.

CHAPTER II.

CREATING THE PROLETARIAT.

As new companies and fresh settlers appeared in East Africa, the demand for workers to develop their concessions for them became more and more acute. This demand was made effective by the direct use of the machinery of government, which came to be increasingly controlled, as far as administration was concerned, by the settlers.

The British came into Africa, according to official history, to abolish slavery; they stayed to establish wage labour. And the most effective instrument for getting Africans to work for European masters was the Government itself.

Of course every official statement denies or disguises this principle of government, but an examination of land policy, of taxation, of labour legislation, even of public health and education, shows how the theory of the white man's burden, of the benevolent responsibility for a backward people, works out in actual practice.

We have already described how native production has been checked by the wholesale seizure of land from African tribes.

But to rob the natives of their land and to restrict the growth of native production was not enough. Workers were not available in sufficient numbers, and more direct methods had to be found. The next step, therefore, was to make it necessary for the natives to earn money, and as their desire

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for money to spend was still almost non-existent, this was done by means of taxation.

In all territories a direct tax in the form of a hut or poll tax is levied on the African population.

The following shows the amount of native taxation in various districts in 1924 :—

| | | | Rate per year. |
|-------------|---------------|-----|----------------|
| Tanganyika | (lowest), | ... | 2/- |
| | (highest), | ... | 9/- |
| N. Rhodesia | (North-East), | | 7/6 |
| | (North-West), | | 10/- |
| Nyasaland, | ... | ... | 6/- |
| Uganda, | ... | ... | 12/- to 15/- |
| Kenya, | ... | ... | 12/- to 20/- |

The cotton-growing peasants of the Buganda district pay 15/- to the British Government, 10/- to the native landlord and 10/- to the native government for remission of compulsory labour—a total of 35/- a year.

These amounts at first sight seem very small, but it has to be remembered that the average wages of an African worker are from 6/- to 12/- a month, so that the tax represents the whole of his earnings for as much as two months, even if he does not have to pay, as often happens, for other members of his family. Native cotton-growers make, as a rule, £6 or £7 a year out of their crops.

The total amount paid in taxation by the natives of Kenya, with its population of 2½ million, was £562,000 in 1924—4/6 a head for every man, woman and child among people whose whole family income is perhaps £6 a year.

In Nyasaland the man who stays at home is taxed twice as much as the man who works for a European, but this is only an extension of the

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general system of taxing natives to make them work.

It was found by the 1924 Commission that the chief motive impelling Africans to leave the settlements and engage in work for Government or private individuals was the necessity of getting money to pay their taxes. This is a clear admission of the way the system works. The fact that the system itself was introduced in response to pressure from white settlers is equally clear. Twelve years before another Commission had been appointed to inquire into the reasons for the shortage of native labour. An English settler who gave evidence then said that :—

“ In his opinion the only way to obtain more labour would be through increasing the cost of the natives' living by means of additional taxation. He was in favour of a fairly heavy Poll Tax, with a remission proportionate to the number of months a native had worked for a European farmer. . . . If the reserves were cut down sufficiently, it would undoubtedly have the effect of turning off a large number of natives, who would be made to work for their living.” (Report of Native Labour Commission, 1912, p. 7).

Less than a year later, the Governor of Kenya (Sir Percy Girouard) announced that the Government regarded taxation as the only possible method of compelling the native to leave his reserve for the purpose of seeking work. (*East African Standard*, Feb. 8th, 1913).

The system of keeping all natives who are not employed as wage-earners inside the reserves (any African in Kenya can be punished for being outside the reserves unless he is working for a European employer) makes it extremely difficult to escape the payment of tax, and with it the obligation to work for wages.

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But white employers were not content with this. They found that natives were apt to throw up their jobs and go back to their homes as soon as they had earned enough to pay the tax. Sometimes their families could pay it by selling crops, and sometimes friends in other districts sent help; and again the result was the same. The man would cease to work for wages. Therefore a whole series of Master and Servant Ordinances, regulating the conditions of employment and laying down penalties for desertion, have been passed by the governments of the various territories. Contracts for more than a month have to be signed before the Government administrative officers in the district where the labour is recruited, and

“the contract once signed becomes legally enforceable against both employer and worker.”

The period for which workers are signed on varies usually from two to eight months. The employer is supposed to provide medical attendance and to arrange for housing and food supplies. (Wages are often paid partly in food, for example in Nyasaland where the usual unskilled rate is 4/6 to 6/- a month plus food, and in Kenya where it is 8/- to 12/- a month plus food).

The worker on his side is liable to imprisonment if he deserts or otherwise fails to carry out his part of the bargain.

In the year 1922, the following sentences were carried out in Kenya :—

2187 natives were punished under the Masters' and Servants' Ordinance.

3872 natives were punished for non-payment of Hut Tax and similar “offences.”

2674 natives were punished under the Native Registration Ordinance.

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The Native Registration Ordinance mentioned here was devised as a method of preventing desertions. It has been found very useful both for tax-collecting purposes and as providing records of available workers. Under this regulation every native is compelled to carry identification papers bearing a finger-print clue. This makes it impossible for any man to leave his job without fear of being prosecuted either for desertion or for not carrying a passport.

But still the demand for workers was not satisfied.

The next stage was direct compulsion, exercised through the tribal chiefs and headmen, who are paid servants of the British Government. The influence of the chiefs in many tribes was, and still is, very strong; and forced labour for tribal purposes was a recognised institution. On this basis Government officials pursued their task of making the natives work.

In 1919 a circular was issued by the chief Native Commissioner on behalf of the Governor of Kenya, which contained instructions as follows:—

All Government officials in charge of native areas must use every possible lawful influence to induce natives to go out to work—women and children as well as men, if farms were near enough to the native areas. Native Chiefs must be repeatedly reminded of their duty to encourage all unemployed young men to go out and work on plantations.

Records must be kept by District Commissioners giving the names of Chiefs who were helpful and those who were not helpful, so that reports might be made to the Governor.

This circular aroused a certain amount of criticism among those who realised that it would be interpreted by native chiefs simply as an order

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from the Government to find a certain number of workers and force them to work. A mild protest was issued by the missionary authorities in East Africa, who said that forced labour might be and probably was necessary, but that definite conscription would be better than these uncertain requirements and unknown penalties for refusal.

In 1921 a despatch from Winston Churchill (then Secretary for the Colonies) laid it down that Government officials would *in future* take no part in recruiting labour for private employment, and that the arrangements for compulsory labour could not include work carried out for the Government by a contractor except with the express sanction of the Secretary of State. (Cmd. 1509).

Nominally, therefore, since 1921 there is forced labour, in the full sense of labour called up under a system of conscription, only on public works such as railways and roadmaking. Actually there has been, and still is, forced labour for private employers, both where rent for land is paid in work instead of in money, and where public works are carried out by contractors. Sanction for forced labour to be employed by contractors was given by Mr. Amery, Secretary for the Colonies in the Baldwin Government, in 1925, and a White Paper (Cmd. 2464), issued in July of that year, contains very interesting details.

In the autumn of 1924, the Governor of Kenya forwarded to the Colonial Secretary requests from Griffiths & Co., contractors for the Uasin Gishu railway (an extension of the line into Uganda) and from the General Manager of the Uganda Railway for more workers to be recruited. On January 9th, 1925, the Governor repeated his demand in a telegram, in which he said :—

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"Every possible effort is being made to secure labour voluntarily, but with very little success, and I consider it essential that power to call out native labour for railway construction and Public Works be granted without delay so as to relieve the congestion and damage in the meantime."

On January 14th, 1925, the Secretary for the Colonies (Amery) replied :—

"In view of your assurances . . . approve, subject to conditions laid down in Ordinance 26 of 1922 compulsory recruitment . . . up to maximum of 4000 labourers at any one time."

Ordinance 26 of 1922 provided that 60 days should be the maximum period of forced labour in one year, and that a man who was fully employed in any other occupation, or had been employed for three months in the preceding year, or was exempt according to any direction issued by the Governor, should not be called out. In the same telegram of January 14th, Mr. Amery asked what rate of wages was to be paid for forced labour and refused to sanction compulsion for work at the docks at Kisumu (on Lake Victoria Nyanza). In answer, the Governor telegraphed :—

"Pay will be lowest accepted rate in the area recruitment, most likely 12/- per month, while ordinary rate for voluntary labour is 14/-. I consider it essential that the pay of compelled labour be slightly lower than for voluntary labour, otherwise the whole value of the lesson will be lost."

The only possible source of labour at present available for Kisumu docks is prison labour; after making special arrangements for housing and transport I have sanctioned a transfer of prisoners for this purpose."

Mr. Amery protested against the payment of lower wages to forced labour, but sanctioned the arrangement—

on the understanding that difference between accustomed voluntary workers and inexperienced compelled worker does not exceed two shillings per month.

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He had been assured by the Kenya official first, that the wages of farm labourers were only 8/- to 10/- a month ; secondly, that little economic pressure or inducement for the natives to earn money at present exists, and thirdly, that—

in fact, they like working in numbers, and I believe will be found to come out without any difficulty when called upon to do so.

Thus the argument that apparently convinced Mr. Amery was that some other workers (though on different work) would be as badly off as the conscripts, that anyhow the natives did not want to become wage-earners, but that they could easily be forced to work because “ they like working in numbers ” !

Throughout the whole of this unique correspondence the term forced labour is most carefully avoided ; but it is beyond dispute that forced labour at wages below the current rate was being used on work which was carried out by contractors. The Secretary for the Colonies himself recognised that—

presumably the compelled labourers will be employed mainly by sub-contractors, but obviously the recruitment of compelled labourers could not be put into the hands of sub-contractors.

Therefore it was necessary to use the Government recruiting agencies, which had to be improved for this purpose.

The work at Kisumu, where the Colonial Secretary refused to allow forced labour to be used, was the loading and unloading of steamers, lighters and wagons, and it was reported in March, 1925, that the shortage of labour was being met by employing prisoners—

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an average of about 230 prisoners are now employed at the Docks. 122 prisoners were transferred to the Kisumu Gaol about a month ago to assist in the work.

Prison labour is even cheaper than forced labour, and it is not difficult to get natives sent to prison in Kenya. Yet the Senior Commissioner definitely recommended the abolition of convict labour at the docks because it was not an economic proposition; the prisoners were not physically fit for the work and the total of sickness was too heavy.

The Government of Kenya therefore set itself to find some alternative to prison labour; workers who would be as cheap and as helpless as convicts, but would be drawn from among the ordinary able-bodied population before they were exhausted by prison life.

The solution was discovered in July, 1925, when a bill to set up detention camps was issued in the Government Gazette.

In December, Mr. Amery sanctioned the establishment of such camps.

Natives of Kenya may now be sent to detention camps for offences under ordinances relating to wild birds, fish protection, game, trespass and about a dozen others, besides the Masters' and Servants' and Native Labourers' Ordinances. This gives a fairly wide field from which the new labour supply can be drawn.

According to the draft bill, a native sent to a detention camp—

shall be kept to labour but shall not receive pay for any work which he may perform.

A circular issued by the Colonial Secretary of Kenya stated that it would be possible for the

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labour of natives in a detention camp to be used by the Uganda Railway and the Public Works Department, etc., and that these camps would ensure a useful labour supply for the Government. (*Manchester Guardian*, Dec. 14th, 1925).

Thus the chain is complete. The African native is robbed of his only source of wealth, the land, and driven by taxation which he cannot escape to enter into a contract as a wage-earner; if, in spite of everything, he refuses to enter into any such contract, he can be called up for forced labour at less than the current rate of wages; if he breaks the contract (which, as we shall show, generally involves leaving his home for miserably low wages and intolerably bad conditions) he is tracked, by means of the registration system, and sent to a detention camp where he is forced to work for nothing.

So far the final linking up of the chain has only been completed in Kenya, where the settlers' interests are strongest; but there is evidence that it may soon be fastened on the workers of Uganda, where already the shortage of workers has led to the calling up of forced labour for roads and railways; while in the other territories the growing demand for labour is speeding up the process of enslavement.

CHAPTER III.

THE NEW SLAVERY.

It is not easy for British workers, living in the final period of a slowly developing capitalism, where mass production has itself grouped the workers together and given rise to working-class organisations, to picture the condition of African workers who, still in the stage of primitive tribalism, have had thrust upon them the whole apparatus of capitalism ready made.

The struggle is so unequal that, if we look on the African worker as cut off from workers in the rest of the world, a return to absolute slavery seems inevitable.

But already it is becoming impossible for the native proletariat of East Africa to remain thus isolated. The development of the country by British capital means at the present stage that big contracts, financed by Government loans, are going to iron and steel and engineering firms in this country, enabling them to keep going in the period of industrial crisis at home; and that railways, harbours and bridges for which the material is made by workers in England are to be built and operated by cheap native labour in Africa. At the next stage these workers will be used, not only for building and working the railways, etc., but for factory production, and the African factory worker, like the factory workers of India, will be used to drag down the standard of the white worker.

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Thus the struggle for all workers, whatever their immediate conditions, is part of one conflict, and British workers must realise that they are already involved with Africans they have never seen and of whose lives they know nothing, in fighting against a system which is speeding up the exploitation of the workers everywhere.

In this chapter we shall try to show something of the lives and conditions of Africans in the present stage of their struggle.

Wages and conditions in East Africa do not represent, as they do in European countries, the minimum at which employers can keep the workers in a state of efficiency and induce them to go on working. They represent something much less than this, because to keep them at work or to bring out new workers, employers have behind them the whole machinery of compulsion, described in the last chapter. It is true that natives who are willing to become wage-earners are scarce. But the population is large, and if one gang of workers breaks down they can be sent back to the reserves, and others can be brought out by the same methods. It is not necessary for the employers to pay a living wage when the supply of labour is controlled by quite other means.

The fact that workers are drafted out from their homes for periods of two to twelve months, for work which they only tolerate because it is temporary, in itself checks the growth of any sort of working-class organisation. Very few of the natives go out with the intention of becoming permanent wage-earners. It is only in the large towns like Mombasa that a permanent working-class exists.

Thus there is no native organisation through

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which even the most elementary form of collective bargaining can be secured. A worker is signed on individually and in any conflict with his employers he stands alone. But the employers have behind them both the employers' associations and the Government. The results are obvious.

In theory the native worker is protected by the Masters' and Servants' Ordinances, but in practice if an employer fails to carry out his part of the contract he gets off without punishment of any sort.

In 1924, according to the Report of the Chief Native Commissioner of Kenya, 168 notices were served on employers of native labour for such complaints as dilapidated or inadequate housing, failure to pay wages and failure to provide food and clothing. What happened?

"These cases do not come before the courts as the Department has instituted a system of serving notices and giving a period for compliance, which is generally observed."—(*Manchester Guardian*, Dec. 11, 1925).

A few years ago there was a proposal to introduce some form of workmen's compensation. The Convention of Associations, representing the employers, objected, and instructed its Executive to take any steps necessary to prevent legislation on the lines of the Employers' Liability Act being brought into law until the Convention has had the opportunity of fully discussing such proposed legislation.
(*East Africa Chronicle*, Nov. 19, 1921).

There is still no such law in force.

Hours of work are long and irregular. At the Kisumu docks, early in 1925, a system of compulsory overtime was in force. The shortage of workers here (in spite of the employment of convicts referred to in the last chapter) was so acute that the natives were in a comparatively

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strong position and a system of 8-hour shifts was introduced. Wages were increased to 18/- a month with a rise of 2/- a month after each successive six months; every man to receive a blanket on joining, and food rations including 1½ lbs. of meat and 1 lb. of potatoes a week. According to an official report *these rates were higher and conditions generally more attractive than those offered for any other class of labour at Kisumu.* They represent in fact the maximum standard of living that native workers engaged on the heaviest type of dock labour can secure.

Conditions of work on railway construction in May, 1925, are described in the following extract from an official return of labour :—

Compulsory Labour (Thika-Nyeri Railway Construction).

Number working—1333.

Standard rate of pay—14/- per month.

Medical condition—Fair. Fever and pneumonia prevalent. Sick report about 3·9 per cent. daily.

Death rate per 1000—2·25 per month.

Voluntary Labour.

Number working—1488.

Standard rate of pay—16/- per month.

Medical condition—Fair, owing to fever, etc.

Death rate per 1000—1·34 per month.

Remarks.

Hospital accommodation is as yet limited. The prevalence of fever and, as a consequence, pneumonia, is to be expected. A rigorous inspection is being carried out. etc.

This is more or less typical of reports on constructional work. Sometimes the medical record is better; sometimes, where an epidemic or specially bad conditions are noted, it is worse. In one case where influenza had broken out, the monthly death rate was 10·6 per thousand.

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The spread of epidemic diseases among wage-workers is very largely due to the appallingly bad transport arrangements and housing provided by the employing class.

Workers are herded from place to place like cattle, themselves suffering heavily on the way and leaving a trail of infected areas. In Nairobi and Mombasa, where the price of land is very high, native workers are packed into overcrowded areas which are worse than the worst slums of European cities.

But in spite of such conditions the measures described in the last chapter are turning Africans into wage-earners in increasing numbers.

The number of paid agricultural workers in Kenya rose as follows :—

| | | | |
|-------|-----|-----|--------|
| 1920, | ... | ... | 53,709 |
| 1921, | ... | ... | 67,388 |
| 1922, | ... | ... | 51,949 |
| 1923, | ... | ... | 70,957 |
| 1924, | ... | ... | 87,093 |

The total number of registered native wage-earners employed by the Government, as well as by private employers, in March, 1925, was 143,626, rather more than a quarter of the total " effective " population between the ages of 14 and 50.

In the other territories, figures are not available, but though the proportion of wage-earners is probably smaller, it is increasing.

The great mass of these workers are unskilled labourers, earning about 10/- a month. Wages for specially heavy work, such as road-making or railway construction are, as the reports quoted above show, from 14/- to 18/- a month. The small number of skilled workers, who are not so easily replaced, may earn up to £5 a month. In some

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districts food is provided at a cost of 4/- to 8/- a month. (The food of a European in Kenya in 1924 cost about £5 a month). Women and children are frequently employed on plantations, and until recently children were recruited by Government officials for coffee-picking.

The conditions of wage labour and the spread of disease, for which British control is to a large extent directly responsible, are combining to reduce the native population of East Africa; and white settlers within the last few years have begun to realise that, however efficient the machinery of compulsion, a declining and disease-ridden population cannot provide an endless supply of labour.

The 1924 Commission found that Uganda (where peasant production is common and wage labour is the exception) is the only territory in which the population is increasing; and that even here in one district practically the whole population is syphilitic, and the birth-rate is very much lower than the death rate.

The 1921 Census Report for Nyasaland gives as the two chief causes of the decline in population (a) venereal diseases (unknown in East Africa until after its invasion by Europeans) and (b) the separation of workers from their families for long periods.

Among natives employed in mines there is a heavy death-rate from tuberculosis (another disease recently introduced) and epidemics of influenza, smallpox and dysentery spread with disastrous severity among wage-workers, owing to bad housing and bad food. Native habits and customs may be responsible for part, but conditions imposed by the British are responsible for much

THE NEW SLAVERY

more of the appallingly heavy waste of life and health in East Africa.

In the earlier period of British settlement medical services existed almost entirely for the benefit of the white population. Native labour was so cheap that it was not worth while to establish expensive public health services to keep the natives alive. But with the growing demand for workers it became necessary to maintain a certain standard of physical fitness and to prevent the native population from dying like flies. The 1924 Commission puts it plainly :—

“A boom in an economic crop—cotton for example—presents in its wake a demand for native labour for crop production, for ginneries, for railway and harbour construction, for roads, for conveyance and handling. The shortage of labour becomes immediately an anxiety to the Government, the care of the natives becomes at once the responsibility of both private employers and the Government. We are convinced that the Governments now fully realise that the future of the country is dependent upon the care of the native population, the increase in its effective birth rate, and, above all, the prevention and care of disease. We found that every section of the community in East Africa is unanimous in demanding an increase in the provision made for medical services. (Ormsby-Gore Report, p. 53).

Disease, famine and war* brought into East Africa under British rule, have wiped out or incapacitated enormous numbers of the people. Now, because the labour of Africans is increasingly profitable, white employers are clamouring for public health services. From the employer's point of view such services, which cost him practically nothing, are a useful subsidy to profits, just as Government grants for the upkeep of plantations or the repair of machinery would be useful. Workers are to be

* Of the 150,000 unarmed porters raised in Kenya during the war, 28 per cent. were killed or died of disease.

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made more durable, and if they get damaged in the industrial process they are to be repaired free of cost.

In regard to education the motive is the same. There is a growing influence against the more or less general elementary education of the mission schools, and in favour of industrial and technical education which will make the natives into efficient and disciplined wage slaves.

An Advisory Committee on Native Education in British African Dependencies reported in 1925 in favour of technical industrial training in Government workshops or in "instructional workshops on a production basis," and of a system of apprentices to be attached to every Government department; these apprentices should

sign a bond to complete the prescribed course of instruction together, if so required, with a prescribed period of subsequent labour. (Cmd. 2374).

Here is clearly another source of unpaid labour.

African workers as a class, as we have said, have no organisation. The first stages of trade unionism are unknown. In theory the individual native can claim the protection of the law; but it will be clear to British workers, who know how the administration of the law is used against the workers in this country, that where it is a question of 'justice' as between the African worker and the white employer, British-made law, administered by British judges and magistrates, is heavily weighted against the native.

We have seen that usually cases against employers who break the labour laws do not come into court at all. It is very difficult to get full information about such cases as do come into court. Colonial newspapers like the *East African*

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Standard are very careful about publishing anything that might injure the prestige of the white man. But sometimes news value gets the better of caution.

The following example of the treatment of a native worker by his employer, and the attitude of the people responsible for administering the law, was fully reported at the time and this account is taken from a summary based on press reports. (See *Kenya*, chap. vii.).

In April, 1923, a native employed on contract by one of the big landowners ran away because his employer had beaten him. He was brought back to finish his term of service. Some months later he was sent to a station 17 miles away with a horse belonging to his master. It was reported that he had been seen riding the horse. His employer questioned him and at first he refused to answer, but afterwards annoyed his master (according to the latter's evidence) by retorting that he was not a thief. The white man pushed him into a shed and after making other natives put him on the ground, flogged him with a lash of ox-hide. Three natives were ordered to take part in the flogging. Finally the employer had the beaten man taken to another shed and tied up. On the way he fell down and the white man kicked him. He was left there during the night and died in the early morning. The medical report showed that death was the result of the flogging and kicking.

The employer was found guilty by a jury of Europeans of "grievous hurt" and sentenced by a British judge to two years' imprisonment.

This case was heard of in this country and a question^a was asked about it in Parliament. It

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even appeared that the Colonial Secretary (the Duke of Devonshire) had protested to the Governor of Kenya at the lightness of the sentence.

But the conditions which make such cases and such sentences possible continue to-day. The natives are kept in subjection by force so that they may work for British and other European employers. They have no power to resist ill-treatment, and if they escape they are liable to be sent to prison or a detention camp for breaking their contract. The employer on his side has not the slave-owner's motive for keeping in good condition a slave he has bought.

African workers are not class conscious and do not yet see in the Government machinery the instrument of the employing class, but they do definitely hold the British Government responsible for present conditions. The chiefs and headmen, as the paid servants of the Government, have largely become its tools. This was illustrated in an interview between the late Governor of Kenya and some of the chiefs, who said that some time ago the Government refused to let them force people to go out for work; but if that were put back, it would be easier to get the railway built, *which they knew was for their benefit.* (*East African Standard*, Jan. 17, 1925).

But the great mass of the people regard their British rulers with growing hostility.

To what extent this hostility has already given rise to native revolts and the beginning of nationalist organisation is described later. But before the meaning of these movements is discussed, we have to consider the development of East Africa in its relation to British capitalism and in its effect on the workers at home.

CHAPTER IV.

DIVIDING THE SPOILS.

YEAR by year the territory of East Africa, with its handful of white inhabitants, is being "developed" in the interests of European capitalists. In this process of development several distinct groups are concerned: (i.) European financiers; (ii.) European investors and settlers; (iii.) Indian and Arab traders; (iv.) African producers; (v.) African wage-labourers. The first and the last of these groups are considered in more detail in other chapters; here we are dealing chiefly with those groups which are concerned on the spot with exploiting the production and the markets of East Africa.

Almost the whole of East African production is made up of crops and raw materials; there is, so far, comparatively little factory production. As a market for imports the demand is mainly for cotton piece goods, which make up 30 per cent. of the total value of imports, and for metal manufactures of various kinds.

The following figures of imports and exports show the comparative importance of different products, and also the very small total volume of East African trade. Recent figures for Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia are not available, but in 1923 imports for both territories amounted to only £990,352 and exports to £853,056. The value of 1924 exports for the other East African dependencies showed an increase of 40 per cent. over 1923; but value per head of population was

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still only about £1 compared with £18 for Great Britain and £39 for New Zealand.

1924 TRADE (VALUE IN £1000).

| IMPORTS. | Kenya. | Uganda. | Tangan- yika. | Zanzi- bar. |
|----------------------------|--------|---------|------------------|----------------|
| Food, Drink, &c. | 904 | 155 | 248 | 679 |
| Raw Materials, | 477 | 9 | — | 300 |
| Manufactures, | 2550 | 1809 | 1814 | 744 |
| Total, | 3931 | 1973 | 2062 | 1723 |
| EXPORTS. | | | | |
| Coffee, ... | 636 | 168 | 353 | — |
| Cotton, ... | 3 | 3487 | 374 | — |
| Sisal, ... | 398 | — | 645 | — |
| Maize, ... | 381 | — | — | — |
| Cloves, ... | — | — | — | 810 |
| Hides, ... | 178 | 24 | 186 | — |
| Soda, ... | 154 | — | — | — |
| Copra, Rubber, &c., ... | 490 | 218 | 1137 | 440 |
| Total, | 2240 | 3897 | 2695 | 1250 |

Figures for 1925, as far as they are available, show that production is increasing, particularly in the case of cotton, sisal and rubber.

All the important crops, except cotton, are grown mainly on estates belonging to Europeans. Of these the larger estates are generally in the hands of corporations or limited companies, which, as we have shown, secured vast areas of land from the Government, often at purely nominal prices. Large parts of the estates so acquired are still unused; they are closed to the natives, but have not yet begun to be worked by their European owners. A large proportion of these concerns are still in the pioneer stage. Many of them have

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been formed or reconstructed within the last three or four years, and the profits they have made are as nothing to the profits that they expect to make in the near future. The great obstacle to profit-making has been the difficulty of inducing Africans to work for European employers ; and, as we have shown, the growing demand for native labour has led to a continuous tightening up of regulations aimed at compelling them to work. New enterprises generally put in their prospectus a statement that labour is cheap and plentiful. In practice they find that it is hard to get, but having absolute control of Government in the country, white interests have set aside the " law " of supply and demand in favour of coercive law. The one method of getting workers, which is seldom tried in East Africa, is to increase the rate of wages.

The companies with the largest capital are survivors of the original invading companies, which have acquired very large concessions and carry on mixed enterprises, including land speculation, plantations, mining, building, etc.

The British South Africa Company, with a total paid-up capital of over £6½ million, owns estates and mineral rights in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, besides its huge properties in other parts of Africa. It also owns a large majority of shares in the Rhodesia Railway Trust, Ltd. This is the company which, under the leadership of Cecil Rhodes, took possession of the whole of Rhodesia and was responsible for its administration until 1924.

The North Charterland Exploration Company, Ltd., secured a concession of over 10,000 square miles in Northern Rhodesia from the South Africa Company ; its functions include tobacco, cotton

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and coffee growing, cattle-raising, land sales, transport, and general trading. Its paid-up capital is nearly £3½ million. The chairman is Sir Harry Wilson, formerly Private Secretary to Joseph Chamberlain and afterwards Colonial Secretary and Acting Governor of the Orange River Colony.

There are similar companies in the other territories. *Tanganyika Concessions Ltd.* has a paid-up capital of nearly £3½ million, and investments and interests valued at close on £4 million in mining and railway companies. Among the shareholders in 1925 were Viscount Grey of Falioden (Foreign Secretary at the beginning of the war), who holds jointly and individually £35,000 ordinary shares; the Anglo-South American Bank (Nominees), Ltd., holding £38,000 ordinary shares; and Mr. Robert Williams, who was associated for twenty years with the Cecil Rhodes group and held 26,000 preference and 64,000 ordinary shares. Tanganyika Concessions has a controlling interest in two railway companies and holds a large number of shares in the *Union Minière du Haut-Katanga*, an immense mining concern operating in the Belgian Congo, where it employs 14,000 natives. The capital of the Union Minière is 156 million francs, and since 1918 it has made enormous profits; for the year 1924 the working profit amounted to 111 million francs, and a dividend of 150 per cent. was paid on the ordinary shares. The shares in this company held by Tanganyika Concessions, appear with other investments in the balance-sheet at a total figure of £3,992,000; but their actual value at prices current in July, 1925, was over £11 million.

The British East Africa Corporation was formed in 1906 to carry out "financial and agri-

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cultural operations" in Kenya and Uganda. It has secured freehold and leasehold grants of Crown land, and owns cotton ginneries, sisal plantations, coffee estates, etc. The company's paid-up capital is £400,000 in 10/- shares, of which 83,333 were allotted as a 16½ per cent. bonus to shareholders in 1920. The largest holding of shares in January, 1925, was 24,575 held jointly with two others by Rt. Hon. Reginald McKenna.

In addition to these larger concerns, which are to a great extent investment companies owning shares in railways and mines, there are numbers of plantation companies owned by European shareholders and entirely or mainly engaged in producing profitable crops. The capital of these plantation companies is generally comparatively small, owing to the fact that they were able to acquire land at very low prices.

East Africa Estates Ltd., one of the largest plantation companies in Kenya, has a paid-up capital of £260,000 and owns 350,000 acres, including valuable land near the port of Mombasa. It also owns nearly the whole of the share capital of *Central Coffee (Nairobi) Estates, Ltd.* The company lately exchanged some of its estates for 20,000 acres of more productive land in the highlands of Kenya, which is to be used at first for maize, which is the most quickly profitable crop, and later for coffee. The two largest shareholders in 1925 were Viscount Cobham, who held 15,608 shares, and the Earl of Plymouth, who held 36,610 shares. Viscount Cobham was formerly Private Secretary to the High Commissioner of South Africa and Conservative M.P. for Droitwich from 1910 to 1916.

Figures given in *The Financial Times* of Oct. 26, 1925, showing costs and yields of maize and

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coffee estates in Kenya, suggest that the operations of this company are likely to be highly profitable. It is estimated that coffee plantations produce from one-third of a ton up to one ton per acre, that the cost of production per ton delivered in London is £50, and that the average selling price is £125 per ton. This means a profit of from £25 to £75 per acre, while the capitalisation per acre of land owned by East Africa Estates, Ltd., is less than £1 per acre. Even assuming that only a very small part of the estates is under coffee, and allowing for the fact that coffee takes four years to mature, the possible rate of profit is enormous.

For maize, both the costs of production and the profit per acre are much lower. The estimated return is 8 bags per acre, valued at 10/- a bag (allowing for transport cost to the Uganda railway) and the cost of production £2 per acre. But even on this basis maize crops grown on 13,000 out of the 20,000 acres of the newly-acquired estates, would provide a 10 per cent. return on the whole paid-up capital of East Africa Estates, Ltd. That very substantial profits are actually being made by plantation companies is shown by the record of *Dwa Plantations Ltd.*, owing 20,000 acres in Kenya, which paid dividends of 10 per cent. for 1923, 15 per cent. 1924 and 17½ per cent. for 1925; and of *Amboni Estates Ltd.*, with 60,000 acres in Tanganyika, which paid 10 per cent. each time in 1923 and 1924, and 15 per cent. in 1925. The net profits of this second company for 1925, after providing £11,227 for depreciation, amounted to £50,914 on a paid-up capital of £120,000—an actual rate of profit of 42 per cent.

Tobacco-planting is carried out largely by individual planters who sell their crops to the big combines. *The Imperial Tobacco Co., The*

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British American Tobacco Co., Ltd. (the export partner of the Imperial Tobacco Co.), and *United Tobacco Companies, Ltd.* all have collecting agencies and factories in East Africa. The best tobacco-growing areas are in Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia. The Imperial Tobacco Co., according to the statement of one of its directors, is prepared to take all tobacco that can be grown in Nyasaland, and is using its influence against the development of native-owned tobacco production. This same director advocated legislation with regard to natives growing tobacco, because the native-owned crop

"usually does no more than pay expenses; the labour is therefore wasted, economically speaking, for it might be employed by the European planter, helping him to increase the acreage he has under cultivation, and thereby giving him an increased output of leaf to be sold at a profitable figure." (*Financial News*, Aug. 8, 1925).

This is typical of the attitude of the European capitalist in East Africa; the native is there to make profits for Europeans, and the Government is there to make it impossible for the native to do anything else.

The Uganda Co., Ltd., which had a paid-up capital in 1925 of £170,000, issued a further 100,000 £1 shares in that year for new developments. The company chiefly produces cotton, but also coffee, rubber, hides and ivory, as well as carrying on a general stores and agency business. Average net yearly profits for six years to October, 1924, amounted to £22,926, on a maximum capital of £100,000. In December, 1922, a 66 per cent. distribution of bonus shares was made, and a dividend of 10 per cent. was paid on the enlarged capital; in 1924 there was a further 15 per cent. bonus issue and a 15 per cent. cash dividend. One of the directors is Mr. Alfred

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Fowell Buxton, who is also a director of the National Provincial Bank and the Alliance Assurance Co., Ltd.; the shareholders included in February, 1925, the Church Missionary Trust Association, Ltd., and a long list of clergymen.

For all plantation crops the wide margin between selling value and production costs depends of course on the cheapness of labour. For sisal (hemp) which is an important crop in many districts, and for rubber, the production of which has probably increased considerably on African estates owing to the 1925 boom in rubber prices, it was estimated that in 1924 wages cost averaged 10 per cent. of selling value. A planter gets back ten times what he gives in wages to the workers who produce and collect his crops; and even allowing for other costs such as fertilisers, machinery and transport, the rate of surplus value which the planter gets out of the labour of native workers is enormous. The wages cost in British agriculture before the war, although wages were then excessively low, was about 30 per cent. of selling value.

Besides the large groups of concession-holders and the plantation companies, there are a number of European capitalists who are concerned particularly in developing the mineral products of East Africa.

The Magadi Soda Co., Ltd., which is controlled by the Brunner Mond combine, with its immense interests reaching out into every section of the chemical trades, was reconstructed in 1924. The paid-up share capital is £577,000 and there are 6 per cent. debentures amounting to close on half-a-million. All the ordinary shares (which alone have full voting rights) except director's shares, are held by Brunner Mond. Two members of

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the Rothschild family appear among the holders of preference shares. The company has a lease of soda deposits over an area of 30 square miles and the right to work for all minerals (until 1946) over an estate of more than 300 square miles. A 90-mile branch railway connecting the soda area with the Uganda Railway is leased by the company from the Government at a rent of 5/- a year, and profits from it are divided between the Magadi Co. and the Uganda Railway.

Of mining companies the most important is the *Bwana M' Kubwa Copper Mining Co., Ltd.*, with a paid-up capital of over £1 million. The Chairman and Managing Director of this company is Mr. Edmund Davis, who is a director of 48 mining and development companies in various parts of the world. With him on the Board of Directors is Lieut.-Col. C. H. Villiers, who took part in the Uganda campaign of 1893 and the Jameson Raid of 1896, and is now a Director of 14 companies, mostly concerned with African mines.

The company owns a large concession in Northern Rhodesia, bordering on the rich copper fields of the Belgian Congo. At the largest mine, according to a recent account, arrangements are being made to treat 1000 tons of ore per day, giving a monthly average production of 855 tons of copper. Costs of production, including mining, treatment and realisation charges amount to £40 11s 6d per ton; with the selling price of best selected copper at £65 per ton, the estimated annual profit works out at £250,722 a year. (*Financial News*, Oct. 12, 1925). If these figures are realised, the company will be making profits at the rate of 25 per cent. on its capital out of the working of a single mine, apart from its other enterprises.

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The native population of Northern Rhodesia, in the opinion of Mr. Edmund Davis,

has as yet had but little opportunity of making that progress in civilisation which contact with European industry, and the chance of working for good wages, brings with it.

The interests of the individual settler who works a plantation or a farm are largely the same, so far as his sources of profit are concerned, as those of the European company. Both are concerned in getting the African worker to produce the highest possible return from the land, at the lowest possible wages. But there is this difference, that while the companies are often first owners of the land, and have their own collecting and packing agencies, the individual planter has perhaps had to buy or lease his land from Europeans already in possession, and has to meet the charges of a middleman for collecting and preparing his crops for export. He is liable, therefore, like the farmer at home, to be squeezed at both ends of the process of production, by land-owning interests on one side and selling interests on the other. The effect of this is that in order to make sure of his profit, he himself becomes the hardest driver of the African labourer. The estates of individual settlers vary from the 100,000 acres of Lord Delamere down to small struggling plantations of a few hundred acres. Probably the worst conditions of all are to be found among the natives employed on these small estates.

The third group which was described as taking part in the process of developing East Africa is the group of Indian and Arab traders. There are altogether in the country 75,000 Asiatics—more than three times as many as the total white population. The Arabs are landowners on a

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small scale in certain districts (chiefly in Zanzibar where the old-established clove industry is owned by Arabs), while the Indians are mostly merchants and shopkeepers. They are in fact the petit-bourgeois class, trading with the natives and taking middlemen's profits from imported goods, and acting as agents for the collection and export of hides and native-grown crops (so far as these are exported at all). Some few among the Indians have made considerable profits and have become the owners of factories; the first large sugar factory in Uganda was started by an Indian merchant in 1924, and more than half of the 160 cotton ginneries in the territory are owned by Indians.

The growing commercial competition between Indians and white settlers gave rise to the violent hostility of British planters to the Indian population and its claims to the ownership of land and full political rights, which is referred to in a later chapter.

The fourth group is made up of native producers. Because most of the land has been taken away from native ownership, and the able-bodied population is being forced by more and more stringent measures to work for European masters, the proportion of native-owned production is now very small. Crops grown on native reserves are almost entirely used for immediate food supply, and there are districts where, owing to the cutting down of reserves, these supplies are not enough and food has to be imported.

It is only in Uganda, where Africans have the right to freehold ownership of the land, and in some parts of Tanganyika that there is any considerable native production for export. Cotton-growing on native-owned estates in Uganda is at

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present a flourishing industry, which has developed with extraordinary rapidity. Every recent account of East Africa recognises the energy and success of Uganda cotton production ; and already it is jealously regarded by white planters, who find the peasant grower making £6 or £7 a year from his patch of cotton, when he might be working for Europeans.

The planters, as with Nyasaland tobacco and on a much larger scale, see in Uganda cotton a source of profit which might be theirs. The total value of the 1925 cotton crops of Uganda and Tanganyika is estimated at £12 million, more than half of which represents the production of peasant owners. To the Manchester manufacturers this is a source of cheap supply, and the *Manchester Guardian* (Jan. 15, 1926) therefore hopes that the Colonial Office will realise "the importance of guiding the industrial policy of East Africa along the lines of peasant proprietorship." But white interests on the spot strongly object to this "direct exploitation of the African native by Lancashire merchants and manufacturers." They maintain their own first claim to any such profits, not because there is any real conflict with capitalist interests at home, but because under this system the native producer gets a larger share of the value of his production.

At a discussion in the Convention of Associations (which represents all the leading European interests) reported in the *East African Standard* of July 5, 1924, Lord Delamere said that owing to the influence of Manchester great pressure was being brought to bear on the native to grow cotton. Another speaker said :

"Natives are being driven to grow cotton at the whip of the Manchester spinners. We have to face this fact,

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and it is up to the settlers to raise their voices and say that this slavery is going to stop."

Then Lord Delamere revealed the fact that he had made special enquiries and found that some native growers made up to £9 a year out of their crops, and a certain Captain Anderson said :

" If the native was allowed to invest money instead of produce, he would soon become a very serious menace."

It was stated that some native chiefs who were landowners were even exacting compulsory labour from other natives ; and a resolution strongly objecting to such a system being permitted was carried.

Thus in the view of this leading body of white settlers, which has a very strong influence on the Government of East Africa, the native cotton production of Uganda must be checked because it interferes with their profits. If the native sells his crop to Manchester, it is slavery ; if the native chief compels him to work, it is a system which the humanitarian white cannot tolerate !

Apart from cotton, native production for export is almost negligible.

The chief exports of Kenya, and the proportion which represents native production, were as follows in 1924 :—

| | <i>Total Exports.</i> | <i>Native grown</i> |
|------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| | (Value in £1000). | |
| Coffee, | 636 | — |
| Sisal, | 398 | — |
| Maize, | 381 | 130 |
| Hides, | 178 | 121 |
| Soda, | 154 | — |
| Sesame Seed, ... | 84 | 84 |

The price of Kenya coffee on the London market is very high (£7 a cwt. in February, 1926), and it is reported that there is

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"considerable anxiety among the European coffee-planters lest the natives should be encouraged to grow coffee" (Ormsby-Gore Report, p. 152)

and thus interfere with its grading and value on the home market. In other words, the planters want to keep the monopoly of Kenya's richest crop and to use native labour exclusively for their own profit.

Profits from crops, profits from mines, and, in the near future, profits from manufacturing industry—these are the possibilities of East Africa for British companies and British settlers. But they do not represent the whole opportunity that colonial development offers to capitalist enterprise. Financial interests are fundamentally concerned in opening up the country, and the methods by which they get their share are described in the next chapter.

CHAPTER V.

THE FINANCIAL INTERESTS.

EAST AFRICA and other new countries are markets not only for the cotton of Lancashire and the tins of Birmingham but also for the railway material, bridges and other constructional material which constitute the main form of capital investment abroad. The need for the development of East Africa at the present time is being given a great deal of publicity. But its importance is not so much in the actual development of transport and other means of communication, from the point of view of the planters and traders in East Africa, as in the opportunities afforded by this development for the financial interests in Britain and the large contracting firms with which the financial interests are intimately associated.

New constructional work in an undeveloped country has always been financed by special loans, which are either provided by the Government out of national revenue or raised by means of a public issue. Loans of both types have been raised for East African development, and an example of each will serve to show how the process works.

The Uganda railway was built by the Colonial office between 1896 and 1901. In August, 1896, the Uganda Railway Act was passed by Parliament, authorising the expenditure of sums up to £3,000,000 "for the construction of a railway in Africa, from Mombasa to the Victoria Nyanza, through the Protectorates of Zanzibar, British East Africa and Uganda." This money was paid

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out of the Consolidated Fund, that is, the general balance of revenue for the current year. But the matter did not end there; the financial interests had to have their pickings. Therefore the second clause of the Act authorised the Treasury to "borrow money by means of terminable annuities," for the purpose; and "the said annuities shall be paid out of the monies annually provided by Parliament for the foreign and colonial services." In other words, the money was not provided out of public funds; but again it was not a public issue, and the Treasury was authorised to borrow it privately and on private terms. Actually, the £3,000,000 indicated as the maximum turned out to be quite insufficient to satisfy the rapacity of the various interests, and by Acts passed by Parliament in 1900 and again in 1902, the total authorised was raised to £5,530,000. The legacy of the transaction is now to be found under the Colonial Office vote each year, which includes an item of £319,000 for the annuities created in connection with the loans raised by the Treasury.

Thus we see that even in the case of monies in theory paid out of public funds for the development of East Africa, the financial interests have got in, and are now receiving their tribute of interest. But it must not be supposed that this ends their profits on the whole transaction. The details given as to how the money has been expended show the following (Uganda Railway, in official report, *Africa*, No. 11, 1904):—

| | | |
|-------------|--|-------------|
| In England, | Stores, freights, & salaries, | £2,355,000. |
| In India, | Fares, wages, etc., (of 32,000 workers), | £874,000. |
| In America, | Viaducts and 36 locomotives, | £187,000. |
| In Africa, | | £1,901,288. |

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It is of interest to consider the various points at which the financial machine levied tribute throughout the transaction. After raising the money, probably for a consideration, and drawing interest on it, the financial machine will have held it to the credit of the Treasury ; at the same time the contractors will have approached the same or other parts of the financial machine for loans to enable them to carry out the work. These loans will have been granted, at a rate of interest which would possibly have been above the bank rate, and very probably at a much lower rate than the ordinary borrower would have been able to obtain.

As each section of work was completed and shipped, the banks will have had their commission for handling the shipping documents involved in the transaction and collecting the sums due. They will have had considerable commissions in transferring any monies required to India, America and Africa, to pay for the portion of the work carried on out there. The banks in Africa again, probably under working agreements with the banks here, would have been put in funds for the payments to be made over there, and would thus have had considerable sums available. On the other hand the contractors or sub-contractors in Africa would have approached them for any advances required to enable them to carry out the later stages of the work, and again would have been granted such advances at a rate of interest probably above bank rate. In all the operations of payments of wages and fares, etc., the banks would have had their pickings. Thus we see that it is not only in connection with the first issue of the loan that the banks are concerned. Right through the whole of such an operation, and in many more details than we have space to enumerate

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the financial machine is levying its toll. In the aggregate the amount it absorbs must be very considerable, and must substantially reduce the real value which ever gets put into the actual development of a new country.

Even the £5½ million was inadequate to complete the main line into Uganda, and in 1923 a further loan of £3½ million was granted by the Imperial Government, which was to be free of interest and sinking fund, so far as the Uganda railway was concerned, for five years. Up to March, 1925, expenditure out of this second loan had apparently amounted to only £270,754; but the financial machine had already got hold of a considerable portion of the money, as is shown in the official Appropriation Accounts at that date. No less than £1,244,040 was on "short call" in London, that is to say it was lent to various financial interests, who were naturally re-lending it at a higher rate; while £610,760 was with the National Bank of India, Limited, Nairobi, and £100,000 was with the Standard Bank of South Africa, Limited, Nairobi. Thus nearly £2,000,000 had been taken from Government funds and passed to the financial machine for its use, obviously at a higher rate of interest than it was paying the Government.

Besides these two important Government loans, a public loan of £5,000,000 for Kenya was issued in London in 1921. It is unnecessary to go into the various purposes for which the loan was raised; what we are here concerned with is that no less than £454,400 was allocated to expenses of issue and discount.

The exact terms of the new £10,000,000 loan for East Africa, recently announced by the Govern-

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ment, have not yet been made known; but according to the *Times* of Jan. 27, 1926, the Governor of Kenya has stated that the loan will be advanced by "the British taxpayer" free of interest for ten years. It should be noted that although it may be free of interest as between the British Treasury and the East African Governments, it by no means follows that it will be free of interest to the British Government. Even if the amount is not borrowed specially by the Treasury, it is obvious that the payment of this sum out of State funds means that the floating debt is larger than it would otherwise be; in other words, the financial interests are directly concerned in seeing that the loan is made.

The instances we have given are sufficient to show the considerable importance to the British financial world of the development schemes which are figuring so largely in the Government's plans. It is obvious that the big engineering firms—many of them closely associated with the banking interests—are also directly interested in the necessary contracts. Referring to the loan now projected, a writer in the *Statist* observes:—

"It is anticipated that the work will, in the main, consist of new railways in Tanganyika and Uganda, but provision for improvement in harbour and port facilities and for certain permanent bridges and main roads is also contemplated. In all, the building of a thousand miles of new railways is to be undertaken, and, of course, the iron and engineering industry in this country will substantially benefit from the influx of orders for rails, rolling stock and bridges."

Thus we see the alignment of interests on this side which are concerned in the development of East Africa. It does not matter to these interests whether the railways are ever built, whether the harbour works sink into the sand, or whether

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there is never any prospect of making the railways pay. Their only concern is in the immediate securing of substantial profits and commissions on a scale which could only be arranged by a Government which in turn controlled the local Governments of the East African territories. Thus we get the latest stage of Imperialist development.

In the old days the financial interests used to go, hand in hand with the heavy-industry contracting firms, to the rulers of "backward" countries, securing contracts to develop their countries and expecting to receive payment from the National revenues of those particular countries over a long period of years. This, however, was a risky business, and in many cases the British military and naval machine had to be called in to enforce payment.

The up-to-date method is different. The interests concerned do not have to go to the expense and trouble of bribing the native rulers, of whom indeed there is now a short supply. It is far more convenient, with the integration of finance capital and its developed control of the British State machine, to arrange the loans and contracts in Whitehall or in some more pleasant club or country house. There is the additional advantage that the repayment of the principal and interest no longer depends on the prosperity of the "backward" country or the whims of its rulers, but is assured by the British Government itself, which in turn is confident of the unwavering loyalty of the British workers to financial contracts entered into by the Capitalist Government on their behalf.

CHAPTER VI.

THE CLASS STRUGGLE.

WE have seen how the Imperial Government supports capitalist adventures in new territory with troops and money, how the State machine is used to create a working-class to make profits for British employers, and how State loans to develop the new country are arranged for the benefit of financial groups. At each stage in colonial development the British Government is the instrument of capitalist groups, and the identity of interest declares itself with special force when the Government servant holding high office and the capitalist drawing profits from colonial enterprise, are one and the same individual.

We find Sir Frederick Lugard beginning his career as the leader of private military raids on behalf of African companies, later holding important appointments in the Colonial Service, and finally reverting to commerce as a director of Colonial banking and plantation companies. We find Viscount Grey, a member of the Government which was directly responsible for the war of 1914, now a large shareholder in Tanganyika Concessions Ltd., which in turn is closely associated with the Union Minière, a company operating in Belgian Congo. It will be remembered that one of the results of the war was the division of German East Africa between Britain and Belgium. Sir Arthur Griffith-Boscawen, who was a member of the Government between 1921 and 1923, holds a

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directorship in the Rhodesia Broken Hill Investment Co., Ltd.

The same is true of less distinguished State officials. In East Africa, Government Servants are not only allowed but encouraged to own estates and to make profits out of native labour. The unofficial agents of the State, the Church missions, whose business it is to teach the new proletariat loyalty to the British ruling class and discipline in the service of the white man, also have their direct interest. One of the most prosperous plantation companies, the Uganda Co., Ltd., numbers among its shareholders the Church Missionary Trust Association Ltd., and a numerous band of parsons.

At each stage in the development of East Africa, from the first invasion by missionaries and trading companies, through the period of white settlement and the establishment of the plantation system, up to the point where finance capital uses the new country for its own purposes, the dominating interest has been reflected in the form of government. In the period of administration by chartered companies, trading relations were the main interest. The coming of white settlers and the establishment within the country of capitalist companies to exploit African workers was accompanied by the strengthening of local control and the setting up of legislative councils on which local capitalists were represented. But as the grip of finance capital tightens, local interests are no longer dominant and the Imperial Government over-rides lesser issues in the interests of the banks and the big industrial groups at home.

The Colonial office has refused to give local self-government in Kenya and to abolish the official

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majority on the Legislative Council. It has also refused to give way to local pressure on the question of Indians in East Africa.

The success of the Indians as traders, the fact that some of them are making money and building factories, means that they are entering into direct competition with Europeans. British planters are intensely hostile to the political and economic recognition of the Indian population. When the last Coalition Government came to an agreement which admitted the claims of the Indians to the franchise and to free immigration, the European colony threatened armed rebellion, and elaborate preparations were made for using force to resist the change of policy. A speaker in the Convention of Associations said that if no other way of stopping Indian immigration could be found, the Europeans should take their guns to Mombasa and prevent any Indians from landing; and a resolution was carried instructing district associations to carry out a boycott of all Indians in the colony "with the utmost determination and relentlessness." (*East African Standard*, Dec. 24, 1921).

The British Government listened, for the moment, to this frenzy of protest. The Governor of Kenya went home to consult the Colonial Office, the agreement was withdrawn, and a compromise was proposed. The Indians then adopted a policy of non-co-operation, and refused to pay taxes or to appoint any representatives on the Council. This policy was abandoned in 1925, and the Indians agreed under protest to accept the compromise, giving them a limited franchise, but excluding them from the right to own land in the best areas.

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The policy of the Imperial Government is to keep the Indians in East Africa, because, like the white settlers, they can be used to develop the country up to the point where it becomes a field for financiers. They help to provide the background for more railways, more docks, more machinery and buildings. A certain measure of recognition is necessary to keep the Indians quiet, and this the Colonial Office will probably induce the white settlers to accept.

For the real struggle in East Africa is not between white planters and Indian merchants, but between British capitalism and the African masses who have been robbed of their land and are now being robbed of their labour. As the process of exploitation goes on, factory production in Africa is bound to increase, which means that native labour will be used in factories under slave conditions such as already exist on the railways and plantations; and mass production will give rise to native organisation on a class basis.

Already the new wage-earning class is learning to recognise its oppressors and to organise against them. Within the last few years there has been more than one native rising. At first the natives struggled only to re-assert their tribal independence, then came definite outbreaks against particularly brutal white employers, and later still came revolt against the oppressive taxation and labour laws imposed by the British Government.

The Nyasaland rising of 1915 was led by Chilembwe, a native who had been educated by missionaries. It was directed against the European staff of a big estate who were notoriously harsh in their treatment of native workers and tenants. Its object was to clear the Europeans

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out of the district. Five of the estate staff were actually killed, and Europeans in the neighbourhood fled to the nearest towns and camps; but because there was no organisation behind it very few natives joined the rising and it was put down in a few days by armed police. Chilembwe himself was shot down, and a number of his followers were afterwards tried and executed.

The outbreak in Nairobi in 1922 marks a definite stage in the struggle of the natives. It was based not on retaliation against individuals but on organised resistance to high taxation, forced labour and insecurity in regard to possession of the land. A native called Harry Thuku organised a native society in the villages to carry on agitation against these grievances. The organisation grew rapidly, and in March the Government arrested Thuku and imprisoned him in Nairobi. Several thousands of his followers assembled outside the prison and demanded his release. They were ordered to disperse, but refused; and after several hours they tried to rush the prison. The police fired on the crowd, and about thirty of the natives, men and women, were killed. Thuku was deported to the coast, and has been detained without trial for four years.

Immediately after this outbreak the native hut-tax was reduced and for a time agitation died down. But native organisations, independent of tribal authority and directed against British oppression, are beginning to appear on a wider scale.

The British authorities are taking all sorts of measures to prevent these organisations from developing into a political force. The missionaries, according to the report of the 1924 Commission,

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were doing all they could to turn them into welfare societies for the improvement of native agriculture, sanitation, child welfare, etc. A Kenya Government official in 1925 reported that one of the missionaries, Archdeacon Owen, had done a great deal, through a body called the Native Welfare and Taxpayers' Association to "restrain political agitation," and that the Administration owed him a debt of gratitude.

At the same time the Government is setting up official native councils. Their main purpose, like Whitley Councils here, is to involve the natives in various forms of collaboration with the ruling class. It is important, from the Government's point of view, to get not only the chiefs and headmen (who are already in the pay of the Government) but the "rank and file" to take part in the work of these councils, and the natives are encouraged to nominate unofficial candidates. The councils are to levy additional taxes on the natives for educational and medical services, roads, waterworks, etc., and are, of course, directly controlled by Government officials. All members of the councils have to take an oath in terms which include a declaration

that you will always help with all your heart, your King, your Governor and your Government.

The necessity of buying off the natives with certain measures of reform is constantly urged by the more responsible Government servants. The Chief Native Commissioner of Kenya, Mr. G. V. Maxwell, published some strong statements on the importance of giving the natives better value in return for what they pay in taxation. He estimated that in 1923 only about a quarter of the amount raised in native taxation was spent on

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services provided for their benefit. As a result he aroused the intense hostility of the settlers. The Convention of Associations demanded his resignation, with the support of Lord Delamere, who said that he preferred officials with the training and outlook of British naval officers, who would "leave no doubt in the minds of the natives."

The influence of the settlers on the local Administration is so strong that it may be that their repressive policy will lead to new outbreaks before the Colonial Office policy of mild reform has had time to cement the bonds of Empire. In any case the natives have learnt that the Government is their direct oppressor, and no minor changes can undo that knowledge.

The only change that Africans really want is one that will give them freedom to use the land, freedom to work for themselves, and release from the burden of taxation. Such a change can obviously only come with the end of the capitalist system.

It is clear that as long as the Government of East Africa is controlled by British imperialism it will continue to be used for the purpose of forcing the natives into wage slavery for the profit of British employers. Any nationalist movement that attempted to throw off British rule in Africa, while capitalism is in control in Britain, would be speedily crushed with the help of the Imperial Government. The new air route to Africa makes it easy to send reinforcements to the help of the local Government, and a native rising, even on a wide scale, could be wiped out as completely as Chilembwe and his followers were wiped out.

Yet the conscious antagonism between Africans and their British masters is growing as the ex-

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ploitation of African workers becomes more acute, and a nationalist movement will inevitably develop out of the struggle. There is no native capitalist class in East Africa, and the movement when it comes must represent the organised resistance of workers and peasants to their exploitation by British capitalists.

As the industrial struggle develops in Britain, British capitalism will turn more and more towards the cheap labour of the colonies, and the growth of factory production in East Africa is as inevitable as it has been in India. The struggle of African workers, therefore, is essentially the same as the struggle of British workers at home. Every movement which challenges the position of British capitalism in any part of the Empire weakens British employers in their fight with the workers in this country, and only the victory of the workers here can finally release the workers of Africa from slavery.