HANDBOOKS PREPARED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE HISTORICAL SECTION OF THE FOREIGN OFFICE.—No. 128

D 6
.G7
no. 128
Copy 2

ITALIAN SOMALILAND

LONDON:
PUBLISHED BY H. M. STATIONERY OFFICE.

1920

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

153

HANDBOOKS PREPARED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE HISTORICAL SECTION OF THE FOREIGN OFFICE.—No. 128

Gt. Brit.

207
1407

ITALIAN SOMALILAND

LONDON:
PUBLISHED BY H. M. STATIONERY OFFICE.

1920

2d set

EDITORIAL NOTE

In the spring of 1917 the Foreign Office, in connexion with the preparation which they were making for the work of the Peace Conference, established a special section whose duty it should be to provide the British Delegates to the Peace Conference with information in the most convenient form—geographical, economic, historical, social, religious, and political—respecting the different countries, districts, islands, &c., with which they might have to deal. In addition, volumes were prepared on certain general subjects, mostly of an historical nature, concerning which it appeared that a special study would be useful.

The historical information was compiled by trained writers on historical subjects, who (in most cases) gave their services without any remuneration. For the geographical sections valuable assistance was given by the Intelligence Division (Naval Staff) of the Admiralty; and for the economic sections, by the War Trade Intelligence Department, which had been established by the Foreign Office. Of the maps accompanying the series, some were prepared by the above-mentioned department of the Admiralty, but the bulk of them were the work of the Geographical Section of the General Staff (Military Intelligence Division) of the War Office.

Now that the Conference has nearly completed its task, the Foreign Office, in response to numerous inquiries and requests, has decided to issue the books for public use, believing that they will be useful to students of history, politics, economics, and foreign affairs, to publicists generally and to business men and travellers. It is hardly necessary to say that some of the subjects dealt with in the series have not in fact come under discussion at the Peace Conference; but, as the books treating of them contain valuable information, it has been thought advisable to include them.

It must be understood that, although the series of volumes was prepared under the authority, and is now issued with the sanction, of the Foreign Office, that Office is not to be regarded as guaranteeing the accuracy of every statement which they contain or as identifying itself with all the opinions expressed in the several volumes ; the books were not prepared in the Foreign Office itself, but are in the nature of information provided for the Foreign Office and the British Delegation.

The books are now published, with a few exceptions, substantially as they were issued for the use of the Delegates. No attempt has been made to bring them up to date, for, in the first place, such a process would have entailed a great loss of time and a prohibitive expense; and, in the second, the political and other conditions of a great part of Europe and of the Nearer and Middle East are still unsettled and in such a state of flux that any attempt to describe them would have been incorrect or misleading. The books are therefore to be taken as describing, in general, *ante-bellum* conditions, though in a few cases, where it seemed specially desirable, the account has been brought down to a later date.

G. W. PROTHERO,

General Editor and formerly
Director of the Historical Section.

January 1920.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE

I. GEOGRAPHY PHYSICAL AND POLITICAL

(1) Position and Frontiers 1
(2) Surface, Coast, and River System
Surface 2
Coast 4
River System 4
(3) Climate 5
(4) Sanitary Conditions 6
(5) Race and Language
Race 6
Language 7
(6) Population 7

II. POLITICAL HISTORY

Chronological Summary 9
(1) Expedition of the *Barbarigo* 9
(2) Protectorate established over Coast . . . 10
(3) Concession of the Ports of Benadir . . . 10
Administration by Private Commercial Undertakings 11
(4) Italian Government assumes Control . . 12
Lease of British Land near Kismayu . . 12
Agreement with the Mullah . . . 12
Abyssinian Boundary Commission . . 13
Agreement with Great Britain . . . 13

III. SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CONDITIONS

(1) Religious 14
(2) Political 14

IV. ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

(A) Means of Communication
(1) Internal 16
(2) External 16

Wt. 15800/101. 1000. 8/20. O.U.P.

PAGE

(B) INDUSTRY
(1) Labour 18
(2) Agriculture
(*a*) Products 19
(*b*) Water-supply 21
(3) Minerals 22
(4) Power 22
(C) COMMERCE 22
(D) FINANCE
(1) Public Finance 23
(2) Currency 24
(E) GENERAL REMARKS 24

AUTHORITIES 26

MAPS 27

I. GEOGRAPHY PHYSICAL AND POLITICAL

(1) Position and Frontiers

Italian Somaliland is a strip of country over 1,000 miles long and varying from about 90 to 250 in width, with an area of some 140,000 sq. miles, lying between 12° north and 0° 20′ south latitude and 42° and 51° 25′ east longitude, where the easternmost extremity of Africa projects into the Indian Ocean. On the land side it marches in the north with British Somaliland, in the south with the Jubaland province of the British East African Protectorate, in the centre with Abyssinia.

Between Italian Somaliland and British East Africa the boundary follows the Juba river to the confluence of the Dawa at Dolo.

From this point approximately the frontier runs east-north-east by the sources of the Maidaba as far as the Webi Shebeli, following the territorial boundaries between the Rahanwein tribe, which remains dependent on Italy, and the tribes to the north, which remain dependent on Abyssinia. The frontier strikes the Webi Shebeli at the point where the territorial boundary between the Baddi Abbi tribe and the tribes above it touches the river, and continues in the same direction for some 60 miles farther. It then turns north-eastwards, and follows the territorial boundary between the coast tribes and the Ogaden tribes of the interior, until it reaches British Somaliland at the intersection of latitude 8° north with longitude 48° east.[1]

[1] According to the delimitation of 1911, superseding the agreement of 1908, whereby the point was near 47° east. See *Abyssinia*, No. 129 of this series, p. 2.

Between Italian and British Somaliland the boundary runs from the point last mentioned north-east to the intersection of latitude 9° north with longitude 49° east, and then north along that meridian till it reaches the coast just east of Bandar Ziada.

On three sides, therefore, Italian Somaliland has natural frontiers, the sea and the River Juba; and on part of the fourth side they are ethnical. The Juba, however, does not form an ethnical boundary.

(2) Surface, Coast, and River System

Surface

Italian Somaliland is situated on the eastern edge, or least elevated part, of the immense monotonous region which slopes eastwards and southwards to the Indian Ocean from the southern side of the mountains stretching from Cape Guardafui to beyond Harrar in Abyssinia. Away from the coast little is known of the character of the country, especially in the north, but it is tolerably certain that it contains no very striking elevations or depressions.

The area may be divided into four regions: (1) a narrow coastal plain extending the whole length of the country; (2) behind this an elevated interior plateau, divided into a series of minor plateaux by river valleys; (3) the alluvial plain of the Webi Shebeli; and (4) the plateau between the Webi Shebeli and the Juba.

Coastal Plain.—The northern coast plain between the frontier and Cape Guardafui is a sandy belt, from five miles to two hundred yards in breadth; in the broader portions it forms low sandy hills or plateaux. Southwards from Cape Guardafui it continues as a narrow sandy strip, increasing in breadth south of Ras Ali Bash Kil. Round Cape Garad and south of it the

plain begins to be interspersed with pasturage and patches of vegetation. A few miles south of Obbia the hills disappear, and the plain widens out and rises to an interior sandy undulating district with occasional belts of forest. This extends inland to the Marehan plateau and merges into the Webi Shebeli plain on the south-west. Behind Mogadishu (Mogadiscio)[1] the coastal plain continues southward to the Juba, separated from the Webi Shebeli by a belt of sand-dunes.

Interior Plateau.—The interior plateau is little known, but its general character is clear.

North of the Darror there are two main plateaux, those of the Isa Mahmud and Osman Mahmud tribes, marked by the Jebel Godob range on the north, the Gorali Mountains in the centre, and the Suleiman and El-Maskad Mountains on the south. South of the Darror the Karkar range marks the edge of another limestone plateau, bounded on south and west by the Nogal.

South of the Nogal the interior plateau becomes more diversified and undulating; good pasturage alternates with sandy tracts. The Mudug oasis, in which Galkayu is an important water-centre, stretches over the border into Abyssinia, as does the Marehan plateau, another barren limestone region. The latter meets the alluvial plain of the Webi Shebeli on the south and a continuation of the coastal plain on the east.

Shebeli Plain.—The plain of the Webi Shebeli, three

[1] The names of the Benadir ports and other places in Italian Somaliland are spelt in many different ways: e. g. Marka, Merka, Merca, Meurka; Mogadishu, Magadoxo, Mogdishu, Magadisho, Mogadiscio; Warsheik, Warshekh, Uarsheik, Warsheikh, &c. For uniformity's sake the spelling here adopted is Merca, Mogadishu, Warsheikh. The Italian map gives Merca, Mogadiscio, Uarsceik. Similarly the Italian Uebi Scebeli, Giuba, and Chisimayo are here always spelt Webi Shebeli, Juba, Kismayu.

to ten miles in breadth, extends along the river up to the point where it emerges from the plateau country. It is divided from the sea by a belt of sand-dunes and from the Juba–Shebeli plateau by a sloping bush-covered plain, characterized by the emergence of isolated hills. The alluvial plain is fertile, populous, and well cultivated, and contains many tracts of swamp.

Juba–Shebeli Plateau.—The Juba–Shebeli plateau is another limestone region, rising towards the frontier and passing beyond it into Abyssinia. This region is infertile, but in a few places there are considerable alluvial deposits, notably in the districts of which Baidoa and Revai are the centres. On the south-east the plateau descends by a terrace to the country of isolated hills which forms the transition to the alluvial plain of the Webi Shebeli.

Coast

Italian Somaliland has a seaboard of about 1,200 miles. The Mijjertein coast, that is, the coast from Bandar Ziada to Cape Guardafui and thence south to Obbia, has a number of small indentations, but on the Benadir coast, which stretches from Obbia to the Juba, coral reefs are frequent inshore, and the coast, which is very little indented, is impossible of approach except in small vessels.

River System

The chief lines of drainage are: (1) that of the seaward slopes of the main Somali plateau; (2) that of the inner slope of this plateau and the mountain region into which it broadens out on the west. It is only the second area that gives rise to rivers of any importance, and of these the Juba and the Shebeli alone have a permanent flow of water.

The Juba is navigable as far as Yonte all the year round; from May to November steamers drawing 3 ft. can reach the rapids north of Bardera. Steamers drawing more than 6 ft. cannot cross the bar at the river's mouth. It is lowest from December to March, then rises slowly till May, after which it again falls, to rise to its greatest height between August and November.

The Shebeli, which, like the Juba, depends on the Abyssinian, not on the local rains, has similarly regular periods of high and low water. It is navigable intermittently only for dug-outs. For part of their courses both rivers flow above the level of the surrounding country.

The main characteristic of the larger rivers of the north is that they run in deep-cut rifts in their middle courses and spread out into a labyrinth of channels towards their mouths. The coast streams, waterless during the dry season, are torrents during the rains.

(3) Climate

The climate of Italian Somaliland is dominated by the monsoons, of which the north-east monsoon blows from December to March, the south-west from June to September. The intervening months are periods of feebler and variable winds.

During the north-east monsoon the temperature is tolerable everywhere on the north coast and at its highest in the interior and on the south coast; during the south-west monsoon the temperature in southern Somaliland is at its lowest, and the north coast becomes very hot and practically uninhabitable. The south-west monsoon is characterized, at least on the north coast, by being laden with sand and dust.

The chief periods of rainfall occur during the months of transition between the monsoons, though there are local rains also at the beginning of the south-west mon-

soon. December to March is a dry period. The rains last longer in the interior than on the coast. The rainfall varies from about 10 in. (250 mm.) on the coast to about 30 in. (760 mm.) inland. The number of rainy days is small.

In Southern Somaliland, for which alone there are regular observations, and these only over a short period, the temperature varies between 104° F. (40° C.) and 59° F. (15° C.), the interior being hotter than the coast and the variation greater. The heat is considerably tempered by the wind.

(4) Sanitary Conditions

Italian authorities take a favourable view of the health conditions of the colony. Malaria is common only in the Juba and Webi Shebeli basins, where there is stagnant water. There is a certain amount of leprosy (especially on the Benadir coast) and syphilis, and it may be supposed that other affections which are known to occur in British Somaliland, e. g. ulcers and suppurating wounds, also occur in Italian Somaliland. Europeans are liable to anaemia.

(5) Race and Language

Race

The origin of the Somalis is extremely obscure. A probable theory is that they are a Hamitic race and the most recently arrived of all the native inhabitants of north-eastern Africa, to which they migrated from southern Arabia. Among the various tribes some appear to represent an aboriginal population, while others claim a Semitic descent. But Sergi, who has compared the Somali type with other branches of the Hamitic family, declares that the Somalis of the present day must be considered pure Hamites.

In addition to the Somalis, who form the bulk of the population, there are in the southern corner of the colony numbers of negroids or negroes, usually slaves or freedmen, engaged in agriculture. The non-native population consists of Italian officials, and a comparatively small number of Arabs and Indians, who largely monopolize the trade of the colony.

In physical type the Somalis have a general resemblance to the Gallas (see *Kenya*, No. 96 of this series, p. 10) but are larger, and darker in colour. Except in cases where there has been a cross with negro blood, their features are fine. Though not muscularly well developed, they are active and enduring. The coast Somali is on the whole inferior to the Somali of the interior both in physique and courage.

Language

The Somali language is closely related to Galla, but has a strong Arabic admixture. It belongs to the southern Hamitic group. Besides Somali, which is spoken, with certain dialectal variations, all over the country, Arabic is also in use as a trade language, while Swahili is spoken in the extreme south. The outcast Midgans and Yibirs have secret languages of their own.

(6) Population

The native population of Italian Somaliland is estimated at about 400,000 (though the figure is quite uncertain), that is, between two and three inhabitants to the square mile. There are, however, large tracts without any inhabitants at all. The density is probably greatest in the agricultural and commercial centres of the south, along the Juba and the Shebeli, and also on the coast. But it is possible that there may be considerable centres in the north likewise, since the Mijjerteins of the north are the most numerous

tribe, reckoning their numbers at over 100,000. The population of the colony falls into two halves: the northern, which is pastoral and nomadic; the southern, also in part pastoral and nomadic, but largely agricultural and fixed.

The chief commercial centres are Bandar Alula on the north coast, Lugh on the Juba in the interior, and Mogadishu and Merca on the Benadir coast.

II. POLITICAL HISTORY

Chronological Summary

1885 Despatch of Italian Mission to Sultan of Zanzibar.
1889 Conclusion of treaty with Sultan of Obbia. Protectorate of coast assumed by Italian Government.
1889, 1890 Captain Filonardi's missions.
1891 Agreements with local chieftains for a commercial station in Benadir. Agreement with England as to boundaries.
1892 Italian Government obtains concession of the ports of Benadir.
1893 Administration of Benadir leased to Filonardi Company.
1893–6 Period of exploration.
1894 Boundary agreement with England.
1896 Filonardi Company wound up.
1898, 1899 Exploitation of Benadir conceded to Milanese Company.
1905 Italy acquires sovereign rights over Benadir. Agreement between Italian Government and the Mullah.
1907 Further agreement with England.
1908 Convention between Italy and Abyssinia for settlement of frontier.
1910–11 Italian and Abyssinian boundaries marked off.
1915 Anglo-Italian agreement as to the Juba river.

(1) Expedition of the 'Barbarigo'

In April, 1885, soon after the occupation of Massawa, the Italian Government despatched the *Barbarigo* of the Royal Navy on a mission to the Sultan of Zanzibar, whose rule extended along the coast of Somaliland as far as Warsheikh. Captain Cecchi, the officer in charge, afterwards Italian Consul at Zanzibar, was instructed to sound the Sultan with reference to territorial concessions, to explore the coast and the mouths of the Juba, and to report on possibilities of commercial expansion. In August the *Barbarigo* returned with

a treaty which secured important commercial advantages to Italy, and bringing valuable results from the voyage. Negotiations for territorial concessions were, for the time being, without result.

(2) Protectorate established over Coast

In December, 1888, the local Sultan of Obbia having sought the protection of Italy, the Italian Government determined to extend Italian influence from the northern boundary of the Sultanate of Zanzibar to the eastern boundary of British Somaliland. Early in 1889 the *Staffetta* and the *Rapido* anchored off Obbia, and a treaty was concluded with the Sultan, who placed his dominions along the coast of the Indian Ocean under the protection of Italy. By a subsequent agreement with the Sultan of the Mijjerteins the Italian protectorate was further extended, and on November 19, 1889, the Italian Government notified to the Powers that it had assumed the protectorate of the coast, including the stations of Brava, Merca, Mogadishu, and Warsheikh, belonging to the Sultan of Zanzibar. In December, 1889, Captain Filonardi was sent with the *Volta* on a second mission to the Sultans of Obbia and of the Mijjerteins. Having achieved his purpose, he touched on the return voyage at Warsheikh, the chief centre of the great Abgal tribes. A further charge was given to Captain Filonardi, on December 21, 1890, to prepare the way for a commercial station in Benadir; and on March 24, 1891, agreements were made with local chieftains to that effect.

(3) Concession of the Ports of Benadir

In the interim, Great Britain, in accord with Germany, had assumed a protectorate over the Sultanate of Zanzibar, with a recognition of Italian rights in

the Sultan's territories. An agreement was signed by the Italian Premier, Rudini, and Lord Dufferin at Rome, on March 24, 1891, which marked out the respective spheres of influence. Thus free to deal direct with the Sultan, the Italian Government obtained a concession on August 12, 1892, of the ports of Benadir for twenty-five or fifty years on payment of a tribute of 160,000 rupees a year. On May 11, 1893, the Italian Government leased the administration of Benadir for three years to the Filonardi Company, and agreed to reimburse the company to the extent of the annual subsidy of 160,000 rupees payable to the Sultan. Between 1893 and 1896 began a series of explorations by Italian travellers and commercial agents in the interior and of naval expeditions along the coast; these were attended with loss of life from disease and attacks by natives.

Meanwhile, on May 5, 1894, a further agreement between Great Britain and Italy had been signed at Rome by Crispi and the British ambassador, which defined the boundary of the spheres of influence of British and Italian Somaliland respectively. In June, 1896, the Filonardi Company was wound up and a new company formed at Milan, which was to assume the administration and colonization of the territory as soon as its unsettled state, consequent on the Abyssinian troubles, had been directly dealt with by the Italian Government. On May 25, 1898, the Government conceded the exploitation of the cities and territories of Benadir and their respective back-countries to the Milanese Società Anonima Commerciale Italiana del Benadir, with a subscribed capital of £40,000. On December 24, 1899, the Chamber confirmed the convention with the Milanese company, and the provisional concession became a definite one, to expire on July 16, 1946, the Government reserving the right to

denounce it on July 16, 1921, and the company after twelve years, dating from May 1, 1898.

(4) Italian Government assumes control

Experience, however, soon proved that the task of ruling a vast territory inhabited by hostile and warlike native populations was beyond the power of a private commercial company. In particular, the Italian colony became involved in the campaign which British forces were carrying on with the Mullah Mahommed ben Abdullah, who in 1903 succeeded in temporarily occupying the Italian port of Illig. Accordingly, on March 16, 1905, the Italian Government assumed the direct administration of the colony. The tribute due to the Sultan of Zanzibar was capitalized at £144,000 sterling; and on January 13, 1905, by an agreement between the British Foreign Minister and the Italian ambassador at London, Italy acquired sovereign rights over Benadir. On July 28, 1905, the Italian flag was unfurled at the stations of the colony, and a 'Royal Commissioner for Southern Italian Somaliland' was appointed. In the same year the British Government leased to Italy, for 33, 66, or 99 years at an annual rental of £1 sterling, some land on the east of the port of Kismayu in British East Africa for the construction of warehouses and other buildings, and a strip of land to the south-east of the British landing-place, for the purpose of building a wharf, with the right of a free passage to the warehouses and thence to a point on the River Juba opposite Jumbo. On March 5 of the same year an agreement was secured by an Italian envoy with the Mullah, who promised to aid in preserving peace and tranquillity with the Somalis and to secure peaceful relations between the tribes under Italian protection

and the dervishes. A supplementary agreement was made on March 19, 1907, at London, between the Italian chargé d'affaires and the British Foreign Minister, which cleared up certain minor points in dispute. The Mullah, however, broke his agreement and resumed hostilities in 1908.

In the colony itself the Italians now made steady progress. After a series of military and punitive expeditions the first stage of Italian penetration was completed by the occupation of the quadrilateral, Mogadishu, Afgoi, Brava, and Danane; the trade routes were rendered safe, and protection was afforded to the native populations who were peacefully inclined.

On May 16, 1908, a Convention between Italy and Abyssinia was signed, which determined the frontier between Abyssinia and the colony.[1] By it Menelik ceded certain additional territory, including Lugh, for the sum of 3,000,000 lire. Two years later the Citerni Mission proceeded to Addis Abbaba in accordance with the treaty to delimit the frontier, a task accomplished in 1911.

An agreement between Great Britain and Italy of Dec. 24, 1915, settled some outstanding questions concerning the administration of the River Juba by the appointment of a permanent mixed Commission to be named by the governors of Italian Somaliland and British East Africa. It contained regulations for the customs, transit, conservancy, navigation, and use for irrigation purposes, of the river. Some fourteen small islands in the river bed were divided between the two countries. After a three years' trial the agreement was to be subject to revision on the suggestion of either of the contracting parties. No proposals for revision were put forward, however, and the period during which modification was possible has now run out.

[1] See Hertslet, *Map of Africa by Treaty*, p. 1223.

III. SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CONDITIONS

(1) Religious

Tradition refers the conversion to Mohammedanism of the Somali tribes to the advent of two Arab sheikhs, Darot and Serhah, and their followers, who are reputed to have come from Mecca about five centuries ago, and married wives from the pagan race then inhabiting the land. Their descendants became Mohammedans, drove the recalcitrant pagans into the interior, and settled, some in the south, others in the east. At Marille and other religious centres, mosques have been built and the usual schools attached for teaching the Koran. The Somalis are strict in their religious observances; they will suffer extreme privation rather than break their fast during Ramadan, and are careful to abstain from wine and spirits and from pollution by contact with unclean animals. They belong to the Sunni sect. The negroids of the south are also Mohammedan.

(2) Political

(*a*) By royal decree (July 1910) Southern Somaliland (or Benadir) was constituted a Crown colony. It is administered by a civil Governor resident at Mogadishu, and is subdivided into four commissariats: (1) Webi Shebeli, with its seat at Mogadishu; (2) the High Juba, with its seat at Jumbo; (3) the Gosha and Lower Webi, at Lugh; (4) the Shidle, at Mahaddei. Each commissariat is further subdivided into vice-commissariats. Owing to the hostile atti-

tude of the native tribes the Governor and his subordinates combine military with civil functions.

(*b*) Northern Somaliland is an Italian Protectorate and ruled by local Sultans, over whose actions the Italian Government exercises only an indirect political control. It comprises the Sultanate of Obbia, the territory of Nogal, and the Sultanate of the Mijjerteins. A commissariat of Northern Somaliland, directly dependent on the Governor of the colony, has two residences, one in the Sultanate of Obbia, the other in the Sultanate of the Mijjerteins.

IV. ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

(A) MEANS OF COMMUNICATION

(1) Internal

The Italians have made a certain number of roads in the southern part of the colony, and in some places maintain a regular service of motors.

The rivers Juba and Webi Shebeli are believed to be capable of development as lines of penetration into the interior. There is a service of steam vessels between Jumbo and Bardera on the Juba, and a complementary service between Jumbo and Kismayu in British East Africa.

The Italian Government has secured treaty rights for the construction of a railway from Itala to Addis Abbaba, whence an extension is contemplated to Gambela, a town on the River Baro, which is leased to the Sudan Government. The River Baro is navigable for a few months of the year, and is used for trade between Gambela and Khartum. The development of the port of Bandar Alula in Northern Somaliland, and its connexion with south-east Abyssinia by railway, has also been contemplated.

There are four principal post offices in the colony, but postal business is carried on at every station.

(2) External

Italian Somaliland suffers under the serious disability of a complete absence of harbours. There are fair anchorages at Bandar Alula and Bandar Maraya on the north Mijjertein coast, at Obbia on the east

Mijjertein coast, and at Itala, Merca, Mogadishu, and Brava on the Benadir coast; but ships have to anchor at some distance from the land, and passengers and goods are taken ashore through the surf in small boats. In 1905, however, the Italian Government obtained the right to use the port of Kismayu in British East Africa. An agreement laying down the details of the joint control and use of this port was concluded in 1916. It is understood that the Italian Government contemplates the construction of a harbour at Brava in the near future.

An Italian company, the Marittima Italiana, maintains a monthly service of ships between Genoa and Mombasa. The ships on this route call at Mogadishu. The same company maintains a second service between Aden and Mombasa, and the ships on this service call monthly at Mogadishu, Merca, and Brava, except during the period of the south-west monsoon, from June to September. There are also services of ships owned by British subjects, which trade between Aden, Mogadishu, and Zanzibar except during the south-west monsoon. Before the war three German lines called at ports in Italian Somaliland, viz. the Deutsche Ost-Afrika Linie, the Woermann Linie, and the Hamburg–Bremen–Afrika Linie. In addition a large local trade is carried on by Arab dhows, which touch at every landing-place along the coast.

There are thirteen wireless stations in the colony. The wireless station at Mogadishu communicates with Italy *via* Massawa.

(B) INDUSTRY

(1) Labour

The provision of labour constitutes a serious problem for the colony, and efforts to obtain an adequate supply have so far been unsuccessful. Various solutions have been suggested. The proposal to introduce Chinese labour is generally regarded with disapproval. As to the possibility of importing agricultural labourers from Italy, opinions differ; but it is generally held that they could not stand the climate, and, further, that their employment would damage European prestige. The employment of white labour in agriculture would also be expensive. There was at one time some suggestion that arrangements should be made with the Indian Government for the introduction of Tamil labour.

In the north, where there are no slaves, any work which is not performed by the women is performed by the outcast tribes, the Midgans, hewers of wood and drawers of water, and the Tomals, workers in iron. The Somali himself only looks after his camels and ponies or, on the coast, engages in trade. It should be said, however, that the Somali of the north is capable of becoming a good servant, since a large number of the servants in the south are actually Mijjerteins.

The problem is somewhat different in the south, where the Somalis have hitherto employed on agricultural work slaves whom they acquired not by conquest but by purchase, and who constitute the only reservoir of labour from which a supply will be forthcoming for some time to come. It was from this source that the Italians obtained labour for road construction. A number of slaves were freed by the Italians, though not without difficulty and some dis-

turbance, but the attempt to liberate them wholesale has now apparently been abandoned. A tribunal has however been set up to regulate the relations between slaves and masters, freeing slaves who have fled from the interior to the coast as the result of cruelty on the part of their masters, and buying out the masters in other cases.

The Somali has good qualities. He is independent, sober, enduring, intelligent, and to a certain degree enterprising. On the other hand, he is vain, highly excitable, exceedingly avaricious, and very much disinclined to work.

(2) Agriculture

(*a*) *Products*

The vegetation of Italian Somaliland may be characterized, in the main, as bush or tree steppe. Vast plains of grass, sometimes green and fresh in favoured spots but largely tough and dry, alternate with thick belts of low forest, usually consisting of trees of the mimosa or euphorbia variety, or of thorn-bush. Tall trees are rare: baobabs, tamarinds, dum-palms, and the wild fig, which grows in the neighbourhood of wells, may be mentioned. Along the rivers, particularly along the Juba, there is thick tropical forest (gallery forest), interrupted by grass-flats and cultivation. In the maritime region there is a thin vegetation of thorn-bush and salsolaceous shrubs.

Apart from the gum- and incense-producing plants that grow in the north of the colony, it does not appear that the commercial value of the flora of Somaliland is very great. Perhaps an exception should be made in favour of certain fibre-producing plants. The Somalis are familiar with a number of trees and shrubs the products of which can be utilized as food, as substitutes for fat, and as materials for dyeing, for arrow-poison,

and for other purposes. Italian scientists have noted wild cotton, certain rubber-producing trees, certain timber trees, and others, but the numbers and distribution of these are not known.

The northern part of the colony and much of the interior are lacking in water, and not suited for agriculture. In the north the inhabitants live mostly on the products of their flocks and herds, importing such grain as they require from Zanzibar, Aden, and the Benadir coast, in return for gums, skins, and ghi. The most valuable products of this region are gums (gum-arabic, myrrh, frankincense, &c.), which are found abundantly on the plateau of the interior. Such natural resources, however, are in many parts very imperfectly exploited. In the Sultanate of Obbia, for example, where trade is almost entirely in the hands of the Sultan and his family, skins are exported in return for cotton stuffs, but gum-arabic, myrrh, and the orchilla weed, in which the district abounds, are totally neglected.

Southern Somaliland is much more productive, possessing perennial streams and two considerable rivers—the Juba and the Webi Shebeli. The land on both sides of these is exceptionally fertile; and on the plateau between the two there is much good grazing ground. The chief crops grown are dura (a kind of millet), sesame, and maize. Bananas and mangoes are also cultivated, and it is said that tamarinds, kapok, cassia, and hard-wood might become commercially important. The Italian Government considers that there are good prospects for rice and cotton planting and for cattle-farming. Native cotton, which is not largely grown, is of poor quality, but experiments in the cultivation of Egyptian and American cotton have yielded good results. The rainfall is usually insufficient for successful cotton-growing, and

adequate irrigation from the rivers will be necessary if the industry is to prosper. A more serious difficulty is the shortage of labour. The depredations of locusts are a further handicap to agricultural development.

Cattle already exist in considerable numbers. It has recently been estimated that in Southern Somaliland alone there were 764,000 head of cattle, 305,000 camels, and 216,000 sheep. There are also large numbers of goats and some herds of semi-wild horses. Cattle plague is troublesome, but could no doubt be successfully dealt with, as in Eritrea. The tsetse fly is also found, but is as a rule confined to certain well-defined areas, especially those of rich vegetation near the rivers. With proper organization, it might be possible to establish a considerable export of frozen meat.

(*b*) *Water-supply*

The water-supply varies greatly in quantity in different parts of the colony. It depends on springs, wells, rain-pools, and rivers. The only rivers with permanent water are the Juba and Shebeli in the south. The others mostly have water only for a short period each year, and for the greater part of the colony the water-supply therefore comes from the subsoil, generally from wells found at the bottom of a depression or dug in a river-bed, but sometimes, e. g. in the Nogal valley, from surface springs. There is at present some doubt about the possibility of tapping fresh supplies. The water of the maritime plain is usually brackish, that of the interior plateau permanently hard owing to the presence of the sulphates of magnesium and calcium.

On the whole it appears that, at any rate in the south of the colony, there is sufficient water for irrigation schemes on a considerable scale. Near the large rivers irrigation is already practised to some extent.

(3) Minerals

Some attempt has been made to investigate the mineral resources of the colony. Notwithstanding the tradition of the existence of gold-bearing deposits in this part of Africa, no trace of such deposits has yet been found. Quicksilver has been reported to occur in the north; in the south an examination of the sands of the Juba and of the crystalline rocks in the region east of it has revealed the presence, in small quantities, of magnesite, titanate, and monazite. Near the coast there are large supplies of stone, granite, clay, &c., which would be available for the construction of harbour works and similar undertakings.

There are valuable salt pits near Hafun in the north, and salt appears to be found and sold at Lugh on the Juba and in other parts of the colony.

(4) Power

The rivers of Italian Somaliland could hardly be used as a source of water-power, the Shebeli having no falls and being so sluggish in its lower course that it is encumbered with marsh plants and never makes its way to the sea; while the Juba, which in normal times runs at no more than $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles per hour, has no falls as far as Bardera, though there is said to be a ledge of rock, over which the river falls, some hours above the rapids at Le Hele.

(C) COMMERCE

The value of the trade of Italian Somaliland increased from over £174,000 in 1889 (imports, £112,000; exports, £62,000) to £350,000 (imports, £286,000; exports, £64,000) in twelve months of 1914–15.

About 75 per cent. of the total exports consists of skins; and live-stock accounts for a large proportion of the remainder. Exports in 1914–15 showed a decrease of £20,000 from the figures for 1912–13.

The principal exports from the Mijjertein coast are gums and live-stock. In addition to these the Benadir coast exports agricultural products, especially dura.

The trade of the Mijjertein coast is principally with Aden. The Benadir coast maintains direct trade with Bombay, but deals mostly with Zanzibar and Aden. Native vessels ply between Benadir and the Mijjertein coast, which takes a great deal of the dura exported from Benadir. There is a considerable transit trade *via* Lugh and Bardera on the Juba, which is concerned chiefly with the products of big-game hunting.

Imports of Italian origin, mostly unbleached cotton goods, rose in value from £9,000 (1898) to £97,000 (1912–13) as the result of preferential tariffs.

(D) FINANCE

(1) Public Finance

The Somaliland budget for the year 1908–9 estimated a deficit of 1,935,000 lire. The estimate proved too optimistic, and it became necessary to vote, on April 1, 1909, a sum of 3,000,000 lire to balance the accounts. On March 20, 1910, the contribution of the State to the expenses of the colony and protectorate for the year 1909–10 was fixed at 2,862,000 lire; for the year 1910–11 at 2,979,000 lire. The expenditure of 1,286,000 lire for public works was also authorized.

The following estimates for the year 1912–13 are typical of a pre-war budget:

REVENUE.

Ordinary Revenue:	*Lire.*
Customs	530,000
Posts and Telegraphs	56,000
Various Taxes	45,000
Fines and Legal Dues, &c.	15,000
Divers Receipts	45,000
State Contribution	3,629,000
Extraordinary Revenue	2,611,000
	6,931,000[1]

EXPENDITURE.

Government and Civil Administration:	*Lire.*
Ordinary	1,499,400
Extraordinary	1,671,459
Military	2,896,700
Expenditure common to Civil and Military Administration	638,441
Special Expenditure for Northern Somaliland	225,000
	6,931,000[1]

(2) CURRENCY

A Royal Decree of December 1910 provided for the minting of silver coins of the values of 1, $\frac{1}{2}$, and $\frac{1}{4}$ rupee. The normal exchange value of the rupee is 1*s.* 4*d.*, one-fifteenth of a sovereign.

(E) GENERAL REMARKS

Little has yet been done to develop the country, but the Italian Government is taking active measures, and appears to have confidence in the commercial future of the colony.

State colonization in Somaliland aims at agricultural development by means of Italian capital and initiative. Concessions are governed by a Royal Decree dated June 3, 1909. Down to 1911 fourteen concessions, of

[1] Equivalent at pre-war rate of exchange to £277,240 sterling.

areas varying from 500 to 5,000 hectares, had been granted for tropical cultivation. The first, to Signor Carpanetti on behalf of the Italian Somaliland Cotton Company near Jumbo, is partly worked by Italian colonists. The lack of native labour, however, constitutes a grave problem. It arises from a number of causes—from the sparseness of the native population, the scanty needs and low standards of comfort of the Somalis, their laziness and special aversion from work on the land. Apart from the freedmen and escaped slaves there is scarcely any labour available, and the development of concessions held by Europeans would seem to be conditional upon the importation of labour.

Notwithstanding the grants of land in Benadir and of free loans, offered by Government for the cultivation of certain crops, no substantial progress has been achieved.

AUTHORITIES

Historical

Accademia dei Lincei. Cinquanta anni di storia italiana. Vol. ii, § v, *Colonie*, by Umberto Ademollo (with maps). Milan, 1911.

Annuario Statistico Italiano. Vols. for 1895, 1900, 1904, 1905–7, and *Seconda Serie*, Vols. 1–5, 1911–15. Rome, 1896–1916.

Bottego, Vittorio. *Il Giuba Esplorato.* (Società Geografica Italiana.) Rome, 1895.

Cecchi, A. *Da Zeila alla Frontiera del Caffa. Viaggio di Antonio Cecchi.* (Società Geografica Italiana.) 2 vols. Rome, 1886–7.

Relazione sulla Somalia Italiana. (Ministero delle Colonie.) Rome, 1912.

Tittoni, Tommaso. *Italy's Foreign and Colonial Policy.* Authorized English Translation by Baron Bernardo Quaranta di San Severino. London, 1914.

Vannutelli, L., and Citerni, C. *Seconda spedizione Bottego. L'Omo: viaggio nell' Africa Orientale.* Milan, 1899.

Economic

Bollettino della Reale Società Geografica Italiana. Rome, 1901 and *Serie* V, 1916.

Bollettino Ufficiale del Ministero delle Colonie. Rome, 1916.

Geographical Journal. London, January, 1916.

Globus. Vol. 84. Berlin, 1903.

L'Africa Italiana. Rome, 1913–16.

La Mano d'Opera nella Somalia Italiana. (Istituto Coloniale Italiano.) Rome, 1911.

Le Colonie al Parlamento Nazionale: relazioni e discorsi. (Istituto Coloniale Italiano.) Rome, 1909.

Martino, G. de. *La Somalia Italiana nei tre Anni del mio Governo.* Rome, 1912.

MARTINO, G. DE. *La Somalia nostra*. Bergamo, 1913.
Notizie sui Commerci della Somalia Italiana. Rome, 1912–13.
Rivista Coloniale. Organo dell' Istituto Coloniale Italiano. Rome, 1910–17.
Statesman's Year Book. London, 1913–18.
Sul Clima della Somalia Meridionale Italiana. Rome, 1913.
United Empire. Journal of the Royal Colonial Institute. London, 1911–17.

MAPS

Italian Somaliland is included in the War Office 'Sketch Map of Somaliland' (G.S.G.S. 1675 B), on the scale of 1 : 3,000,000 (1909); also, except for a small corner in the south, in G.S.G.S. 2924, 'Somaliland,' on the same scale (1907, corrections 1919).

It is covered by sheets 69, 80, 81, and 88 of the War Office Map of Africa, on the scale of 1 : 1,000,000 (G.S.G.S. 1539).

There is a large scale map of a portion of Somaliland: long. 45°–49° 30′ E., lat. 5°–12° N. (G.S.G.S. 1764) on the scale of 1 : 250,000 (old series, 20 sheets, 1905).

LONDON:

PUBLISHED BY H. M. STATIONERY OFFICE.

To be purchased through any Bookseller, or directly from
H. M. STATIONERY OFFICE at the following addresses :—
IMPERIAL HOUSE, KINGSWAY, LONDON, W.C. 2, and
28 ABINGDON STREET, LONDON, S.W. 1;
37 PETER STREET, MANCHESTER;
1 ST. ANDREW'S CRESCENT, CARDIFF;
23 FORTH STREET, EDINBURGH;
or from E. PONSONBY, LTD., 116 GRAFTON STREET, DUBLIN.

1920.

Price 1/- *net.*