

Europeans in East Africa

G Raghava Rao

THE Europeans in East Africa numbered just 44,052 in the Census of 1948, compared to the total population of 18.1 millions. Most of them are of British nationality, the rest being a sprinkling of Greek, French, Italian, German and others. Since whatever development has taken place in these parts can be attributed mainly to them, it would be interesting to study how the European population is distributed as also their classification by occupations. Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika are under British administration while the islands of Zanzibar and Pemba are ruled by an Arab Sultan on the advice of a British Resident, who is directly responsible to the British Colonial Office. Therefore the European residents belong largely to the ruling race. Even so, they had to overcome many difficulties in the early days of their settlement.

The European population of East Africa was distributed in 1948 as follows:

Kenya	..	29,660
Tanganyika	..	10,648
Uganda	..	3,448
Zanzibar and Pemba		296

A large part of Kenya has got a pleasant climate and vast stretches of extremely fertile land which was lying unoccupied at the end of the last century. These factors first attracted Europeans to Kenya. It was not so in Uganda, because a large part of it was unhealthy and there were no extensive and fertile lands unoccupied. Neither was Uganda rich in minerals. The European population in Zanzibar and Pemba has never been considerable.

Europeans began to settle in East Africa from the end of the 19th Century. In 1903 about 100 Europeans were residing in the vicinity of Nairobi. In 1913 there were about 900 European planters along the railway line from Tanga to Moshi. In the later half of the nineteenth century, European explorers like Mungo Park, Richard Burton, David Livingstone and Henry Stanley visited East Africa and travelled most of the sub-continent. They were followed by European Christian missionaries who brought the Gospel and the first

rudiments of Western civilization to the Africans, who did not at first take very kindly to them. Lt G Shergold, T O'Neill and Bishop Hannington lost their lives while trying to contact or convert the natives. In addition to evangelical work, Mr K Borup, an industrial missionary of the CMS, initiated Africans to the cultivation of cotton on a commercial scale. He popularised five varieties of cotton, Egyptian Mitafifi, American upland, American long staple upland, Black Peruvian and Peruvian Sea Island. At the same time, the European traders who formed themselves into the British Imperial East African Company and Deutsche Ostafrikanische Gesellschaft penetrated into the interior of the continent, after establishing trade on the coast of the Indian Ocean. But they were not quite successful. The British Imperial East African Company incurred very heavy losses and went into liquidation.

In 1885 Tanganyika came under the German Government. On 1st July 1895 the territory of Kenya and Uganda was brought under the British Crown. Without railway communications it was not possible to do much towards the economic development and commercial expansion of the East African countries. The European Governments, therefore, constructed railway lines from Mombasa to Kampala and Dar-es-Salaam to Mwanza. Prof S H Frankel has worked out the capital expenditure of the railways up to 1934 as £28 millions. Simultaneously with the railways, steamer service was started on many of the great lakes.

For meeting the heavy expenditure towards the running of the railways, it was necessary to develop agricultural and industrial production. Europeans who were adventurous and had foresight purchased millions of acres of fertile and virgin land in the highlands where the climate was pleasant. Farming, then, was far from the pleasant and profitable occupation that it is today or was, until recently. For many years, European farmers were worried on account of periodic attacks by locusts, crop pests and failure of rain. The agricultural development of Kenya Highlands

was due in a large measure to the energy and enterprise of men like Lord Delamere who acquired 100,000 acres near Njoro. Indeed, Lord Delamere was the main inspiration for a generation of settlers. The first year of his farming was a great disaster. He had no capital of his own and every penny he invested in Kenya was borrowed from abroad. "Equator Ranch," his estate, had cost him many thousands of pounds by the time he was convinced that it was suitable neither for sheep farming nor cattle raising, because livestock on the ranch fell an easy prey to the East Coast fever. Then Lord Delamere began to raise maize and wheat. Most of the settlers had naturally to run all the risks common to settlers everywhere and some more.

The German East African Company was the first to introduce sisal plants into East Africa in 1893. Nowadays sisal worth £16 millions is exported annually from East Africa. A year later, Rev Stuart Watt began to raise apples, apricots, plums and lemons on his farm. One John Boyes introduced in 1901 wattle seeds, the bark of whose trees is used nowadays to extract a tanning substance. In the same year Sand back Baker acquired a farm of 5000 acres near Nairobi and started manufacturing dairy butter. At the beginning of the present century French fathers introduced coffee plants into Kenya from Zanzibar. In 1928 Capt Gilbert Walker introduced pyrethrum plants. So, within half a century after the Europeans began to settle in Kenya, they have been able to produce enough wheat, maize, coffee, tea, milk and butter not only to meet the needs of East Africa but also to export large quantities of them. Much more cotton is grown in Uganda than is needed to clothe the population of East Africa. All this is now being exported but cotton spinning and weaving mills are due to be set up shortly.

Next to agriculture comes mining, a major portion of which is in the hands of Europeans. Except a few—there are Indian owners of gold mines, too—the gold mines are worked by Europeans, who have got the necessary capital and technical skill. Although a few

Indians hold shares in diamond mines, diamond mining is also entirely in the hands of the Europeans.

Manufacturing, processing or packing involving heavy capital investment, employment of large number of technicians, and elaborate organisation are owned and run by Europeans in the following industries- -fee r, wheat flour, meat, butter, leather, sisal twine, and furniture. Europeans also own printing presses; hotels and stores, and shops for selling motor cars, motor spare parts, and agricultural implements. Most of the wholesale trade with European countries is in their hands. Practically the entire officers' cadre in the Government is filled by Europeans.

The occupational distribution of the European population in Kenya, according to the Census of 1948, was as follows:

	Men	Women
Agricultural and stock raising	2948	367
Public Services, NCS	1686	595
Wholesale and retail trade	1005	589
Education, Religion, Art and Science	617	779
Civilians in defence service	401	158
Building Construction and Repairs	388	36
Rail Transport	227	37
Medical and Hygiene services	218	310
Finance Banks and Insurance	175	93
Provision of lodging, food and drinks	144	189
Manufacture of food	132	24
Production and supply of electricity, gas, heat and water	82	21
Manufacture of wood and cork	81	5
Printing, book binding and photography	75	30
Recreation, amusement and sports	73	18
Chemical industries	54	5
Manufacture of wearing apparel and make up of textile goods	20	42
Household and personal services	2	140

Of the European population in Kenya 67 per cent are of working age which is 15 to 59. Almost all the men and more than 40 per cent of women in this working age group

are actively engaged in some occupation or other. In non-European communities the proportion of those actively engaged is far lower than that among Europeans. Though belonging to the ruling race, some Europeans hold jobs which are by no means soft or dignified. The number of Europeans working as mechanics, fitters, repairers and engineers was given as 392, 122 were enumerated as salesmen and shop assistants, 51 as dock workers, 58 as electricians and skilled workers, 32 as stereotypers and printers, 30 as butchers and slaughterers, 18 as hairdressers, 15 as carpenters and sawyers, 7 as bricklayers and masons, 5 as boot and shoe makers and repairers, and 2 as tailors. Learned professions in which merit counts much have attracted more Europeans than non-Europeans. There are more Europeans than Indians among physicians, surgeons, dentists, dental mechanics, civil engineers, surveyors, mechanical engineers, electrical engineers, geologists, architects, chartered accountants, audi-

tors, chemists and artied clerks. The above occupational distribution shows that the Europeans who came to East Africa later than the Arabs and the Indians, contributed much to "agricultural development. This they could do because they were adventurous and had foresight and also because they had the government behind them. Nowadays the future of East Africa is engaging the attention of many. The Africans feel that their standard of living is extremely low, while that of the Europeans is inordinately high. They want more land. Their demands can be met if the Europeans leave some fertile and uncultivated land and concentrate hereafter on the development of mining, textile, chemical and other industries. During the last half a century they developed agricultural wealth and it is high time for them to develop industries for which task the Europeans are better equipped by their financial resources and natural bent of mind than others in East Africa,

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