

**EMPIRE COTTON GROWING
COMMITTEE. COTTON GROWING IN
NIGERIA: REPORT OF SIR
HECTOR DUFF TO THE COMMITTEE ON A
TOUR UNDERTAKEN IN NIGERIA,
FEBRUARY-JULY, 1921**

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SIR HECTOR DUFF

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EMPIRE COTTON GROWING COMMITTEE

COTTON GROWING IN NIGERIA

REPORT OF SIR HECTOR DUFF TO THE
COMMITTEE ON A TOUR UNDERTAKEN
IN NIGERIA, FEBRUARY—JULY, 1921

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CONTENTS

| | PAGE |
|--|------|
| INTRODUCTORY | 1 |
| PART I.—DESCRIPTIVE | |
| PHYSICAL FEATURES OF THE COUNTRY | 3 |
| AREA AND POPULATION | 5 |
| NATIVE TRIBES | 6 |
| DISTRIBUTION OF COTTON AREAS | 8 |
| COMMUNICATIONS | 9 |
| THE AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT | 13 |
| THE POLITICAL STAFF | 16 |
| THE NATIVE ADMINISTRATION | 17 |
| PART II.—CRITICAL AND CONSTRUCTIVE | |
| STRENGTHENING THE AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT | 20 |
| SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH | 25 |
| ESTIMATED COST OF NEW STAFF | 29 |
| FINANCIAL PROPOSALS | 31 |
| TRANSPORT | 32 |
| FIXED TRANSPORT | 32 |
| (a) ALTERNATIVE RAILWAY ROUTES | 35 |
| (b) WATERWAYS | 38 |
| FLEXIBLE TRANSPORT | 41 |
| (a) HUMAN TRANSPORT | 41 |
| (b) MOTOR TRANSPORT | 42 |
| (c) ROADRAILS | 47 |
| (d) ANIMAL TRANSPORT | 47 |
| GRADING OF COTTON | 49 |
| COTTON IN THE RAILWAY BELT | 53 |
| PIONEER WORK | 53 |
| GUARANTEED PRICES | 56 |
| AGRICULTURAL SHOWS | 58 |
| INSURANCE | 58 |
| CANTEN STORES | 58 |
| GINNERIES | 60 |
| TENURE OF LAND | 61 |
| MIDDLEMEN | 64 |
| COMPETING CROPS | 66 |
| NATIVE COTTON SPINNING AND MANUFACTURE | 68 |
| REPOPULATION OF CERTAIN AREAS | 72 |
| PART III.—MISCELLANEOUS | |
| WORK OF THE BRITISH COTTON GROWING ASSOCIATION | 74 |
| IMPERIAL ASPECTS OF THE COTTON INDUSTRY | 76 |
| CONCLUSION | 79 |
| APPENDICES | 80 |

COTTON GROWING IN NIGERIA

INTRODUCTORY

I LEFT Liverpool for Nigeria on the 9th of February, 1921, returning to England on the 25th of July after an absence of five and a half months.

During that time I travelled within the Colony and Protectorate for a total distance of about three thousand miles, halting for periods varying from a day to a week, according to their importance, at the places shown on the attached map (see Appendix I.).

In the course of these travels I met, in addition to the local representatives of the British Cotton Growing Association, practically all the principal officials of the Nigerian service, including the Governor (Sir Hugh Clifford, G.C.M.G.), the Chief Secretary (Mr. D. Cameron, C.M.G., now Acting Governor), the Lieutenant-Governors of the Northern and Southern Provinces, the Directors of Agriculture (Northern and Southern), the General Manager of the Nigerian Railway, the Director of Marine Transport, the Superintendent of Motor Transport, and many other departmental authorities, besides, of course, the Residents and District Officers of every province through which my route lay. At the same time I made a point of meeting the native chiefs of the various Emirates or other territories visited during my tour, including the Sarkin Musulmi (Sultan) of Sokoto, the Emirs of Kano, Zaria, Ilorin, Kontagora, Argungu, etc., the Headmen of Yelwa, Besse, Birnin-Kebbi, Rahama, and many others.

Before proceeding farther I wish to bring to the notice of the Committee the invaluable assistance which I received, before leaving England, from Sir Frederick Lugard, G.C.M.G., who so freely gave me the benefit of his advice as to the general outlines of my tour, and from Mr. W. H. Himbury, Manager of the British Cotton Growing Association, who went out of his way to help me by every means in his power; and I would take this opportunity also to express my cordial acknowledgments of the great kindness and consideration which I received from nearly everyone whom I met in Nigeria itself.

At the time of my arrival the Governor was engaged on a tour of the Northern Provinces prior to his departure for England on leave of absence, but he was obliging enough to meet me at Zaria, where I breakfasted with him on the train and had an opportunity

of explaining the scope and objects of my mission and of discussing some of the more important problems connected with it. These discussions were necessarily of a provisional and general character only, since I had then no practical acquaintance with local conditions, and was not in a position to formulate detailed proposals, but His Excellency evinced much interest in the whole subject of the Nigerian cotton industry, and was kind enough to say that he would be glad to meet me in London after the completion of my tour, and to give his careful consideration to any definite suggestions which might then be put forward.

In Sir Hugh Clifford's absence I received every possible assistance from the Acting Governor, Mr. Cameron, who readily placed at my disposal all the information for which I asked from time to time, and did everything in his power to help me. I am very specially indebted to Mr. Cameron's courtesy and likewise to his wide knowledge of Nigerian affairs, from which I derived the utmost assistance.

With this acknowledgment I should like to associate the expression of my sincere thanks to the other Government officers above mentioned, and also to Mr. J. Percival and the local staff of the British Cotton Growing Association, all of whom did their utmost to co-operate with me and to make my mission a success—in short, no one could have received more willing help than I did throughout my tour. If I lay special emphasis on this, it is because I feel that, in transactions of the kind which the Committee contemplates, it is of the first importance that the relations between its representatives and the local authorities should be founded in mutual confidence and good-will. I hope and think that one of the results of my tour has been to establish such a footing and to enlist a large measure of sympathy in Nigeria for the great work which the Committee has in view.

In drawing up this report I have aimed in the first place at giving some general idea of the country and its native inhabitants, the distribution of the most promising cotton centres, the existing system of communications and how far they serve these centres, the constitution of the Government with reference more particularly to those departments whose co-operation is of special importance to the Committee's objects, and after thus outlining broadly the conditions which obtain at the moment, I have endeavoured to indicate generally the lines on which it appears to me that existing facilities could be reinforced or new means of development introduced.

The first part of the report, which is mainly descriptive, probably goes over a good deal of ground with which the Committee is already familiar, but for the sake of continuity I have deemed it best to begin with a short summary of things as they are before attempting to deal with questions of constructive policy.