

## SETTLEMENT PROPOSALS

EUROPEAN colonization of the East Africa Protectorate was not a premeditated affair. It was but one of several settlement schemes which were haphazardly encouraged by the Foreign Office during the early years of the Protectorate. The Foreign Office gave equal consideration to proposals for Indian settlement, and even, for an embarrassing period, a Jewish colonization scheme.

The indecision of the Foreign Office was a reflection of the widespread doubts whether Europeans could settle permanently in the tropics. European colonization in the past had been confined almost exclusively to temperate latitudes. In 1884 Sir John Kirk, who had lived much of his life on the tropical East Africa coast, stated that he did not believe 'that a colony in the true sense of the term, where the white race can permanently exist and perpetuate itself, could be founded anywhere in Central Africa'.<sup>1</sup> Joseph Thomson, the first British explorer to cross the East African highlands, considered them unfit for European colonization.<sup>2</sup> As late as 1899 another explorer with much experience in tropical Africa, Sir Harry Johnston, excluded the highlands from his regions of 'Healthy Colonizable Africa', even though in 1884 he had recommended the establishment of a British colony on the slopes of Mt. Kilimanjaro.<sup>3</sup>

The Imperial British East Africa Company had little faith in European colonization. According to George Mackenzie, the Company looked to India, not Europe, for 'settling up'.<sup>4</sup> Company men in the interior had little to say about the possibilities of European colonization, except when they became publicists for the cause of Company and Empire. Holey did suggest in 1891 that, if ever the Company decided to promote European settlement, some of the Kamba country would be suitable.<sup>5</sup> But he was crossing the area during the rains and misleadingly compared it to the downs of southern England. Ainsworth did not make the same mistake.

1 Quoted by R. Coupland, *The Exploitation of East Africa, 1856-1890* (1939), p. 387.

2 'East Central Africa, and its commercial outlook', *Scottish Geographical Magazine*, II, 2 (February 1886), 76.

3 Sir Harry H. Johnston, *A History of the Colonization of Africa by Alien Races* (1899), pp. 274-75; R. Oliver, *Sir Harry Johnston and the Scramble for Africa* (1957), pp. 66-67.

4 F.O.C.P. 7867, no. 64, Mackenzie to Hill, 29 July 1901.

5 'Tana Diary', 23, 24 Sept. 1890, typescript, Secretarial Library, Nairobi.

In January 1896 he pointed out that there was 'not much room for European colonization, certainly not in Kikuyu, which is a small country, thickly populated'.<sup>6</sup> Hall had made similar observations.<sup>7</sup> Lugard, too, was struck by the density of Kikuyu cultivations when he arrived at Dagoretti in October 1890. Although he subsequently passed through unoccupied land in the highlands beyond the Kikuyu escarpment it did not occur to him, when writing up his diary, that this might be settled by Europeans.<sup>8</sup>

When it came to defending the Company, and urging the retention of Uganda and the construction of the railway, it was frequently said that the highlands were suitable for European settlers. Lugard himself, in his *Rise of Our East African Empire*, recommended settlement on the Mau plateau, though only on an experimental basis.<sup>9</sup> So did Portal,<sup>10</sup> but he was expected by Rosebery to justify the retention of Uganda. So too did McDermott,<sup>11</sup> the Company apologist, who was anxious to prove that his Company was receiving inadequate compensation for a valuable estate. Again, in the debates in Parliament, those who were in favour of retaining Uganda and building the railway argued that European settlement was possible, while those in opposition said that it was not.

The sole European settlement scheme attempted during the Company period was a ludicrous failure. This was the attempt of the Freeland Association to found a colony in 'the African Alps', near Mt. Kenya.<sup>12</sup> The association was founded in Austria in 1892 by Dr. Theodore Hertzka, a celebrated Viennese journalist. A socialist visionary, Hertzka intended to abolish private ownership of land, rents and wages. He proposed to grant land free to all members, who would become shareholders of a company, and to divide profits equally between the members. As Hertzka and his colleagues had little capital they turned from Europe to East Africa for cheap land.<sup>13</sup> Having established a branch of his associ-

6 F.O. 107751, Ainsworth to Hardinge, 10 Jan. 1896, in Hardinge to Salisbury 12 April 1896.

7 F.O.C.P. 6557, no. 175, Hall to Pigott, 19 March 1894.

8 *The Diaries of Lord Lugard*, ed. Margery Perham (1959), I, 316, *et seq.* which records his inwards journey through the highlands in October-November 1890; and III his return in July-August 1892. Even when he discussed the shortage of grain in the Rift Valley (III, 358) he considered this would have to be grown by Africans.

9 Vol. I (1893), p. 419.

10 *Reports relating to Uganda*, C. 7303 (1894), pp. 3-4.

11 P. L. McDermott, *British East Africa or I.R.A.*, 2nd ed. (1895), p. 403.

12 For a more detailed discussion on the Freelanders see R. Beachey, 'Freeland, a socialist experiment in East Africa, 1894', in *Makerere Journal*, 2 (1959), 36-38. I am grateful to Mr. A. T. Matson for information on the Freelanders.

13 F.O.C.P. 6538, no. 76, memo. by Gerard Lowther, Vienna, 26 Jan. 1894.

ation in England, Hertzka negotiated with the Company for permission to send a preliminary expedition to East Africa. The Company had already begun negotiations with the government for the surrender of its charter so the Foreign Office had to be consulted as well.

This proved a convenient excuse for frustrating the Freelanders, whose ideas did not inspire the confidence of the Company or Foreign Office and who were already suspected of attempting to further German territorial ambitions. Dr. Julius Wilhelm, an Austrian whom Hertzka sent to London to negotiate with the Foreign Office, was granted permission to lead an exploratory expedition to East Africa but he was given no assurance that the association would be granted land if a suitable site was found. The arms for his party were rigidly controlled and Ainsworth, at Machakos, was instructed neither to assist nor obstruct Wilhelm's recruitment of porters.<sup>14</sup>

The expedition landed at Lamu, near the Tana mouth, on 1 April 1894 and, despite bitter quarrels amongst the members, Wilhelm managed to send a preliminary expedition up the river.<sup>15</sup> In view of the fate of previous Company expeditions, it was not surprising that the expedition failed to find suitable land. Next, Wilhelm applied for land between Machakos and Kikuyu to form a small 'industrial' settlement. Hardinge, in referring this to the Foreign Office, suggested that Wilhelm and his party might give up and leave if they were sufficiently discouraged. Kimberley, the Foreign Secretary, agreed: the government, he said, would prefer to be rid of the Freelanders altogether.<sup>16</sup> This did not prove difficult. After a series of quarrels most of the party returned to Europe, disgruntled with the whole business. Early in 1895 Wilhelm followed them, complaining bitterly about Hardinge's 'passive resistance'.<sup>17</sup>

Although the Freelanders as a body were discouraged by the Foreign Office and the Company, they were still able to obtain land individually. Only two of them, the Englishmen Godfrey and Bosanquet, applied for land—500 acres on the Tana—but they did not stay to occupy it.<sup>18</sup> This was an indication that settle-

14 *Ibid.*, no. 67, memo. by Anderson, 25 Jan. 1894; no. 85, I.B.E.A. Co. to Pigott, 19 Jan. 1894, in I.B.E.A. Co. to F.O., 1 Feb. 1894.

15 F.O.C.P. 6557, no. 132, Cracknell to Kimberley, 31 April 1894. This enclosed a list of the party which was composed of 3 Englishmen, 4 Austrians, 3 Germans, a Belgian, a Dane, a Russian and a New Zealander.

16 F.O.C.P. 6557, no. 312, Hardinge to Kimberley, 29 May 1894; no. 344, Kimberley to Hardinge, 26 June 1894.

17 F.O.C.P. 6693, no. 231, Hardinge to Kimberley, 14 Feb. 1895.

18 F.O.C.P. 6661, no. 105, Kimberley to Hardinge, 13 Nov. 1894. Subsequently Godfrey became Assistant Collector at Ndi where he died in 1897.

ment in the interior was virtually impossible without adequate communications. Other Europeans who settled in the highlands before the arrival of the railway had an equally difficult time. Stuart Watt was the only European who settled permanently in the highlands before 1895. In 1896 four more settlers arrived under the leadership of Dr. D. Wallace, intending to settle near Fort Smith. Wallace and his brother soon returned to England, leaving the others, Dr. Boedeker and the blacksmith James McQueen, to fend for themselves. They lived a precarious existence, dependent on the administration for protection, employment and a market for their produce.<sup>19</sup>

It seemed more sensible to many of those concerned with East Africa to rely on Indian settlers. The Company considered introducing Indian peasant farmers, used the rupee currency and even obtained some Indian troops. The Foreign Office also looked to India—for troops, labour for the railway, subordinate clerical staff, for a legal code and legislation and, above all, for the extension of commerce into the interior.<sup>20</sup> By 1900 Nairobi, with its flourishing bazaar, was more of an Indian than a European township; and Indians soon penetrated into remote districts where, as Churchill put it, no European could earn a living.<sup>21</sup> It was much the same with market gardening: Indians who obtained small plots of land were able to undercut European farmers in the sale of fresh produce.<sup>22</sup>

The chief value of the Indian traders was that they developed trade with Africans and gradually introduced the use of the rupee currency. It was for this reason that Ainsworth in January 1896 promised to make every effort to encourage the settlement of Indian traders.<sup>23</sup> In 1899 he went one step further and suggested that Punjabi cultivators should be introduced to help improve Kamba agricultural methods: 'There would not be the same scope for European emigrants [sic] as there is for Indians . . . For a large number of Europeans the Country does not at present hold out sufficient inducements; naturally Europeans require to make more money than does a native of India.'<sup>24</sup>

19 F.O. 107/67, Wallace to Salisbury, 20 April 1896; F.O. 107/60, Crauford to Salisbury, 15 Aug. 1896; Hall Letters, Hall to Colonel Hall, 4 Dec. 1896. There was no other organized party though several other settlers arrived in 1899.

20 For a further discussion of Indian expansion inland see L. W. Hollingsworth, *The Asians of East Africa* (1960), pp. 47-59.

21 W. S. Churchill, *My African Journey* (1908), p. 63.

22 F.O. 2/723, memo. by Sir John Kirk, 13 April 1903.

23 F.O. 107/51, Ainsworth to Hardinge, 10 Jan. 1896, in Hardinge to Salisbury, 12 April 1896.

24 P.O. Mombasa, 75/47, Ainsworth to Crauford, 13 July 1899.

A more influential voice, that of Johnston, was also beginning to urge Indian in preference to European settlement. In his *Colonization of Africa by Alien Races*, published in 1899, Johnston held that East Africa was unsuitable for European settlement but that in time there would be 'a great overflow of India into these insufficiently inhabited, uncultivated parts of East Africa now ruled by Britain and Germany'.<sup>25</sup> Experience in East Africa did not at first cause Johnston to alter his views. From Uganda in October 1900 he reported that he was 'still as much in favour of this scheme as I ever was . . . There remain large tracts of the Eastern Province of Uganda which are, and will be for a long time to come, open to Indian immigration.' Johnston went on to recommend the establishment of Indian settlements at intervals along the full length of the railway. From these he expected Indians to spread out and establish centres for trade, stock raising and agriculture. He predicted that the Indian would be more welcome to Africans than the European 'who is apt to be too autocratic and unobliging in his methods of trading'.<sup>26</sup>

Sir John Kirk was another who advocated Indian settlement. Like Johnston, he referred to East Africa as 'India's America'.<sup>27</sup> As late as April 1903 he scoffed at the idea of white settlement in the highlands; the Indian market gardeners near Nairobi were much more efficient than the Europeans, and the 'most valuable colonist of the two'.<sup>28</sup> George Mackenzie, one of the leading figures in the Company, thought similarly. He advised Hill that 'for agricultural lands you will have to rely on native and Indian settlers'. Mackenzie suggested this after a discussion with A. M. Jeevanjee, a Khoja merchant who had made a small fortune from subcontracting for the railway and who was also anxious to settle Indians along the line. Mackenzie suggested the establishment of a series of villages, with land granted free for the first five years and then on a rental revalued every five years. 'What you want,' he added, 'is a series of decoy ducks, giving them liberal terms on which they can fatten. Once they were got to bring their families over you would soon find others ready to follow.' Mackenzie had no faith in European settlers: they could get better terms and more congenial surroundings in Australia and Canada.<sup>29</sup>

The railway officials, many of them with an Indian background,

25 p. 281.

26 F.O. 2/300, Johnston to Salisbury, 26 Oct. 1900.

27 Quoted by N. Leys, *Kenya* (1924), p. 77.

28 F.O. 2/723, memo. by Kirk, 13 April 1903.

29 F.O.C.P. 7867, nos. 64, 169, G. S. Mackenzie to Hill, 29 July, 13 Sept. 1901.

were also in favour of settling Indians along the line. Whitehouse, the chief engineer who had constructed railways in India, wanted to settle railway labourers around the Kikuyu, Limuru, Escarpment, Kedong and Naivasha stations, granting each settler up to five acres of land and special financial assistance for seeds, stock and implements. Three of his subordinate officials, Farquhar, Rogers and Donald, made similar proposals. Farquhar held that the railway zone between Nairobi and the Kikuyu escarpment, was suitable for Indians. Here much of the land was occupied by Kikuyu; but Farquhar recommended confining Indian settlement to the 'gaps' between Kikuyu cultivations. Rogers suggested experimental Indian settlements between Gilgil and Elmentsita, in the Rift Valley, and between Kibigoris and Kibos, in the low-lying Nyando Valley near the lake. Most of the railway labourers had returned to India on the expiry of their contracts but, as Donald pointed out, many of those still in East Africa were willing to settle if the government offered them special financial assistance and passages for their families.<sup>30</sup>

There was considerable support in the Foreign Office for this policy of Indian settlement. As Hill observed, the Foreign Office was 'rather looking to India for our East African system and for development'. He suggested asking the Treasury to provide £1,000 to assist the Indian settlers.<sup>31</sup>

Eliot, who had arrived in place of Hardinge early in 1901, and the few white settlers in Nairobi, had different ideas. In a dispatch of 5 January 1902, accompanying the proposals of the railway officials, Eliot recommended that Indian settlement should be confined to the lowlands. He had decided to reserve the highlands for Europeans: 'Believing as I do that the East Africa highlands are for the most part a white man's country . . . I doubt the expediency of settling large bodies of Indians in them, as even in Mombasa there is considerable friction between the European and Indian traders.'<sup>32</sup>

The day before Eliot wrote this dispatch he had been to a meeting called by the European settlers in Nairobi. Nineteen settlers were present; they resolved that the highlands were 'in every way suitable' for European colonization and called on Eliot to prevent the immigration of Indians. Eliot promised 'to promote and encourage the settlement of Europeans'. He assured those present that they

30 F.O. 2/569, enclosures 2, 3, 4, and 6 in Eliot to Lansdowne, 5 Jan. 1902.

31 *Ibid.*, minute on Eliot to Lansdowne, 5 Jan. 1902.

32 *Ibid.*

had no reason to fear the Indians: 'the cool grassy uplands, so attractive to the white man, were positively distasteful to the Hindu.' But he added that Indian settlers would be 'a good element' in the lower country near the lake and along the coastal strip—'warm, damp regions of great fertility, but at present little cultivated'. These assurances were not well received by the meeting which, Eliot observed, 'was very hostile to the Indian element'—but they pointed the way to the creation of the 'White Highlands'.<sup>33</sup>

The Foreign Office was unaware of the discriminatory implications of Eliot's proposals. Hill had thought it sufficient to encourage both Indian and European settlement, on the assumption that the two races could coexist without friction. He assumed that 'the objections to introducing Indian labour which are felt further south need not, perhaps, prevail with us'.<sup>34</sup> When the white settlers, some of them from the 'south', showed in their meeting of January 1902 that they did have strong objections to Indians, Hill was unconcerned.<sup>35</sup> Eliot's plan to segregate Indians from Europeans did not draw a comment from Hill or anyone else in the Office.

Eliot went ahead and established a special Indian settlement at Kibos, near the lake. Here twelve Indian labourers from the railway were granted plots of land varying in size from five to fifteen acres, and special financial assistance for seeds, stock and implements.<sup>36</sup> The settlement was a success. Later, other Indians were granted land at Kibos and along other parts of the line in the Nyando Valley.<sup>37</sup> On 28 August 1902, Frederick Jackson, Acting Commissioner for the East Africa Protectorate, issued a circular offering Indians land along other parts of the line, excluding the highlands between Kiu and Fort Ternan.<sup>38</sup> In May 1903 Eliot instructed his Land Officer, Barton Wright, not to grant rural land in the highlands to Indians.<sup>39</sup> In the townships they were still allowed commercial and residential sites and up to two acres of land for market gardening purposes. All this was a matter of administrative practice,

33 F.O. 2/805, Eliot to Lansdowne, 21 Jan. 1902, enclosing resolutions of Committee of Europeans, passed at meeting at Nairobi on 4 Jan. 1902. Besides the nineteen settlers, John Ainsworth and two Roman Catholic missionaries were present; eleven other settlers were represented by proxy.

34 F.O. 2/569, minute on Eliot to Lansdowne, 5 Jan. 1902.

35 The only comments on Eliot's dispatch of 21 Jan. 1902 were concerned with land regulations.

36 F.O. 2/712, Eliot to Lansdowne, 30 April 1903. In May, Hopley reported that four more Indians had settled and that eighty acres were under cultivation (F.O. 2/713, enclosure in Eliot to Lansdowne, 12 May 1903).

37 F.O. 2/716, Eliot to Lansdowne, 19 Oct. 1903, enclosing report from Waller.

38 C.O. 533/14, enclosure 3 in Sadler to Elgin, 21 May 1906.

39 *Ibid.*, enclosure 2 in Sadler to Elgin, 21 May 1906.

without legislative sanction.<sup>40</sup> It was the foundation stone for the edifice of the 'White Highlands'.

Having secured the highlands against Indians, the Nairobi Europeans were threatened by a totally unexpected settlement proposal. Moreover, the proposed new settlers were both white and European. They were Jewish refugees from eastern Europe, fleeing from pogroms in Russia and Rumania. They were sponsored by the Zionist organization and encouraged to apply for land in East Africa by Joseph Chamberlain, the Secretary of State for the Colonies. Because of the valuable Jewish investment in the Empire, particularly in the Rand mines, Chamberlain was anxious to conciliate the Zionists. On his visit to the East Africa Protectorate in December 1902, en route to South Africa, Chamberlain was struck by the suitability of the highlands for European settlement. When he returned to England Chamberlain offered the Zionists land in the highlands. Theodore Herzl, the Zionist leader, accepted the offer reluctantly, after an investigating commission had decided that land previously offered to the Zionists in the Sinai peninsula was unsuitable.<sup>41</sup> To Herzl and the Zionists, East Africa could be no more than an antechamber to the Holy Land.

The Zionists decided to make the most of the offer. Leopold Greenberg, Herzl's London representative, presented Chamberlain with a draft agreement which, if granted, would have created a Jewish self-governing colony. He suggested that settlement of Jewish immigrants should be managed by a Jewish colonial trust, with a capital of £2,000,000 and complete control over the selection, sale and leasing of land and mines. Greenberg also wanted a Jewish governor, and the power to legislate for 'internal administration', to levy taxes, to control immigration, and to appoint judges. Finally, Jewish religion and social customs were to be respected.<sup>42</sup>

These proposals were unacceptable to the Foreign Office. Greenberg then suggested that the Zionists would accept 'municipal government', so long as their religion and social customs were safeguarded.<sup>43</sup> The Foreign Secretary, Lord Lansdowne, decided that these proposals could be used as 'a basis for discussion' but

40 The subject is discussed more fully in ch. X below.

41 For Chamberlain's part in the scheme see J. Amery, *Life of Joseph Chamberlain* (1951), IV, 256-70.

42 F.O.C.P. 8192, no. 19, Greenberg to Chamberlain, 13 July 1903, enclosing 'Terms and Conditions of Concessions to be granted . . . to Jewish Colonial Trust.' This was drafted by Lloyd George. Chamberlain referred it to the Foreign Office.

43 F.O. 2/807, memo. by C. J. B. Hurst on meeting with Greenberg, 11 Aug. 1903.



only after he had consulted Eliot. He was, however, willing to allow the Zionists to send an investigating commission to the Protectorate. If the commission found suitable land, Lansdowne promised to 'entertain favourably' the proposals for a Jewish settlement.<sup>44</sup> Lansdowne had virtually committed the Foreign Office to grant land to the Zionists.

In August 1903 rumours of the Zionist scheme began to reach East Africa. The settlers, now increasing in number through migration from South Africa, reacted with a vigour that was equalled only by their opposition to Indian settlement. According to the *African Standard*, 'pulpit, public and press' were united in opposition to the Zionists.<sup>45</sup> W. G. Peel, the Bishop of Mombasa, preached a sermon which stressed that the Jews would not be concerned with 'lifting their heathen neighbours into the elements of Christian civilization' and claimed that they would 'use the [African] people to their fullest advantage'. Instead of Jews, the Bishop wanted 'Christian settlers . . . as living examples to the benighted Africans of the Christian life and Christian civilization'.<sup>46</sup> Dr. D. C. R. Scott of the Church of Scotland Mission supported Peel.<sup>47</sup> The Christian settlers met in solemn concord at Nairobi to protest against the 'threatened Jewish invasion' and formed an 'Anti-Zionist Immigration Committee' with Lord Delamere as its president.<sup>48</sup> Delamere cabled *The Times*, protesting that the Foreign Office proposed to 'give' the best land in the highlands to 'undesirable aliens', and hurriedly wrote a pamphlet on the subject.<sup>49</sup> The *African Standard* waged a scurrilous campaign against the Zionists. It claimed that the 'best portion' of the Protectorate had been 'coolly handed over' to the Zionists, and spoke of a bargain 'struck behind closed doors in Downing Street—or was it Lombard Street?' The *Standard* demanded the reservation of the highlands 'as the rallying-ground for a British settlement—[for] men of sinew, nerve, and knowledge'.<sup>50</sup>

Eliot handled the Jewish controversy in the same way as he

44 F.O.C.P. 8192, no. 95, F.O. to Greenberg, 14 Aug. 1903.

45 12 Sept. 1903.

46 F.O. 27716, enclosure in Eliot to Lansdowne, 10 Sept. 1903.

47 *African Standard*, 19 Sept. 1903.

48 *Ibid.*, 5 Sept. 1903.

49 E. Huxley, *White Man's Country*, 2nd ed. (1953), I, 121; Lord Delamere, *The Grant of Land to the Zionist Congress and Land Settlement in British East Africa* (1903).

50 29 Aug. 1903. After this date the *Standard* kept up a steady stream of invective, usually under such headings as 'Jewganda' or 'Jewdrops,' until the scheme was abandoned. On the other hand, the *East Africa and Uganda Mail*, a Mombasa weekly which was bitterly opposed to the *Standard*, supported the Zionist offer.

handled the Indian one. Unwilling to admit to anti-Semitism, he pointed out that since prejudice nevertheless existed among the settlers, the introduction of Jewish settlers would only lead to friction. Eliot did not want any pogroms in East Africa. If he had to take the Jews, he considered it would be preferable to locate them on the Uasin Gishu plateau, well away from the railway and the British settlers.<sup>51</sup> This plan of segregation, like Eliot's proposal to confine Indian settlers to the lowlands, was acceptable to the Foreign Office.<sup>52</sup> The Zionists were offered the Uasin Gishu plateau.

Eliot and the settlers had little real cause for anxiety. The Zionists were deeply divided over the whole scheme. The Foreign Office offer was debated at the Zionist Congress at Basle in August 1903. A young chemist, Chaim Weizmann, attacked the proposal as diverting the Zionists from their true objective—the national home in Palestine. Although supported by the Russian group within the movement, Weizmann failed to carry the Congress with him. Congress decided to send the investigating commission to East Africa.<sup>53</sup> Before the commission was dispatched the Foreign Office heard of the dissensions within the Zionist ranks. Weizmann had complained to the Foreign Office about the East Africa proposal.<sup>54</sup> It was discovered that Greenberg had no plans to assist Jewish immigrants: those who went to East Africa were to pay their own expenses.<sup>55</sup> Alfred Lyttelton, who had replaced Chamberlain at the Colonial Office, was opposed to the scheme.<sup>56</sup> Yet Greenberg refused to give up. After anxious delays he managed to send the commission in December 1904.

It was the report of the commission, received by the Colonial Office in June 1905, that put an end to the scheme. The commissioners had found the Uasin Gishu plateau totally unsuitable. There was considerable relief in the Colonial Office, now responsible for the Protectorate. Lyttelton considered the report 'very fortunate' and added that 'no opportunity should be spared of judiciously pouring cold water on this plan'.<sup>57</sup> This was unnecessary. The

51 F.O. 2/716, Eliot to Lansdowne, 4 Nov. 1903; F.O. 2/835, Eliot to Lansdowne, 24 March 1904.

52 F.O. 2/708, Lansdowne to Eliot, 15 Oct. 1903.

53 Hurley, I, 118-19; Amery, IV, 267.

54 F.O. 2/848, memos. by Hill and the Earl of Percy, Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, on conversation with Weizmann, 26 Aug. 1904.

55 F.O. 2/845, memo. by Barrington on interview with Greenberg, 5 Jan. 1904.

56 F.O.C.P. 8290, no. 189, C.O. to F.O., 27 Nov. 1903; Lyttelton considered some aspects of the scheme were 'open to grave objections'.

57 C.O. 533/10, Greenberg to C.O., 5 June 1905, and minute by Lyttelton. The minutes by the permanent officials were in a similar vein.

Zionist Congress met again in August, rejected the East African proposal by a large majority, and passed a motion urging the establishment of an autonomous Jewish state in Palestine.<sup>58</sup> The way was now clear for British and South African colonization of the highlands.

Since the turn of the century, European settlement in the highlands had been urged with increasing confidence. Johnston changed his mind about European settlement as a result of his experience in Uganda between 1899 and 1901. When he arrived in the highlands in October 1899 he was still doubtful: he suggested dividing the unoccupied land in the highlands between 'European, Indian or negro settlers'.<sup>59</sup> By April 1900 he was convinced that the highlands were 'absolutely healthy country—as healthy for Europeans as the best parts of North and South Africa'.<sup>60</sup> Johnston was anxious to persuade the Foreign Office to accept his proposal for the amalgamation of the two protectorates, with a capital on the Mau plateau. The capital was also to act as a sanatorium for officials. He had just recovered from his fourth attack of blackwater fever and was thinking in terms of the health of government officials, not colonization. As late as January 1901 Johnston was suggesting it was still 'unwise to give active encouragement to the immigration of European settlers into the Uganda Protectorate'.<sup>61</sup> It was not until July 1901, after he had left Uganda, that Johnston came out firmly in favour of European settlement in the highlands.<sup>62</sup> By 1904 Johnston, like Eliot, was recommending segregation or, as he called it, partition: the unoccupied land in the highlands for Europeans, unoccupied land elsewhere for Indians, and the rest for Africans.<sup>63</sup>

Eliot's role was more crucial. He was appointed Hardinge's successor in 1900, at the age of thirty-seven and after a brilliant academic and diplomatic career. Like Johnston he doubted at first whether European settlement in the highlands was possible.<sup>64</sup> By May 1901 he had visited the interior and had received 'a favourable impression' on the prospects for European settlement.<sup>65</sup>

58 C.O. 533/8, F.O. to C.O., 14 Aug. 1905, enclosing report by Lord Acton on Basle Congress.

59 F.O. 2/204, Johnston to Salisbury, 13 Oct. 1899.

60 *Preliminary Report by Her Majesty's Special Commissioner on the Protectorate of Uganda*, Cd. 256 (1900), p. 2.

61 F.O. 2/461, J. P. Cunningham to Lansdowne, 14 Jan. 1901. Cunningham was Johnston's private secretary, writing on Johnston's instructions.

62 Cd. 671, p. 9.

63 'The White Man's Place in Africa,' *Nineteenth Century and After*, no. 328, (June 1904), p. 946.

64 *Report on the East Africa Protectorate*, Cd. 1626 (1903), p. 29.

65 F.O. 2/447, Eliot to Cranborne, private, 15 May 1901.

By June, when he wrote his first annual report, he was certain: the highlands, he said, were 'pre-eminently a white man's country'.<sup>66</sup> Once he had convinced himself of the wisdom of white settlement, Eliot pursued his goal with almost fanatical zeal. He devoted his considerable intellectual ability to arguing the cause of European settlers against the Indian and Jewish proposals; and to contradicting the belief that European settlement was not possible in this part of the tropics. He assumed the role of an immigration agent, publicizing the virtues of the Protectorate in an endeavour to divert British settlers from Canada and Australasia. He became the prophet of a new white colony which he thought would ultimately become self-governing, like the older colonies of the Empire.<sup>67</sup>

In this, Eliot was aided and abetted by white settlers already in the Protectorate. Though scarcely more than thirty had arrived at Nairobi by the beginning of 1902, they were able to form an association to promote European colonization—and to discourage Indian, and later Jewish, colonization.<sup>68</sup> These pioneers also saw themselves as founding a white man's country and, like British colonists elsewhere, expected to obtain self-government. Their most influential spokesman was Hugh Cholmondeley, the third Baron Delamere, who decided to settle permanently in the highlands in 1903. Delamere was already familiar with the country, having trekked into the highlands from the north in 1897, in the course of a shooting expedition, and revisited them in 1899. When he returned to the Protectorate in January 1903, Eliot offered him a position in the administration, as a sub-commissioner specially charged with the management of land settlement. Delamere refused the post and became a settler himself. He was granted 100,000 acres of land in the Rift Valley. With this stake in the future of the country, he was soon to rank with Eliot as a founding father of the European colony in the highlands.<sup>69</sup>

Eliot and Delamere encouraged and gave direction to the developments that were already taking place as a result of the construction of the railway. Once completed as far as Nairobi, the railway acted as a magnet attracting European concession hunters, merchants, farmers, sportsmen and adventurers to the highlands. Nairobi, originally a railway camp and quickly becoming an Indian commercial centre, became also a European frontier town and the

66 Cd. 769, p. 8.

67 See below, ch. IV.

68 F.O. 2/805, Eliot to Lansdowne, 21 Jan. 1902.

69 Delamere's role as the settler leader is discussed in Mrs. Hurley's biography, *White Man's Country*.

starting point for the expansion of European settlement westwards.

Yet despite all the publicity about the suitability of the highlands for European settlement and the attempts to exclude Indians, there was, by the end of 1902, no substantial body of European settlers in the highlands. Nor had any attempt been made since the fiasco of the Freelanders, to organize a special settlement of Europeans. Chamberlain's invitation to the Zionists was partly a response to the need to attract settlers. It proved unsuitable for the Zionists and unacceptable to the European settlers already in the Protectorate. Almost in desperation Eliot turned to South Africa in October 1903. The South African 'invasion' that followed 'saved' the highlands for the Europeans and proved of fundamental importance in the history of land settlement in the East Africa Protectorate.