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# Is Germany Unworthy of Possessing Colonies?

Approbation of German colonial activity by our enemies.

#### 1. Out of what wood are the German colonists hewn?

But I was not as well prepared for the corresponding and equally interesting types among the Germans, the planters, the civil afficials, the officers who had commanded, or were about to command, white or native troops; men of evident power and energy, seeing whom made it easy to understand why German East Africa has thriven apace. They are firstclass men these English and Germans; both are doing in East Africa a work of worth to the whole world; there is ample room for both, and no possible cause for any but a thoroughly friendly rivalry; and is it earnestly to be wished, in the interest of both of them, and of outsiders too, that their relations will grow, as they ought to grow, steadily better and not only in East Africa but everywhere else.

Theodore Roosevelt: African Game Trails, Scribner's Magazine 46 Nr. 4 Oktober 1909. P. 388 9.

Such Germans as we had anything to do with were awfully good chaps. They are all planters, settlers, merchants etc. and have lots of English friends, and treated such of our wounded as they got hold of very well. The German hospital doctors looked after all our white wounded, thus relieving our men to look after the natives. Certainly in this show they are behaving in quite a courteous way. I suppose it's partly because we've both got coloured troops, and they felt they have to live up to the white man's standard, but also, I fancy, the Colonial Germans are a great improvement on the home product. (Morning Post)

Colonial Germans: The Beira Post vom 15. Januar 1915.

Unfortunately, as amongst some officials of the East Africa Company and administration, so among a few of the Government servants in the Cameroons, there were instances of great cruelties committed between 1887 and 1896, cruelties which led to a serious revolt among the negro soldiery. (1895).

Germany wisely did not hush up these affairs, but investigated them in an open court and punished the guilty. It will be seen, I fancy, when history takes a review of the foundation of these African states, that the unmixed Teuton-Dutchman or German is on first contact with subject races apt to be harsh and even brutal, but that he is no fool and wins the respect of the negro or the Asiatic, who admire rude strength; while his own good nature in time induces a softening of manners when the native has ceased to rebel

and begun to submit. There is this that is hopeful and wholesome about the Germans. They are quick to realise their own defects, and equally quick to amend them. As in commerce so in Government, they observe, learn and master the best principles. The politician would be very shortsighted who underrated the greatness of the German character, or reckoned on the evanescence of German dominion in strange lands.

Sir Harry H. Johnston: A History of the Colonisation of Africa by Alien Races. New Edition, Cambridge, University Press 1913.

The ability of German officers in Kamerun and East Africa to command the loyalty of their native troops and the cooperation of the inhabitants of these two colonies is a big surprise to France and Great Britain, and disproves the thesis that the natives of the portions of Africa over which Germany ruled were eager to welcome British and French liberators.

Herbert Adams Gibbons: The new map of Africa (1900-1916).

The Century Co. 1916.

It has been stated that the preference for British rule is less strongly stated in German East Africa than in other liberated colonies. The Administrator states that it was an error to assume that from the outbreak of war the natives as a whole eagerly looked forward to deliverance.

There is one element, which may prove to be a distinct danger — viz., the German native soldier, unfailing loyalty to the German cause ist noted.

"Future of German Colonies." (The Times Nr. 41971, 12. December 1918),

Without any trumpet-blasts and without the noisy assistance of the press-agents the Germans educate young Africa according to their notions and they take great pains in doing it. I have closely observed the Germans in their intercourse with their half-civilised charges on the West-Coast. Administration and government are to a great extent a question of temperament on the Black Continent, and as far as appearance goes, the Germans give way much less easily to temper and irritation than other white people. I have observed all the white races in their endeavours to rouse Africa and cannot shut my eyes to the conviction that the German "native" will improve just as much, if not more than all the other.

E. R. Forbes in: American Review of Reviews 1911.
(Retranslated from: Deutsche Post in Afrika — Korrespondenz Nr. 1427. 30, Oktober 1918).

There ist not the remotest possibility of the tribes rebelling against the pacific and enlightened rule of the German administrators in German East Afrisa, who are generally university men possessing high qualifications for such delicate and responsible appointments.

"The Cape Times and British Central Afrika." (Central African Times (Blantyre) v. 4. Febr. 1905. S. 5.)

Germany leads the world in education, taking the word as meaning mainly cultivation of the intellectual powers. It is therefore perhaps hardly surprising that her colonial education should be good. . . . . . . .

What is evident is, that in education of the better class of Colonists Germany is ahead of all countries, as she always is in matters educationel. . . . . . As far as Colonial education of the better-class emigrant goes — i. e. the official, the military man, and scientist — Germany has a complete apparatus. She has the education, and not the Colonies; we have the Colonies and not the education.

Let us admit that the Germans have stolen a march on us, and let us take the hint. . . . . Louis Hamilton: "Colonial Education in Germany" in United Empire, 1911.

# 2. How do the Germans treat the natives in their colonies?

They have not been overmindful of native rights to land, but in a general way have treated the natives no worse and in some respects better than other European Powers who are attempting African colonisation and development. If German East Africa passes under another flag or other flags, it will not be punishment for any great fault that Germany has

committed in administration or equity, and certainly not for any lack of scientific research. There has been no talent hidden in a napkin. If the Germans lose German East Africa, it will be not because of any crime in Africa.

Harry Johnston: German East Africa (Windsor Magazin, March 1916), London.

The Local authorities of German East Africa were commendably active in alleviating the distress in their respective districts. Doctors were sent out; relief works were opened; the starving were fed, and large quantities of seed were distributed to replenish the devastated fields. —

In fact, the natives appear to the casual observer to be remarkably contented with the administration of the Protecting Power.

Vice-Consul Douglas Young: Diplomatic and Consular Reports 1907/08.

It is a **mistake**, however, to conclude, as is often done, that natives are ruled in German colonies as though they were all **recruits on a barrack square**. Nothing of the kind. The report of Dr. Solf's speech shows German colonial administration to be inspired by similar ideas which now direct English policy in East- and West-Africa, and which have spelt conspicuous success in those regions of the dark Continent.

"German Colonial Administration." (The African World, March 15, 1913.)

The policy now obtaining in the German Colonies, to treat the natives with kindness and consideration, has done much to add to security of life and general contentment; this satisfactory state of affairs would not be of long duration if the native population had not been taught the very salutary lesson that crime and disorder are promptly put down with a firm hand which, if necessary, is stretched out to remotest districts.

L. Hamilton: "The German Colonies" 1910/11 in: "United Empire, 1912.

Contrary to what has been frequently asserted during these past two years, public opinion in Germany, as we have already seen in the matter of the putting down of the Herero rebellion in Southwest Africa, has been very much alive to the responsibility of Germany toward her native wards. One has only to read the newspapers and reviews, and to look over book lists, and to go through parliamentary debates during the past fifteen years, to realize that only in Great Britain, among all the European colonizing Powers, has there been manifested as much humanitarianism and idealism as in Germany with regard to the establishment and maintenance of a just and enlightened colonial régime. At this moment, it is exceedingly important that this statement be made by one who cannot be suspected of sympathizing with Germany in the present war or of trying to plead the German cause. The truth is the truth. Only on the truth can the future be built. In France, in Belgium, in Portugal, in Italy, in Russia one looks in vain to find so wide-spread and so important a championing of the cause of native races as one finds in Germany.

Herbert Adams Gibbons: The new map of Africa (1900-1916).

## 3. What do the Germans do for the coloured people in their colonies?

That the Germans accomplished in educating the natives in preventive medicine, and in caring for their personal and communal health and cleanliness, is marvellous. . . . . .

The fight against malaria, yellow fever, sleeping sickness, skin diseases, and tuberculosis, was carried on with unremitting vigilance and enthusiasm. The greatest success was in vaccination. Smallpox is the most dreaded scourge of the country. The German propaganda made the native so alive to the value of vaccination that they came and asked for it and many paramount chiefs established compulsory vaccination by law. . . . . . .

Herbert Adams Gibbons: "The new map of Africa" (1900-1916).

These native-quarters lie to the back of the town, and afford a convincing example of the thoroughness of the German system and of the seriousness with which they regard their work of colonisation. The streets are neat and tidily laid out, and immaculately clean. Each native house has a galvanised iron tub with a lid, to hold the domestic refuse; and this in Africa! One might as well have been in an English town under the rule of a too-zealous sanitary authority.

R. S. & M. E. Meikle: After Big Game London o. J. S. 78.

The Government of German East Africa has espoused the cause of the native, and while prepared to render every possible assistance to the planter in facilitating the recruiting, transport and supply of labour, is determined not to countenance compulsion in any shape or form.

Vice-Consul Douglas Young: Diplomatic and Consular Reports for the year 1907-1908.

The advantages of the German tax-system compared to the Congolese — Baccari observes — are in point of moral incalculable. The burden of taxes are more equally distributed, the native is more liberty given to dispose of the results of his labour and his lands . . . .

The German system besides necessitates the circulation of money and through that develops in the native a love for money, which is a spur to work for every man.

Bourbon del Monte Santa Maria: L'Africa Orientale Tedesca. S. 381 382.

.... With the missionaries, the colonial governments have developed education to quite an astonishing extent. The number of native children attending schools is rapidly on the increase, and this is chiefly due to the peaceful and harmonious manner in which the missions and the administration have supported one another's effort.

L. Hamilton: "The German Colonies", 1911/12 in "United Empire 1913."

#### 4. How do the Germans educate the natives in their colonies?

It is likely to turn out German East Africa in course of time a flourishing tropical settlement; not a country which Germans could colonise as Australia or Canada has been made colonizable, but a Ceylon, a Java, a Southern India, where the German planter may make a competence, where the goods of Germany may find unrestricted markets, and where the Teuton may educate and raise into higher state of civilization a vigorous negro people. - Harry H. Johnston: "A History of the Colonisation of Africa by Alien Races, Cambridge 1913."

All the larger coast towns possess a well-equipped native school under the charge of a qualified German teacher. Swahelis, Arabs, Indians, and in fact all coloured races learn side by side, and no distinction is made between them. . . . . . . .

The succes with which these schools have met seems little short of marvellous when one considers the nature of the raw-material. Not only in Dar-es-Salaam but at other administrative centres native boys are employed in Government offices and in commercial houses as junior clerks and typists, and the sight of these native Africans, seated at type-writers and typing German from manuscript, is one not readily forgotten by the stranger.

The suggestion that education "spoils the natives as labourers" is also manifestly absurd, for comparatively few pupils at present selected originate in the non-labouring classes. Further, the whole bearing and manner towards Europeans of the natives in the coast towns of German East Africa, and wherever German influence has penetrated, are markedly deferential without being subservient.

There are seven missionary societies in German East Africa, possessing about 30 schools, in which the German language is taught. The society of St. Benedict and the Congregation of the White Fathers appears to be the most widely established. . . . . . . . . . . . .

Vice-Consul Douglas Young: Diplomatic and Consular Reports for the year 1907/08.

Aside from what they accomplished in the matter of sanitation and the spread of the knowledge of preventive medicine, the most remarkable achievement of the Germans in West Africa was their school system. Although Kamerun has hardly more than half the area of its neighbour, Nigeria, and one-seventh of the population, its Government and assisted schools in 1913 were proportionately better attended than those of the British Protectorate. Similarly, Togoland has better school opportunities than its French and British neighbours. In 1910, Kamerun made school attendance obligatory for children of both sexes. There was plenty of zeal and pedagogical ability, and a very earnest desire to lift the natives to a higher level, morally as well as materially.

Herbert Adams Gibbons: The new map of Africa (1900-1916).

Even if slave trade is to be condemned because of its many cruelties connected with it, that form of slavery as it still exists in East Africa is absolutely innocuous. Here the slave is a member of his master's family which gives him food and home and looks after him in sickness and age. The whole institution is so intimately linked to the customs and usages of the country that it cannot be considered as degrading to the natives who thrive much better under compulsory work. And the amount of work which the master desires from his slave is so small that one can safely say, servants in civilised countries enjoy far less liberty. The cruelties of the time of the Arabs disappeared entirely partly through the work of the Missions, partly through coming in contact with the white elements which came into the country. If today a slave-owner is denounced for illtreatment of a slave, he is without further ceremony forced to set him at liberty. . . . .

Each slave has the right to buy his freedom provided he pays the compensation fixed by the authorities.

A slaveowner cannot sell a slave without permission of the authorities and consent of the slave.

Bourbon del Monte Santa Maria: L'Africa Orientale Tedesca, Vol. 2. S. 267 69.

## 5. Have the Germans succeeded in making their colonies prosper?

Togo, Cameroon, German South West and East Africa were flourishing. Their trade in 1913—1914 reached the sum of 278 Million Francs. 357 German Limited Companies worked in the colonies with a capital of 506250000 Francs. 4400 km Railway lines had been constructed and Milliards sown into the African soil.

La Dépëche Coloniale Nr. 6143 v. 6. Okt. 1916. (Aus: L'Effart Colonial Allemand).

Germany has outstripped other colonizing powers in Africa in four things, all of which are strikingly illustrated in the little colony of Togoland: roadbuilding for cooperation with railways and transport; accommodation for travellars in the interior; scientific forestry; and supervision of public health. . . . .

None accuses Germany of not having got the most, from the European standpoint, out of the colonies she possessed in Africa. . . . . . .

Herbert Adams Gibbons: The new map of Africa (1900-1916).

What have the Germans done since then? They have built a railway some seven hundred and fifty miles long from Dar-es-Salaam to Tanganyika, . . . . . from Tanga — two hundred and eighteen miles — in the direction of Kilimanjaro. They have cleared and constructed a number of routes suited to motor traffic. They have founded several European towns and settlements and a number of native centres of habitation. They have to a great extent put down brigandage and slavery. They have developed agriculture considerably, and in a general way have **improved the status and increased the principles of the native population.** Their missionaries have done educational work similar to that of the British and French missionaries in the same region.

Harry Johnston: German East Africa (Windsor Magazin, March 1916), London.

Whatever may be the outcome of the war, there is no doubt that Germany had a future before her in East-Africa, of that Dar-es-Salaam is eloquent testimony. Her administration was efficient; the zeal for health and sanitation admirable; her pursuit of scientific research energetic. Germans build well, make good roads, maintain law and order, and are energetic to recognise and to utilise all the possibilities of the country.

The roads are admirably made, and form another striking testimony to German thoroughness. Indeed one cannot help wondering how they managed to achieve so much in so short a time, contrasting their business-like methods and patient industry with the more deliberate methods of Englishmen in the tropics.

R. S. & M. E. Meikle: After Big Game London o. J. S. 81/82

German East Africa is fertile and very well administered, both from a municipal and rural point of view.

Economically the German authorities have been more enterprising than our own in the introduction and acclimatisation of new plants.

Both as regards Ceara rubber and Sisal hemp they were years in advance of ourselves, and are now (1912) exporting large quantities of produce whilst our own plantations are maturing.

The Guide to South and East Africa, London 1914.

There have been **no half-measures in German East Africa**, nor has money been stinted. The possibilities of the country have been considered, and exploited thoroughly and **on commercial lines**. Where experiment has proved this or that industry or product not a commercial succes, it has been ruthlessly abandoned, the loss cut, and a fresh experiment made. Where first results have been promising everything has been done to improve and extend.

Organized science, too, has been amply provided for the planter in German East Africa. It would be difficult to exaggerate the beauties and charm of Amani — the Kew Gardens of that colony. Here every form of rubber tree and vine, every kind of fibre plant, all sorts of tropical fruits, cereals forest trees, and useful crops were being grown experimentally, scientifically, and with a strict view to commercial advantage. A staff of professors, keen botanists and chemists, who knew their subjects through and through, where installed there and a well-served hostel was established for the inquiring planter, who could spend his days in gathering all the information his hosts were most anxious to give him on the subject in which he was interested.

"The East African Colonies." The Times Nr. 41175 vom 24. Mai 1916.

Although it is difficult to restrain all expression of enthusiam at the great strides already made in the development of German East Africa, any attempt to predict the future of the country would be peculiarly rash at the present moment.

Vice-Consul Douglas Young: Diplomatic and Consular Reports for the year 1907/08.

Those who have visited any of the German colonial possessions must have been impressed by the admirable public buildings erected in the principal towns, and by the contrast these towns present when compared with those of neighbouring British colonies. The writer has visited Swakopmund, Dar-es-Salaam, and Tanga and was specially struck by the fine public buildings and the order and cleanliness that existed.

Evans Lewin: The Germans and Africa. London 1915.

Southwest Africa, with its forbidding harborless coast and its poor terrirory, illustrates the indomitable spirit of men who made the very best of the worst possible circumstances, and created a self-supporting colony in spite of adverse political, geographical, economic and financial conditions.

Herbert Adams Gibbons: "The new map of Africa (1900-1916),"

Considering that the Germans are in possession of their colonies only 30 years, while England occupies her oversea possessions for at least a century, the progress of German Southwestafrica is by no means to be underated. I know the country for mor than 30 years and prophesy to it a similar future to that of British Kaffraria, which was also colonised by German immigrants.

Germany must only give up her hopeless beginning to want to cultivate the natives; who belong to the lowest type of human races. In my opinion the Hereros aught to be pensioned and set aside on reservations, following the Australian example. Only through the settlement of white men can one hope that the colony will prosper.

Mr. Samuel im "Observer" (Retranslated from Weser-Zeitung v. 17, Oct. 1911.

The German administration in Oceana succeeded to suppress the continuous petty wars which the main tribes of the archipelago carried on. When the present Governor Dr. Solf arrived nearly ten years ago he found the natives armed to the teeth and persuaded that they had vanquished all Europeans. By his skillful politics it was possible to disarm them to a great extent in a peaceful way and gain their confidence.

Martin: Possessions allemandes (Quinzaine Coloniale, le 10. Mai 1909. S. 330.)

In reference to the other African — and indeed Pacific — Colonies it is but fair to point out that the presence of but a small white population is not a singn that the Colony is unprosperous. Let any one with a turn for figures compare the proportion of English residents in India to the native population with the number of white imhabitants in any tropical African Colony (French, German or English) and he will find that the proportion of white settlers in Africa is infinately greater then in the case in India. . . . . . . In what Germany has undertaken in her Colonies has she been successful? Five years ago it would have

been difficult to answer that question. To-day "yes" is the only answer an honest objective observer can give. To the question "What is the future likely to bring?" there seems but one reasonable answer. If German colonial politicians continue along the determined line they have hitherto followed, never allowing themselves to be disheartened by defeat, or turned from their purpose, it will bring what she needs — a Settlement Colony"

L. Hamilton: "German Colonial Policy" in "United Empire" 1913.

But the most remarkable of all is the port of Tsingtau, a truly European port, the like neister Yokohama nor Shanghai can boast of, where the largest boats are able to go alongside a jetty of more than 2 km. in length. A mole of more than 4 km. extension protects the port from getting swamped with sand. There are to be found wharves, dry and floating docks which can take vessals of 16000 tons, of this no parallel can be found in the whole Far East. The costs of the dock and work for the harbour averaged anually 4 Million Marks.

Camille Martin: Colonies étranger et pays d'influence. Possessions allemands. (Quinzaine Colonial No. 9. 1908.)

For the rest, old colonising nation that we are — using the word colonising in its modern sense — we have not learnt all our lessons yet. We can learn much from what Germany is doing quietly and unostentatiously in China. Her introduction of order, health, system, education, and afforestation are respect-compelling factors which speak eloquently to awakening China of a country which to her is a new world-power risen out of obscurity. She no longer looks upon Kiaochau as thorn in her side, but as a sound spot, from which the health-giving example of Occidental civilisation radiates through the Celestial Empire.

"The German Colony in China" (United Empire Vol. 3. 1912. S. 717).

### 6. Are the Germans better or worse than other colonising nations?

Blind selfishness does not characterize the German, as some would have us believe, for if he acquires a colony, he invites all, German or Englishmen, Portuguese or Frenchmen, to bring their capital and trade. In the whole of the West African colonies the merchant is nowhere more warmly encouraged than in German Togoland and Cameroons, where Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity is the motto of the ruling power.

In Duala I was informed by an English merchant that the Governor calls officials, merchants, and missionaries into consultation twice a year. Imagine the English Governor of Sierra Leone, the Goldcoast, or Southern Nigeria taking so radical a step, and moreover, inviting Germans to confer with him! What questions would be asked in the House of Commons!

The Times: Finance und Commerce v. 13. Jan. 1913.

Of all the "protectors," in Africa the German has the cleanest hands and the best prospects. His invasion of Africa was characterised through artful diplomacy, but even his worst enemy can hardly maintain that he has not dealt fairly. Courteousness and affability were the key to the German conquest of the West-African Seas. Once the flag of Liverpool ruled supreme. Today the German flag is seen as often as the English one on the high seas. But if you come to an independent harbour as f. i. Monrovia, you will nearly always see two German flags for every Union Jack. Germany needs the commerce of Africa and she will get it wherever competition is free and chances are equal.

E. R. Forbes in: American Review of Reviews 1911. (Refranslated from: Deutsche Post in Afrika — Korrespondenz Nr. 1427. 30. Oktober 1918.)

"What can we learn?" is the last question on the list. We can learn from German colonial policy that colonial education is not a quantité négligeable. Theory cannot stand alone, nor can practice. . . . . . . Behind the busy German abroad and in his Colonies stands the unobtrusive student in his laboratory, before his maps, in his library, in the lecturehall. How colonial education is organised and works in Germany has been pointed out by the present writer in a former number of "United Empire".

L. Hamilton: "The German Colonies", 1911-1912 in "United Empire" 1913.

"The most outstanding feature of the German administration is without doubt the thorough way in which they investigate and experiment on the possibilities of German-East Africa. The way in which they have fostered and organised trade up country deserves every-

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praise. The roads that have been made are excellent, and the manner in which they are pushing on railway construction calls for a good deal of admiration. Thoroughly and systematically conducted, it presents a rather marked contrast to the usual haphazard British methods. The somewhat rigid systems and unbreakable rules in force at their stations may strike an Englishman as a trifle pointless, but, nevertheless, in an administration of a country, discipline and system are of the greatest importance, and probably some means between the German rigidity and our own casual elasticity would produce the best results. We should study each other's methods, and chose which can be adopted with profit and which discarded. The Germans are openly and admittedly learning from us with our greater colonial experience. We, on the other hand, need not think that we have nothing to learn from them."

(Besprech. üb. Melland & Cholmeley Through the Heart of Africa) The Colonial Office Journal Vol. 6, 1912, S. 119.

Many English writers, and particularly the few who have written on the German African colonies since August 1, 1914, have described the German penetration in Southwest Africa and elsewhere as the result of contemptible trickery and bluff. They try to prove that the whole history-from the diplomatic and political side, and even partially from the economic side, of Germany in Africa is a disgraceful chapter of brutality and failure, the heat of conflict has led them to distort facts and express hopelessly biased judgments. It is unfortunate, at a moment when the question of the future of the German colonies needs a dispassionate attitude, that sources of information in the English language should be so one-sided.

There is much to deplore and condemn in German methods of colonization in Africa-But there is no more to condemn in German methods then in French and Italian, and not as much in Belgian. . . . . It must always be born in mind, however, that Germany, Italy, and Belgium are new hands at colonizing. It is as unfair to compare German colonial administration with British colonial administration as it would be to compare British General Staff officers with German General Staff officers. As for the methods by which colonies are acquired, Germany has done nothing, in bringing territories under her flag, that has not been done by every other colonizing Power.

Herbert Adams Gibbons: "The new map of Africa, 1916

The readers of the Dèpéche Coloniale have perhaps not forgotten that we registered daily the progress of the German Colonies and their constant efforts to raise them to prosperity because it would have been childish to deny or conceal this. The flourishing of Togo, Cameroon, East Africa, yes even the smaller possessions in the Pacific, and last but not least Kiautschau brought Germany near to the first place in the ranks of the colonial powers, but about half a century ago alongside the names of the hardy English, Portuguese and Spanish Pioneers, which conquered the world for their respective nation, scarcely 3 German names could have been found.

"L'Effort Colonial Allemand". La Dépêche Coloniale Nr. 6143 vom 6. Oktober 1916.

#### 7. Are the Germans to have colonies or not?

The Germans have brilliantly proved their ability as explorers and also as merchants. They must show now what they can do as colonists.

It is in the interest of civilisation that all European peoples should give their typical character to that portion of our globe of which they take possession. In this way the world will show greater variety and fall not asleep to the monotony of methods and conceptions.

Paul Leroy-Beaulieu: "De la Colonisation chez les Peuples modernes", T. 1. Paris 1908. S. 341.

civilisation, might undertake not to thwart German expansion overseas, wether commercial only or territorial also.

Richard Jebb: "The empire and Germany" in "United Empire" 1912.