

ITALY REALIZES DREAM OF EMPIRE

But From Where Will the Capital Come to Develop Ethiopia's Unexploited Resources? And Will Italians Colonize Country?

By WILLIAM C. UTLLEY

WITH the annexation of Ethiopia by Italy, the Dark Continent of Africa now consists entirely of "colonies" of the European nations, with the single exception of Liberia, a tiny negro republic on the Atlantic coast near the equator and just south of the Sahara desert.

Africa covers 12,000,000 square miles and is the home of 150,000,000 people. For four hundred years the continent has been a colonial pie sliced up by the swords of half a dozen nations. Much of the territorial holdings in it are in the hands of three minor nations which are hardly in a position to defend their holdings against the countries which in the past few decades have asserted their power more substantially.

These three powers are Spain, Portugal and Belgium. They rule over 1,850,000 square miles of Africa and among their colonial subjects are 17,500,000 people.

With her new colony, which Mussolini says will be developed to its fullest extent immediately, Italy now has possession of Libya, a vast stretch of country across the Mediterranean in a southerly direction from the mother country; Eritrea, along the southern end of the Red sea; Ethiopia, which includes the headwaters of the Nile, and Italian Somaliland, which lies along the Indian ocean and borders Ethiopia on the south.

Flanks Britain's "Life-Line."

This means that Italy has become an empire, that Victor Emanuel is no longer merely a king, but an emperor. The only barrier that separates the two major sections of this vast colonial estate is the An-

approximately 65,000,000 persons. Including Egypt, these colonies cover 3,925,000 square miles, making the population about 16 to the square mile. The British colonies, which stretch the full length of Africa on the eastern side of the continent, are the most inhabitable sections.

In annexing Ethiopia, Italy will have added about 350,000 square miles to her colonial empire, and will have gathered another 10,000,000 persons under the Italian flag. With the new conquest, the population of her African colonies rises from 2.5 persons to the square mile to 10.5 persons to the square mile. She now controls nearly 1,267,000 square miles of Africa, with a population of 13,350,000 persons.

Belgium's territory, while it is large, consists almost entirely of equatorial jungle, which is not at the present time valuable. What its worth will be when and if the jungle of the Belgian Congo is ever cleared, is unknown. There are

any great market for goods manufactured in Europe. Natives, largely of a primitive character, require little of the manufactured goods of civilization. It may be possible that



Recent picture of the defeated Emperor Haile Selassie.

with continued development this market will be built up. But such development takes an enormous amount of capital.

That is the one big disappointment to Italy in her conquest of Ethiopia. The land, exclusive of the central plateau, is poor, the natural resources are ridiculously less than they have been estimated in the popular fancy of those who seek to justify Il Duce's bloody war.

Colonization Is Difficult.

Mussolini claimed a double purpose in his conquest of the ancient kingdom of Abyssinia—room for his overcrowded people to expand, and the obtainment of raw materials for Italian industries. But Italian people are apparently not so willing to become colonists in an unpleasant and uncomfortable land. In Eritrea, which has been Italian now for 50 years, there are only about 100 colonists.

The entire Ogaden area, with the provinces of Boran and Bale, so completely conquered by the forces of General Graziani, are of little or no value, being principally desert. He has not yet moved into the rich agricultural regions of the Arussi plateau, although that is scheduled to be his next step.

There has been some romantic gossip of vast oil deposits in Ethiopia, especially in the Ogaden district, but these have been largely denied by the facts. What mineral resources are present will be found for the larger part in the Danakil country to the northeast, but even these are uncertain. There is some salt, which Italy mined during the war—at a cost all out of proportion to its value in peace times.

Italy Must Aid Colonists.

The important part of Ethiopia is the central plateau, whose population is the traditional enemy of the tribes on the outskirts below. Here it is that Mussolini plans to put most of his colonists. The country is agriculturally rich and the climate, while it is not pleasant to white people by any means, is at least livable. While the plateau may be said to be conquered, it is not yet entirely occupied by Italian armies, the Gojam and Shoa being still unoccupied.

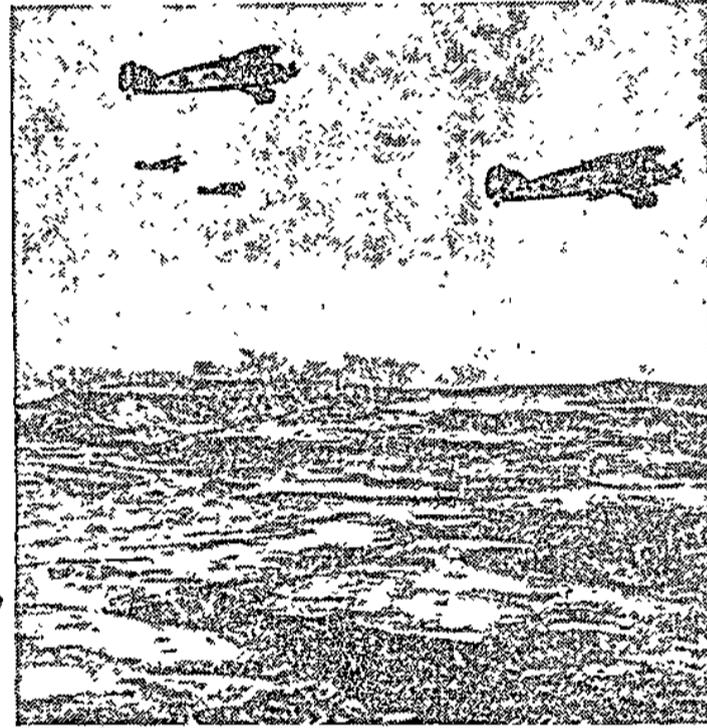
If the colonization of the plateau is to be successful, the colonists must be given a great deal of aid by the mother country. The fact that the colonists will start from scratch will be a boon to Italian industry, for the demand for heavy goods for the building of a new nation should give millions more work. It is believed that the colonists will be able to raise cereals and live stock, finding a market for them in Italy and selling them for prices which will be higher than the world market for the same goods.

One of the principal problems facing the new Ethiopian emperor and his viceroy, General Badoglio, is what to do with the natives. It is hardly possible that they can be driven from the land; they certainly will not be allowed to compete with the colonists on equal terms, for they will be able to work for far smaller compensation, the Italians being unable to compete with their low standard of living. The situation will be much the same as that which the Japanese peasants found in attempting to colonize Manchuria.

With the exception of some little platinum and gold, the mineral resources of Ethiopia are largely a fable. The wealth, if any, which it will add to Italy will have to be worked out of the land in hard Italian sweat—and with the capitalization of hundreds of millions of dollars, Italy hasn't got the hundreds of millions.

But she has now fulfilled what Mussolini says has been the dream of Fascism for 15 years. Italy has become an empire. It sounds big, and it earns Il Duce invaluable plaudits from his people.

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Italian Planes in an Air Raid Near Addis Ababa.

glo-Egyptian Sudan. Italy is now firmly entrenched along both sides of the Mediterranean and at the southern mouth of the Red sea, becoming what is probably the dominating factor along the life-line of Britain's empire.

Britain, with her prestige falling apart because of the total ineffectuality of her campaign in the League of Nations to stop the Italian course of empire, and the utter failure of her fleet to bluff Il Duce into backing down, now finds herself in a most embarrassing position.

Not only has she suffered great loss of respect in the eyes of the world, but she has ceased to dominate the route to India through the Suez canal. Her line of colonies which stretch from Cairo to the Cape of Good Hope are no longer flanked by a nation without sufficient power to worry anybody, but by the colonies of a nation which is not only powerful in Africa but in Europe itself. And the source of much of the all-important irrigation of Egyptian lands is now in the hands of a power which is at present hostile.

Of the African colonies, Britain's are, however, undoubtedly the best. More than one-fourth of the continent is covered by the Sahara desert, and there is another large desert, the Kalahari, in the South. The average density of the population in Africa is about twelve to a square mile, as compared with about forty to a square mile in the United States. The density of population of the British colonies is everywhere above the average for the continent, while the possessions of every other power have an average density below the continental average.

France Is Biggest Holder.

France and Great Britain now share equally about two-thirds of Africa. The remainder is divided up between Italy, Belgium, Spain and Portugal.

It is France who is the largest holder of territory in Africa. She has the Island of Madagascar in the Indian ocean off the southeast African coast, Morocco, Algiers and Tunis. But since so much of her holdings include desert land—she virtually owns the Sahara—her 4,232,000 square miles of territory have an average population of only nine souls to the square mile. Her African colonial subjects number about 38,500,000 in all.

Britain's colonies are the home of

not many people able to exist in these 920,000 square miles, the population being about ten persons to the square mile, with a total of 9,584,000.

Even more sparse is the population of Portugal's several African colonies, chief among which are Angola, bordering the Atlantic coast to the south of the Belgian Congo, and Mozambique along the Indian ocean on the mainland opposite Madagascar. The Portuguese territory embraces a little less than 800,000 square miles, with a little over 7,000,000 inhabitants, or about nine to the square mile.

Spain's Share Sparingly Settled.

Spain's 140,000 square miles of African territory, chiefly in Morocco and on the Atlantic seaboard



Pietro Badoglio, Italy's new viceroy of Ethiopia, surveys the lay of the land as an aide points it out to him.

west of the Sahara, are inhabited by only about 900,000 persons, or 6.5 to the square mile.

The popular conception that colonies in Africa offer the European colonizing nations an outlet for their excess populations has been proved more or less false. With all the colonization and empire building of 400 years, only one person in 50 on the African continent today is white. There are in all only about 3,000,000 whites.

It is also doubtful that the Dark Continent and its people present