

Tripartite Agreement likewise in respect of her hydraulic interests. Italy further offers her support to Great Britain in order that the latter may obtain from Ethiopia the right to construct and maintain a motor road between Lake Tsana and the Sudan.

"2. Italy requests the support of Great Britain in order that she may obtain from the Ethiopian Government the concession to construct and to run a railway from the frontier of Eritrea to the frontier of Italian Somaliland, which railway, according to the Tripartite Agreement, must pass to the west of Addis Ababa. It is understood that this railway, together with all the necessary works for its construction and for its running, must have an entirely free passage across the motor road.

"3. Italy requests from Great Britain, as she also reserves to herself the right to request from France, an exclusive economic influence in the west of Ethiopia and in the whole of the territory to be crossed by the above-mentioned railway, and the promise to support with the Ethiopian Government all the requests for economic concessions regarding the Italian zone."

The above offer was not entertained at the time chiefly owing to the strong objection felt to the idea of allowing a foreign Power to establish any sort of control over the headwaters of rivers so vital to the prosperity and even the existence of Egypt and the Sudan. But, in view of the relations of mutual confidence so happily existing between our two Governments, His Majesty's Government desire to extend to this question the principle of friendly co-operation which has proved so valuable in other fields. His Britannic Majesty's Government have accordingly further examined the question and recognise that the Italian proposal is not in contradiction with the stipulations of the London Agreement of December 13th, 1906, since the object of that agreement is to maintain the *status quo* in Ethiopia on the basis of the international instruments indicated in Article 1 thereof and the co-ordination of the action of the signatory States to protect their respective interests so that they should not suffer prejudice. They would therefore welcome the Italian support offered provided that it can be accepted without prejudice to those paramount hydraulic interests of Egypt and the Sudan which the Italian Government have not failed to recognise.

I have therefore the honour, under instructions from His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, to request your Excellency's support and assistance at Addis Ababa with the Abyssinian Government in order to obtain from them a concession for His Majesty's Government to construct a barrage at Lake Tsana, together with the right to construct and maintain a motor road for the passage of stores, personnel, etc., from the frontier of the Sudan to the barrage.

His Majesty's Government in return are prepared to support the Italian Government in obtaining from the Abyssinian Government a concession to construct and run a railway from the frontier of Eritrea to the