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GOVERNMENT NOTICE No. 433.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE  
GOVERNOR AND HIGH COM-  
MISSIONER OF TRANSPORT  
RECORDS WITH DEEP REGRET  
THE DEATH OF SIR CHRISTIAN  
FELLING, Kt., C.M.G., General Manager  
of the Kenya and Uganda Railways and  
Harbours Administration.

## GOVERNMENT NOTICE NO. 434.

The following cablegram has been received by His Excellency the Governor from the Secretary of State for the Colonies :—

“ 20th August. It is with deep regret that I have received your telegram of the 19th August, reporting the death of Sir Christian Felling. As the General Manager of the Kenya and Uganda Railway he won the confidence and respect of both his colleagues and the general public, and his death removes an official of outstanding ability whose loss will be deplored throughout Kenya and Uganda. Please convey to Lady Felling my sincerest sympathy with her in her sad bereavement.

SECRETARY OF STATE.”

## GOVERNMENT NOTICE NO. 435.

## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, MOMBASA, 20TH AUGUST, 1928.

## THE LATE SIR CHRISTIAN FELLING.

## MOTION OF ADJOURNMENT.

The following report of proceedings in the Legislative Council at Mombasa on Monday, the 20th August, 1928, is published for general information :—

THE HON. THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (MR. MARTIN) : Your Excellency, it is the custom of our race, when we lose from amongst us and from the number of our legislators, one who has done great service to the people, that we do him honour in our chief assembly.

Sir Christian Felling was long a member of this Council and he never joined in its deliberations but he added to them light and wisdom from the great store of his knowledge and experience.

He was first a great and trusted public servant. Year after year have members listened to his exposition of railway and financial problems, have voted him the supplies he asked for and spontaneously expressed their increasing confidence in his administration.

Sir, this confidence was not based merely on the gains he achieved for us in the efficient organisation of the main factor in our economic life. It was fed from some quality of the man himself, who had within him a fount of enthusiasm we never knew to fail and a power to concentrate all his faculties ceaselessly on his beloved work—concentrate indeed with that unreckoning devotion to which now we owe his loss.

And yet again there was some further mystery of charm which conquered friend and foe of debate alike. I say “ of debate ” because enemies I believe no man in this Council had fewer. But even there, when the clash of opinion rose to a note sharper than the usual tone we must all remember both the passionate sincerity and the disarming boyishness

of manner which could leave but one impression upon his hearers. Because he was single-minded we trusted his judgment: because he was simple of heart we gave him our affection in any crisis.

That crisis has now arisen which was furthest from our thoughts and expectation; but it is the only one perhaps in which we can fully know our thoughts, with the solemnity which silence alone can give them.

Sir, I beg to move that this Council do now adjourn.

THE HON. CONWAY HARVEY: Your Excellency, all the Elected Members desire to associate themselves with this tribute to the memory of our esteemed colleague who has done so much to mould the destiny of Kenya and join with Lady Felling and other members of the bereaved family in mourning the all too premature passing of one whom we have ever regarded as an outstandingly efficient General Manager, a good sportsman and a warm friend. Long after many of us have been forgotten Sir Christian Felling's work will stand as a permanent memorial to one who regardless of his personal convenience unstintingly and at all times gave of his very best to the Colony in which he took such a deep and abiding personal interest.

HIS EXCELLENCY: I hope that I may be allowed to say a few words about this motion, not as President of this Assembly—for in that capacity it would be my only duty to put the question to the House—but in the unusual capacity here of High Commissioner, since there is present in this Council now that Sir Christian Felling's chair is vacant, no other representative at the moment of the Railway and the Port.

Of Sir Christian Felling's achievement it is almost superfluous to speak. In five years he transformed the whole working of the Railway and he transfigured its finance. No man realised better than he did that behind that achievement lay the progress of the country and the energy of all who contributed to its development. No man understood better that the prosperity of the Railway was due in the first place to the vigorous expansion and steadily increasing production of both the territories which the Railway served. But in new countries like this Railway development and general development are very closely allied. The steady policy of new construction which Sir Christian Felling pursued and which, without his foresight, without his gift of management, without his powers of persuasion, it would have been difficult to pursue—that policy was responsible itself in no small part for the increase of production on which the Railway thrived.

In these things Sir Christian Felling had the eye of faith; but he worked for the future without ever losing his hold upon the present and without ever over-taxing its strength. There was always associated with his steady policy of new construction an equally steady policy of renewals and betterment from revenue, for which he was often criticised, and also a thrifty, thorough and unceasing care for sound finance. The triumphant testimony to what he achieved in that respect is the success of our recent loans. I may also tell you—news which reached me this morning and which would have delighted him in every way—that the Secretary of State and the Lords of the Treasury have now approved the new berths at Kilindini, which this Council voted at Sir Christian Felling's instance only three or four weeks ago.

It must be remembered, also, that rapidly increasing production, while it helps the Railway to pay, is also a terribly severe tax upon organisation and management, and I say without hesitation, for I saw it daily, and I saw it very close, that it was Sir Christian Felling's practical genius, and that alone, which brought the Railway triumphantly through the prodigious strain of the last five years.

The industry, the devotion, the resource, the skill which went to that achievement I was perhaps better placed than others to see. He had in a very high measure the power of inspiration and leadership. He spared inefficiency or untrustworthiness in others as little as he spared himself, but he always held the affection and loyalty of his staff. Another unusual quality was the extent to which he combined great technical grasp of the business of railway management with a very high order of financial foresight and skill. That combination will be hard indeed to replace. You may find good technical managers, you may find good advisors on finance, but to find the two qualities combined in one man is rare indeed.

But above these things, I always felt that one quality in particular stood out. That was a certain natural and intuitive statesmanship which informed all he said and did. It showed in his discussion of every problem, but especially in two ways. He had, in the first place, a rare insight into the political and economic structure which underlie all development. He understood the need of a sound, political structure if other things are to thrive. He understood the play of forces and he never underrated the human element. Hence his wide interest in all our affairs—an interest much wider than those who were not living in close relations with him were able perhaps to realise. He often spoke to me about matters which were entirely outside his own province because he was deeply interested in them and liked to discuss them. An example of this was the Native Lands Trust Bill, which he held to be of the utmost importance. I shall never forget the pleasure and encouragement he gave me after I had spoken on that measure, when he came to tell me that he hoped that speech would be a landmark in our affairs and that he shared to the full my faith in what the Bill would do for all races, and particularly for the native races, of this Colony. There are so many who misunderstand our problems that it is terrible to lose one who understood them so well.

Furthermore, you must remember that he was the servant of two territories. That has always caused, and in present circumstances must inevitably cause, a peculiar anxiety and strain. There again his natural statesmanship came to his aid. He saw both territories in perspective, and he was equally devoted to the interests of both. He had indeed the truest political instinct. He knew—no man better—that no public service can thrive permanently without the understanding and good will of the public which it serves; and that understanding he strove for with all his might. He was often indeed far more deeply agitated than people probably realised by evidences of public hostility to any policy which he believed to be in the public interest. His training in South Africa, which was in part political, greatly helped him on that side of his work; and I should like to-day, when we are honouring his memory, to acknowledge also our great debt to the Dominion from which he came and to the Government of that Dominion for sparing us his unrivalled services. I would like to say only one thing more, and that is on the personal side. There was about Sir Christian Felling, with all his sheer practical capacity, a touch of knight-errantry, a spirit of high and gallant endeavour, which thrilled to the romance of

creative work and counted not at all the sacrifice of ease and health which would have deterred a lesser man. Often when I was speaking with him I thought of Kipling's lines to the "True Romance":—

*"Who holds by thee hath Hear'n in fee  
To gild his dross thereby  
And knowledge sure that he endure  
A child until he die."*

Sir Christian Felling had the charm of mind which that sense of romance bestows. He was a singularly lovable man, in whose life the baser elements of our life had little part, and with all his wisdom, with all his practical genius, with all his power of work, he had the eager, sensitive, appealing temperament of a boy.

I cannot think of him as growing old. He has passed, a gallant spirit, in the plenitude of his powers—a life given for the Empire in East Africa as truly and completely as any life laid down in the war, and I think we may believe that for Christian Felling as for Greatheart when he crossed the river, all the trumpets sounded on the other side.

I would like to add my tribute of deep sympathy to that which has already been expressed to Lady Felling, who was always to him the most helpful and truest of wives. I should also like to give my sympathy to his children, and particularly to his son who is at New College now.

While our sorrow cannot compare with theirs, I for one shall miss daily not only his official services which were great indeed and correspondingly hard to replace but also and above all the sense of companionship which always came to me when discussing problems with him. We have lost in him a brave and brilliant public servant, a noble and inspiring character, a personality of great sincerity and charm, and one of this country's truest friends.

The best tribute that we can pay to that vanished spirit is to ensure that his work is not squandered, but well and truly carried on. I am sure that as a Council we shall strive to do that, and that the Colony as a whole will keep his memory with affection and always honour his name.

I will ask hon. Members to stand while the question is put.

The question is

"That this Council do now adjourn."

The question was put and carried.