

No. 118.

ST. HELENA.

REPORT ON THE BLUE BOOK
FOR 1889.

(For Report for 1888 *see* No. 58.)

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.
January 1891.



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1891.

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No.	Colony.	Year.
68	Lagos	1887
69	Trinidad (Tobago)	1888
70	Basutoland	1888-9
71	British Honduras	1888
72	British Guiana	"
73	Western Australia	"
74	Gold Coast	"
75	Sierra Leone	"
76	Gold Coast (Sanitary Reports)	"
77	Hong Kong	"
78	Ceylon	"
79	Fiji	"
80	Lagos	"
81	Victoria	"
82	Leeward Islands	"
83	Natal (Liquor Traffic)	"
84	Hong Kong (Further Report)	1889
85	Bahamas (Fibre Industry)	"
86	Heligoland	1889
87	Newfoundland	1888
88	Mauritius, Seychelles, and Rodrigues	"
89	Zululand	1889
90	Gibraltar	"
91	Grenada	"
92	Bermuda	"
93	St. Vincent	1888
94	St. Vincent	1889
95	Bahamas	"
96	St. Lucia	"
97	British Bechuanaland	1888-9
98	Turks and Caicos	1889
99	Gambia	"
100	Straits Settlements	"
101	St. Kitts-Nevis	1886
102	Basutoland (Governor's Visit)	1890
103	British New Guinea	1888-9
104	Natal	1889
105	Malta	"
106	British Guiana	"
107	Barbados	"
108	Trinidad and Tobago	"
109	Western Australia	"
110	Gold Coast (Agriculture)	1890
111	Labuan	1889
112	Jamaica	"
113	Falkland Islands	"
114	Basutoland	1889-90
115	Sierra Leone	1889
116	Fiji	"
117	Hong Kong	"

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The OFFICER ADMINISTERING the GOVERNMENT to the
SECRETARY OF STATE.

The Castle, St. Helena,
June 7, 1890.

MY LORD,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship the Blue Book of this Island for the year 1889.

2. The returns, unhappily, exhibit no cessation of the decline which has now been going on for 20 years. Modern improvements in merchant shipping, which have largely contributed to the extraordinarily rapid growth of other Colonies, have had the opposite effect upon this island. The great prosperity which it formerly enjoyed was due to its being situated in the midst of the south-east trade wind, and directly in the track of sailing vessels coming round the Cape of Good Hope from India and the East. It had also the advantage that it is easier to make from the eastward than Table Bay. It has never produced any articles for export. The inhabitants used to find ample employment in supplying the requirements of the numerous ships which called here. But, when steamers began to be substituted for sailing vessels, and the Suez Canal was opened in 1869, fewer ships passed St. Helena; and of those which still pass the greater number are so well found that it is unnecessary for them to call. A further, and quite unexpected, blow was experienced, when Her Majesty's Government recently decided to withdraw the garrison of Imperial troops—a decision which was partially carried out in the year now under review.

3. The returns of the shipping, and of the receipts and expenditure of the Colonial Government, during the last 24 years, which are appended (*see* Appendices 1 and 2) to this report, will show more clearly than any description what a continuous and heavy decline there has been.

"Calling" Ships.

4. In the three years preceding the opening of the Suez Canal, the number of ships which called here was at the rate of 896 a year; and 853 called in 1869, the year in which the Canal was opened. Ten years later, in 1879, the number had come down to 603. In 1889 only 288 ships called; of which 15 were men-of-war (nine British, three French, one Brazilian, and one Portuguese), 30 merchant steamers, 226 merchant sailing vessels, and 17 whalers from the Southern Whale Fishery. The falling off during the last 20 years has been proportionately larger in the case of British than of Foreign sailing vessels; which is perhaps due to the operation of the Plimsoll Acts.

"Passing" Ships.

5. The return which forms Appendix 1 includes all the ships which traded with the island from 1866 to 1885 inclusive: but since 1886 a certain amount of trade has also been done with "passing" ships, which are not included in the list of those which "called." Before 1886 no ship was allowed to have any communication with the island, except of course by signal, unless it had been boarded by the Harbour Master and he had given it pratique. Now, under the "Passing Ships Ordinance 1886," licensed boatmen are allowed, subject to certain restrictions, to communicate with ships which have not obtained pratique. A return has, therefore, been made out (*see* Appendix 3), which shews, not only the ships which obtained pratique and are described as having "called," but how many were sighted from the island, and how many of those sighted either called or traded with the licensed boatmen.

6. It will be seen that the number of ships trading with the boatmen is steadily increasing, the numbers being 109 in 1887, 166 in 1888, and 261 in 1889. The number of ships which were sighted in 1889 was 604, and of that number no less than 549 either called or traded without calling.

7. There can be no doubt that the facilities afforded by the Passing Ships Ordinance are convenient for vessels which want only a few potatoes or fresh vegetables, or to post letters, and do not care to incur the delay of "calling" here. Between October 1886 and February 1890, the number of letters received at the Post Office from passing ships was 1,023; and it is an important point in favour of the system that it secures the safe posting of any letters noted by a captain on the certificate which a boatman has to deliver to the Customs officers when he comes on shore.

8. There is, however, much controversy as to the effect of the ordinance upon the island. A commission, consisting of Mr. S. Solomon, Mr. Jas. Homagee, and Mr. H. B. Morrice, was appointed

in March of last year, to inquire into the working of the ordinance and its effect upon the revenue and upon the community generally: but, after taking evidence, the Commissioners were unable to agree upon a joint report. On the one hand, the ordinance has provided employment for between 20 and 30 boatmen, and the farmers appreciate the opportunity which the system gives them of selling their produce. But, on the other hand, as the trade to be done with a passing ship is necessarily limited, the increase under this head has not made up for the continued decline in the number of calling ships; and there are many persons who contend that the operation of the ordinance has been positively detrimental to the island, inasmuch as it is alleged that the boatmen often intercept vessels intending to call. It is, no doubt, the interest of the boatmen to induce ships to trade with them instead of calling and trading with the merchants on shore; and, possibly, on getting their requirements partially supplied by the boatmen, some captains do continue their voyage without waiting to obtain all that they would otherwise have taken. Unfortunately the matter does not admit of being settled by reference to statistics. In the three years, 1883-5, preceding the enactment of the ordinance, the average annual decrease in the number of calling ships was $15\frac{2}{3}$, or, if sailing vessels only be counted, 17; while for the three years, 1887-9, after the ordinance came into operation, the figures were respectively $29\frac{2}{3}$ and 25. This would seem to show that on an average eight sailing vessels have been intercepted in each year since 1886. But the ordinance did not come into force until October of that year, and only 19 vessels traded with the boatmen before the year ended. The average annual decrease in the number of calling ships in the three years 1884-6 was 48; and, even if all the 19 vessels had called, it would still have been $41\frac{2}{3}$. The available statistics may, therefore, be cited to prove, either that 12 ships more or 8 ships less have called in each year since the ordinance came into force.

9. I have referred at what may be thought disproportionate length to the operation of this ordinance; but, with the exception of the threatened withdrawal of the garrison, and perhaps the new Tax Ordinance, there is no question which has been more urgently pressed upon my attention during my stay in the island. The ordinance has not proved so beneficial as was anticipated when it was enacted; but I have not been convinced that it has done all the harm which its opponents attribute to it, and it would not now, in my opinion, be advisable, or even practicable, to repeal it. It appears to me that the best course to take with the object of getting more ships to call is to make it known as widely as possible that there are no dues to deter vessels from doing so, and that they will have their requirements supplied at moderate prices. The port is absolutely free to all vessels unless they land or ship cargo; and, although the high prices formerly charged by local merchants are still remembered against the island, the present charges, so far as I am able to judge, are not unreasonable.

Revenue and Expenditure.

10. The following table shows the revenue and expenditure of 1889 divided under the principal heads:—

Revenue.		Expenditure.	
	£		£
Customs - - - -	4,891	Cost of administration - - -	5,717
Taxes - - - -	955	Charge of debt - - -	1,199
Other sources, including rents of Government property - -	2,668	Pensions - - -	2,068
	<u>8,509</u>		
Deficit - - - -	470		
Total - - - -	<u>8,979</u>	Total - - - -	<u>8,979</u>

11. It will be seen that there was a deficit of 470*l.* in 1889. There was, however, a balance to the credit of the Colony at the beginning of the year, out of which the deficit was met; and at the end of the year there was still a balance in hand, the excess of assets over liabilities being 816*l.* 1*s.* 10*d.*

Revenue.

12. The Customs duties are the principal source of revenue. They averaged 15,939*l.* a year in the three years preceding 1869, and in 1869 they amounted to 15,076*l.* By 1879 they had come down to 10,470*l.*; and in 1889 they were only 4,891*l.*

There has been practically no alteration in the rates since 1864: for, when tonnage dues were abolished in 1882, other charges, calculated to produce the same amount of revenue, were substituted for them. The falling off in the receipts is, therefore, entirely due to the decline in the shipping, aggravated in 1889 by the partial withdrawal of the troops, who are large consumers of dutiable goods.

13. The receipts from Customs in 1889 were 609*l.* less than the amount estimated, and 950*l.* less than the amount received in 1888. The quantity of spirits, wines, and beer, consumed in the island was less than in 1888, and the revenue under this sub-head decreased by 242*l.* There was also a decrease of 640*l.* under the sub-head of wharfage; the value of the local imports being only 28,963*l.* in 1889 as against 37,606*l.* in 1888, and only one vessel in distress landing cargo as against two in the previous year.

14. The revenue from other sources, including assessed taxes, licences, and rents of Government property, does not exhibit so great a falling off. It was 3,518*l.* in 1889, which was 93*l.* more than in 1888. In 1869 the receipts were 5,704*l.*, and 3,685*l.* in 1879.

Expenditure.

15. The expenditure of the Colonial Government, which in 1869 amounted to 24,626*l.*, had been reduced to 12,486*l.* in 1879, and in 1889 it was only 8,979*l.* It will be observed that of the sum of 8,979*l.* expended in 1889, no less than 3,261*l.*, or more than one-third, was for pensions and on account of the debenture debt. The whole cost of carrying on the Government, exclusive of those charges, was only 5,717*l.*; and this includes many expenses, *e.g.*, for water supply, sewerage, the maintenance of the wharf, and the repairs of the streets, which would in ordinary cases be defrayed by municipal bodies.

16. This result has only been obtained by the exercise of the most rigorous economy. For nearly 20 years every opportunity has been seized for abolishing offices or reducing salaries. The staff of public officers has now been reduced to the lowest possible point, and some of those employed in the more important posts are insufficiently paid. In many cases they only hold their appointments temporarily, and their service does not count for pension. The staff of the Colonial Hospital is insufficient for the proper discharge of the work which has to be performed; the sanitary condition of the town is not what it should be; and in the case of other services, although Mr. Grey Wilson has made the small sums at his disposal go farther than almost any one else could have done, there are many desirable improvements which it has not been possible to carry out.

Municipalities and other Local Bodies.

17. The only municipal institutions are the Poor Relief Board, the Public Market Committee, and the Board of Health.

18. The members of the Poor Relief Board are elected annually by the ratepayers. The amount raised by the Board in 1889 by means of rates on all houses and lands, supplemented by some small receipts from other sources, was 1,169*l.* The valuation of the properties on which the rate is assessed was in round numbers 96,000*l.*, and the rate varied from 5*s.* 4*d.* to 5*s.* 6*d.* a quarter on each 100*l.* The expenditure, which included the cost of maintaining the poor house and lunatic asylum, and of outdoor relief, was 1,157*l.* The board is not controlled in any way by the Government. At a meeting of the ratepayers, held on the 10th of April last, it was proposed that steps should be taken to have auditors appointed by the Government with powers similar to those of the Local Government Board in England: but the motion was defeated by a large majority.

19. The Market Committee, like the Poor Relief Board, is, or should be, elected by the ratepayers. Two of the five members retire annually; but the ratepayers do not usually take sufficient interest in the matter to attend the election, and the vacancies have to be filled up by the Governor. For the same reason the Governor has usually to appoint the members of the Board of Health.

Taxation.

20. As compared with the United Kingdom, St. Helena is not heavily taxed. The amount raised by the Government, the Poor Relief Board, and the Market Committee, in 1889 from all sources was 9,422*l.*; which, if the population be taken at 5,000, is 1*l.* 17*s.* 8½*d.* a head. If the population be taken at 4,000, the rate would be about 2*l.* 7*s.* 0*d.* a head. In the United Kingdom the gross public revenue alone was 92,781,313*l.*; and, if the population be 38,000,000, the rate would be 2*l.* 8*s.* 10*d.* a head. This is without reckoning the local taxation, which in England alone amount to between 14,000,000*l.* and 15,000,000*l.* a year, or about 10*s.* a head. It is, however, to be borne in mind that, while the United Kingdom is rich, St. Helena is poor; and it must be admitted that the existing taxation is as much as the island can bear.

21. The Customs Tariff compares not unfavourably with that of the United Kingdom. In the United Kingdom duties are levied upon twenty different articles; but in St. Helena the only articles upon which they are levied are tobacco, spirits, beer, and wine. In the following table the duties charged in St. Helena are compared with those charged upon the same articles in the United Kingdom:—

	St. Helena.	United Kingdom.
Tobacco, lb. - - -	6 <i>d.</i> to 1 <i>s.</i>	3 <i>s.</i> 2 <i>d.</i> to 4 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i>
Spirits, gallon - - -	10 <i>s.</i>	10 <i>s.</i> 4 <i>d.</i>
Beer, 36 gallons - - -	12 <i>s.</i> 8 <i>d.</i>	6 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i> to 30 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i>
Wine, gallon - - -	2 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i>	1 <i>s.</i> to 2 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i> and upwards.

22. Among the ordinances passed in 1889 was one dealing with the levying and collection of taxes and rates, the enactment of which was regarded with apprehension and mistrust by many of the inhabitants. The object with which the ordinance was passed was twofold:—(1) to facilitate the collection and prevent the evasions of the dues levied under the Tax Ordinance of 1868; and (2) to give some slight relief to the poorer classes and to make up the difference by increasing, to the extent of the relief granted and no more, the taxation falling upon those better able to bear

it. It was estimated by Mr. Grey Wilson that the new ordinance would only directly affect the revenue to the extent of 20*l.*, but whether as a loss or a gain he could not say. As the ordinance only came into operation at the end of 1889, its effect will not be ascertained until the accounts for 1890 are made up. It deals with licences, taxes on houses and vehicles, and water rates; which yielded only 955*l.* between them in 1889. In so far as the ordinance prevents evasions, it will only affect any persons who previously paid less than they should have done; and the opposition with which it met would seem to have been mainly due to the fear that it was the precursor of other changes.

Public Debt.

23. The Public Debt at the end of the year amounted to 7,408*l.* Of that amount, 2,250*l.* is the balance, not yet paid off, of a loan which was raised in England between 1868 and 1872 for the reconstruction of public buildings destroyed by the white ant, which had been accidentally introduced into the island a few years previously. This loan bears interest at the rate of 7 per cent., and is being paid off by instalments of 1,000*l.* a year. The remainder of the debt, amounting to 5,158*l.*, is a sum which was voted by Parliament in the Supplementary Estimates of 1871–2 to pay off certain outstanding debts. As questions have been raised with regard to the liability of the Colony to repay this money, I take this opportunity of quoting the following note, which was appended to the Estimates, and is therefore the condition upon which the money was granted by Parliament:—“It is intended “ that this advance (which is not to bear interest) should be “ repaid by St. Helena in such instalments as, looking to the “ financial condition of the Colony, the Secretary of State may “ from time to time direct.” Since that date, the Colony has not been able to repay any portion of the grant; but, on the contrary, a further grant of 5,500*l.*, was made by Parliament in 1875–7, without any condition of repayment, to enable the Colonial Government to pay off the accumulated deficits of several years.

Mail Service.

24. From 1883 to 1888 the mail steamers between England and the Cape of Good Hope called at St. Helena 13 times a year on the outward, and 26 times on the homeward, voyage; and compensation for these calls had to be paid to the Cape Government, by whom the contracts with the Steam Ship Companies were made. The Imperial Government paid for the outward calls; and the St. Helena Government paid for those in the other direction at the rate of 36*l.* 13*s.* 5*d.* a call when the steamer called also at Ascension and 100*l.* when it called only at St. Helena. The annual cost to St. Helena was 1,776*l.* 14*s.* 5*d.* To this must be added the cost of the “sea transit,” payable to the Cape Government, which brought the cost of the homeward service up to nearly

2,000*l.* a year. The Imperial Government, however, engaged to make good to the Colony any deficit in its finances which might be caused by this arrangement, without deducting the postage collected in St. Helena, which was retained by the Colonial Government. During the five years for which the arrangement lasted (*see* Appendix 4) the total cost of the homeward service was 9,848*l.*, of which sum 9,020*l.* was paid as a subsidy and 828*l.* for sea transit; and 9,875*l.* was received from the Imperial Exchequer in the form of grants-in-aid of the local revenue. Practically, therefore, the Imperial Government defrayed the whole of the charges for the mail service both outward and homeward; and in 1889 it was agreed that the sums payable to the Cape Government on account of the subsidy should be paid direct from the Imperial Exchequer instead of passing through the St. Helena accounts, but that the Colony should provide the sums payable for sea transit without the assistance of a grant-in-aid.

25. In the middle of the year, however, the Postmaster General made an arrangement with the Cape Government providing for the conveyance of the St. Helena and Ascension mails by what are known as the "intermediate" steamers instead of the steamers carrying the South African mails. This arrangement was made to prevent the South African mails from being delayed by the calls at St. Helena and Ascension, and in return for that advantage the Cape Government agreed to forego the contribution of 3,250*l.* a year which it had been receiving from the Imperial Government for permitting its contract steamers to call at the islands. The Steam Ship Companies receive the same subsidy as before, and the Imperial Government saves 3,250*l.* a year; but the result to St. Helena is that, instead of the mails arriving punctually to the day, and almost to the hour, when they were expected, they have been most irregular, the outward mails sometimes arriving one and even three days too soon, and the homeward mails being usually several days late. The inconvenience and loss caused by these irregularities are serious when, as in the case of St. Helena, there are only mails each way at intervals of three and five weeks alternately and no telegraph by which the movements of the steamers can be ascertained.

Military Expenditure.

26. The whole cost of the garrison is defrayed from Imperial funds, and amounted in 1889 to 15,122*l.* There is no local militia or volunteer force. During the last few years large sums of money have been expended by the Imperial Government upon the fortifications, which are now practically complete and provided with the necessary armament of heavy guns. Much anxiety was, however, caused in the earlier part of the year by the announcement that it had been decided to withdraw the garrison in time of peace. The greater part of the Royal Artillery were actually withdrawn in the course of the year, but the infantry are still here. On the 31st of December last the garrison consisted of 153

officers and men. The withdrawal of the troops, if carried out, will throw many persons out of employment, and will cause a serious reduction in the Colonial Revenue. It will be necessary to apply to Parliament for a grant to relieve the distress among the unemployed by emigration or other means, and for an annual grant to enable the government to be carried on. It is not, I understand, intended to reduce the Army by the number of the troops hitherto stationed in St. Helena, but merely to keep the troops in England until an emergency arises. The only saving, therefore, will be the small difference between the cost of keeping the troops in England and that of keeping them in St. Helena; and this will be more than counterbalanced by the grants which will have to be made in aid of the Colonial Government. Whether the troops will reach the island in time to defend it, if war breaks out, is a question for the naval and military authorities.

Legislation.

27. Seven ordinances were passed during the year:—
 No. 1, to shorten and interpret the language of ordinances;
 Nos. 2 and 5, to promote public health;
 No. 3, for the protection of life and property on the occurrence of fire;
 Nos. 4 and 6, appropriation ordinances;
 And No. 7, to provide for the levying and collection of rates and taxes.
28. I have already referred to the new Tax Ordinance, No. 7; and the only other one which requires special notice is No. 2, to promote public health. The other Health Ordinance, No. 5, merely corrects a clerical error in the previous one.

Health.

29. The Health Ordinance had its origin in a difficulty which arose in 1888 as to the removal of refuse from the town. This, like many other duties which in England would be discharged by a local authority, has been undertaken in St. Helena since the days of the East India Company at the cost of the general revenue. When the general revenue became insufficient to meet all the claims upon it, it was pointed out that any further taxation which might be required for the benefit of the town should be obtained from the town alone and not from the country. The inhabitants of the town, however, objected to the imposition of a rate for sanitary purposes; and the plan was, therefore, adopted of making individuals responsible for the removal of refuse from their own premises.

30. The ordinance does not deal with the important matters of water supply and sewerage. The water for the use of the town is brought down from the hills in pipes, for which the town is indebted to the East India Company. It is good drinking water;

and, although in the dry season there is sometimes not enough for the efficient and regular flushing of the drains, the supply is, on the whole, satisfactory. The system of sewerage is not so good; and there are deaths nearly every year from enteric fever and diphtheria, which cannot but be regarded as affording indications of defective sanitary arrangements. Some improvement may be expected from the operation of the Health Ordinance, if strictly enforced: but a completely satisfactory system could only be established at a cost which the town is quite unable to afford. Notwithstanding these defects, however, the healthiness of the island is such that in 1889 there were only 50 deaths; of which 11 occurred among persons over 70 and under 80 years of age, and 4 among persons over 80. The death rate was 10 per 1,000 if the population be 5,000, or $12\frac{1}{2}$ per 1,000 if it be 4,000.

Council.

31. In the administration of the government, the Governor is assisted by an Executive Council, which in 1889 consisted of the Bishop, the Officer Commanding the Troops, and two of the principal inhabitants—the Hon. G. Moss and the Hon. T. E. Fowler.

Col. L. F. Perry, R.A., was the Officer Commanding the troops until the 14th of December, when he left the island and was succeeded by Captain A. E. Mackenzie, of the 1st Battalion, East Yorkshire Regiment. Mr. Grey Wilson, the Colonial Secretary, who had acted as Governor since the 4th of October 1887, left the island for six months' leave of absence on the 5th of November; on which date I assumed the Government, having arrived on the 28th of October.

32. There is no Legislative Council. Laws are made by the Governor alone, or by the Queen in Council; but the draft of any ordinance has usually to be published, for general information and in order that objections may be made, before it can be enacted.

Pensions.

33. The amount of the pensions paid out of the funds of the island in 1889 was 2,063*l.* This is a very heavy item, absorbing as it does nearly a quarter of the revenue at the present time. The pension list is, however, diminishing. At the end of the year it had been reduced by deaths, and by the re-employment of a pensioned officer, to 1,890*l.* 18*s.* 9*d.*

34. In addition to the foregoing pensions, which are paid from St. Helena funds for services rendered to the Colony, there are certain pensions paid by the Imperial Government to officers of the East India Company, who retired when the Crown took over the island in 1834. There are also some pensions payable to the widows and orphans of officers in the Company's service from a fund established in 1766, which is known as the St. Helena Widows and Orphans Fund. The income of this fund is insufficient to meet the charges on it, and the deficiency has to be supplied

from the Imperial Exchequer. In 1850–1 the amount voted by Parliament for defraying the cost of the pensions directly chargeable on the Exchequer and making good the deficiency in the Widows and Orphans Fund was 10,875*l.*; but in 1889–90 the amount which had to be voted was only 1,362*l.* There is still one subscriber to the fund.

Population.

35. At the census of 1871 the population, exclusive of the garrison and of the crews of ships in harbour, was 5,838. In 1881 it was 4,511. I have been unable to obtain complete particulars of the changes which have since taken place. In 1888 the population was assumed to be increasing: but in 1889, owing to the scarcity of employment in the island and the demand for labour in South Africa caused by the recent discoveries of gold, it certainly decreased. The number of persons who left the island was 254, while 63 arrived in it; and there were 126 births as against 50 deaths. There was, therefore, a loss of 191, chiefly adults, by emigration; and a net decrease of 115. The worst of the emigration is that, as the adult and able-bodied go away, the proportion of children and of the aged and infirm increases among those who remain; and higher rates have to be levied upon an impoverished and diminishing body of ratepayers. On the other hand, however, many of the emigrants remit money to their relatives in St. Helena.

Ecclesiastical.

36. There are a bishop and four clergymen of the Church of England, and four churches. The average attendance is estimated at 1,000 persons. The whole cost of the ecclesiastical establishment was formerly defrayed by the Government; but state aid has now been entirely withdrawn. There is a Baptist minister, who serves four chapels with an average attendance estimated at 314; and the Salvation Army has a considerable number of adherents. There is also a Roman Catholic chapel, built and maintained by the War Department, and served by a military chaplain.

Education.

37. The island is well provided with elementary schools. The Government maintains a mixed school in the Country close to Plantation House; and in Town, a boys' school, a girls' school, and an infant school. The total cost in 1889 was 405*l.* 10*s.* 6*d.*, towards which the sum of 42*l.* 13*s.* 1*d.* was derived from fees. The Benevolent Society, supported by voluntary contributions and with capital invested to the amount of 2,046*l.*, maintains two

schools, one in Town and the other in the Sandy Bay district. The cost in 1889 was 160*l.* 9*s.* 3*d.*, and 8*l.* 13*s.* 10*d.* was received in fees. The Hussey Charity, founded in 1865 under the will of Miss Rebecca Hussey, for the education of emancipated slaves in St. Helena and Lagos, maintains three schools, one in Town, another at Hutts Gate near to Longwood, and a third at Half Tree Hollow between the town and Plantation. No fees are charged in these schools, and the cost in 1889 was 205*l.* 16*s.* The Hussey Charity has also a night school in Town. The Government schools are undenominational: the others are connected with the Church of England. I was present at the annual inspection of seven of the ten schools, and was much pleased with what I saw. The standard is not the same in all: but each in its way appeared to be efficiently conducted, and to reflect credit upon the managers and teachers. The number of children upon the roll in the Government schools in 1889 was 339, and in the other schools 346; making 685 in all.

Newspapers.

38. The papers which were started in 1888 have ceased to appear; but the old established paper, the St. Helena Guardian, is published regularly every week.

Imports and Exports.

39. The value of the imports in 1889 was only 28,963*l.*, as against 37,606*l.* in 1888. The value of the exports was 5,643*l.*, of which specie accounts for 5,250*l.* The other exports, valued at 392*l.*, consisted merely of casks, hides, old metal, old rope, sacks, skins, and a few bales of wool.

Friendly Societies.

40. The readiness of the inhabitants to help themselves by subscribing to the Friendly Societies, instead of relying upon the poor rates for relief in sickness or for the payment of funeral expenses, is a very satisfactory feature in St. Helena. In addition to the previously existing societies, a Childrens Benefit Society was established in 1889. There are now six societies, with 2,389 members and funds invested to the amount of 6,757*l.*; but many persons belong to more than one society.

Savings Bank.

41. The only bank in the island is the Government Savings Bank, in which the number of depositors on the 31st of December last was 94. Notwithstanding the general depression, the amount of the deposits made during the year exceeded that of the withdrawals by 510*l.* 11*s.* 3*d.*: but the number of depositors only increased from 91 to 94, as many of the individual depositors closed their

accounts to enable them to leave the island. The bank is largely used by various institutions as well as individuals, and this accounts for the small number of separate deposits. At the close of the year the amount to the credit of the depositors, exclusive of interest, was 8,060*l.* 11*s.* 3*d.*: of which 7,497*l.* 10*s.* 3*d.* was invested, 450*l.* being invested in the island and the rest abroad. The expenditure of the Bank was 215*l.* 3*s.* 8*d.*; namely, 195*l.* 3*s.* 8*d.* for interest to depositors and 20*l.* for the manager's salary. The interest on the invested funds was sufficient to meet the expenditure and leave a surplus of 30*l.* 18*s.* 3*d.*

Meteorology.

42. The readings of the barometer, and of maximum and minimum thermometers, at the Castle in Jamestown, are recorded daily by Mr. G. C. Bruce. The highest temperature recorded in 1889 was 88° Fahrenheit on the 17th of March; and the lowest of the maximum temperatures was 72°, which was recorded on the 31st of August and 10th of September. The thermometers are well placed for registering the shade temperature of the air in the daytime, but at night the doors of the passage in which they are placed have to be closed. The minimum readings are consequently higher than they should be, and I refrain from quoting them. The difference in temperature between Jamestown, at the sea level, and Plantation or Longwood, 1,700 or 1,800 feet above the sea, is from 9° to 10° throughout the year. The amount of rain which fell at Longwood in 1889 was 22.48 inches, and at Woodlands 25.81 inches, which is very much less than usual. Unfortunately, no record is kept of the rainfall in Jamestown. Professor Cleveland Abbé, who visited the island this year with the United States Eclipse Expedition, is anxious that rain gauges should be kept both in Jamestown and at other places on the island, and that the signalman at Prosperous Bay should also be supplied with a self-registering anemometer.

Hospital.

43. The number of patients admitted during the year was 142, and the daily average in the hospital was 7.6 males and 2 females. There were 7 deaths. Of the 142 patients admitted, 52 were merchant seamen landed for medical treatment. The total cost of the Hospital, including salaries, provisions, medicines, &c., was 862*l.*; towards which 290*l.* was received from the patients and the Poor Relief Board. The balance, amounting to 572*l.*, was defrayed by the Colonial Government. The average daily cost of each patient was 4*s.* 11*d.*; but seamen are only charged 3*s.* a day.

Agricultural Resources.

44. Since the shipping began to decline, various attempts have been made to develop the resources of the soil, but none of them

ST. HELENA. have as yet met with success. The cultivation of cinchona was introduced by the Government in 1869; but it had to be abandoned in 1871, as the soil proved to be insufficient for the proper development of the plants. The manufacture of fibre from the aloes and flax, which grow here abundantly, has since been tried; but, although there is more likelihood of success in this than in other experiments, the difficulties of obtaining an adequate supply of water or proper machinery have not yet been overcome. Potatoes are grown in considerable quantities, and are the crop on which the farmers now principally depend. It will be still more important to them, if the trade with passing ships continues to increase. Many of the vessels which pass are from 60 to 120 days out from such ports as Calcutta, Bangkok, Rangoon, Singapore, and Hong Kong; and what they chiefly want when they come to St. Helena are potatoes or other fresh vegetables. Coffee of good quality is grown in small quantities, and more land has recently been planted with it by Mr. W. A. Thorpe. It has been pointed out by Mr. D. Morris, now Assistant Director of the Royal Gardens at Kew, who visited the island in 1883, that coffee and various other things, if they cannot be produced in sufficient quantities for exportation, might at least be grown to the extent required for local consumption. It is unfortunate for the island generally that the cottagers, who used formerly to live in the country and cultivate their little plots of ground, have of late years been moving into the Town, or to Half Tree Hollow, where they have no gardens. The land, which might have produced many things in a small way, has been turned into pasture, which is now of little value, and will be still less valuable if the troops, who are almost the only consumers of beef and mutton, are withdrawn.

Imperial Assistance.

45. The conclusion at which Mr. Morris arrived, when he reported upon the position and prospects of the agricultural resources of the island in 1883, was that, unless the Home Government were prepared to give the Colony some assistance and to support it while endeavouring to develop the resources of the soil, there was little hope for it in the future. What is wanted is capital: but that is more than the taxpayers of the United Kingdom can be expected to provide. They do afford a certain amount of assistance, and in former days used to give much more. When the island was taken over by the Crown from the East India Company in 1834, very large grants-in-aid were voted by Parliament until the costly establishments, which the Company had maintained, could be reduced. The grants were 99,000*l.* in 1834-5, 70,000*l.* in 1835-6, 35,000*l.* in 1836-7, and 18,000*l.* in 1837-8; and from that date until 1848-9 a grant-in-aid of the local revenue was made regularly every year. But for the last 40 years the Government has been carried on by means of the dues raised in the island itself, with only occasional assistance from Imperial funds. Grants of 3,000*l.* and 5,000*l.* were received from

Parliament in 1868 and 1877 respectively, and a loan of 5,158*l.* was received in 1871-2. No grant-in-aid has been received since 1877; but the Home Government has adopted the principle of assisting the island by undertaking the cost of certain specific services, which must be kept up for Imperial purposes. From 1884 to 1888, the cost of the mail service was refunded to the Colony by Parliament, and has since been defrayed directly from Imperial funds; the main country roads, being essential for the defence of the island, are maintained by the War Department, under an arrangement made with the approval of the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury in 1885; and the island telegraphs, which are the joint property of the Colonial and Imperial Governments, are maintained and worked by the Royal Engineers with only a small contribution from Colonial funds. If the same principle were extended to the salary of the Governor, whose functions, in receiving the commanders of the British and foreign men of war and other visitors who call here, and in various other things, are Imperial rather than Colonial, there would be no ground for the complaint that the inhabitants of St. Helena have to bear more than their fair share of Imperial expenditure, when the revenue of the island is insufficient for local requirements.

Conclusion.

46. I have not referred to the disastrous fall of rocks of the 17th of April last, or to other events which have occurred since the close of 1889. But I cannot conclude this report without acknowledging the cordial assistance which I have received from the Members of Council and all the public officers—both civil and military, and to the kindly feeling exhibited towards me by all classes of the community, during my stay of seven months and a half in the island. Many of the civil servants have to discharge responsible duties with inadequate pay, and all the inhabitants are suffering more or less from the general depression. It is melancholy to contemplate the present condition of an island which was once so flourishing and still has so many points to recommend it. There are still the wonderfully healthy climate, neither too hot nor too cold; the beautiful scenery; the mixture of tropical and temperate vegetation; the rare indigenous plants; the clearly marked geological structure; and the historical associations derived from the rule of the East India Company, the imprisonment and death of the great Napoleon, and the visits of Halley and Darwin and other distinguished men of science. But the ruins of well-built country houses, and the deserted cottages, which are to be seen in every direction, as well as the returns of the rapidly diminishing revenue, afford evidence of the change which has taken place in all that constitutes material prosperity; and I regret that there is at present no sign of any improvement.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. L. ANTROBUS,
Acting Governor.

ST. HELENA.

APPENDIX 1.

APPENDIX 2.

SHIPPING, 1866-89.*

RECEIPTS and EXPENDITURE, 1866-89.

Year.	Merchant Sailing Vessels.		Ships of War and Mail Steamers.	Total.	Difference from previous Year.		
	British.	Foreign.			Decrease.	Increase.	
1866	529	322	67	918	—	68	
1867	503	309	66	878	40	—	
1868	501	318	72	891	—	13	
1869	456	319	78	853	38	—	Suez Canal opened.
1870	416	322	69	807	46	—	
1871	380	308	70	758	49	—	
1872	310	285	63	667	91	—	
1873	370	291	56	717	—	50	
1874	380	247	57	684	33	—	
1875	298	242	65	605	79	—	Average Annual Decrease 1870-81, 27½
1876	306	222	54	582	23	—	
1877	335	266	63	604	—	82	
1878	362	251	56	669	—	5	
1879	310	228	65	603	66	—	
1880	306	191	67	564	39	—	
1881	245	215	65	525	39	—	
1882	233	203	61	497	28	—	{ Tonnage Dues abolished.
1883	250	213	58	521	—	24	
1884	188	160	68	414	107	—	Average Annual Decrease 1883-5, 15½
1885	225	160	65	450	—	36	1884-6, 48
1886	166	153	58	377	73	—	{ Passing Ships Ordinance enacted.
1887	150	111	56	317	60	—	
1888	142	124	64	330	—	13	Average Annual Decrease 1887-9, 29½
1889	134	110	44	288	42	—	
					775	210	Average Annual Decrease 1870-89, 28½
Net decrease since 1869					—	565	

* This return includes only ships which "called."

Year.	Revenue.		Total Revenue exclusive of Grants and Loans.	Total Expenditure including repayment of Debt.	Surplus.	Deficit.	Grants and Loans from Parliament.	Loans bearing interest.	
	Customs.	Other Sources.							
1866	£ 17,257	£ 5,895	£ 23,152	£ 26,110	—	£ 2,958	—	£ 5,000	
1867	17,150	5,867	23,023	27,113	—	4,087	—	—	
1868	13,402	5,304	18,706	26,203	—	7,497	3,000	5,000	
1869	15,076	5,704	20,780	24,626	—	3,846	—	5,000	
1870	11,004	4,880	15,974	18,943	—	2,969	—	1,250	
1871	10,621	4,937	15,558	18,439	—	2,881	950	—	
1872	10,121	3,807	13,928	27,376	—	13,448	4,208	8,250	
1873	11,138	3,842	14,980	16,699	—	1,719	—	—	
1874	10,003	3,979	13,982	14,522	—	540	—	—	
1875	10,041	3,575	13,616	14,040	—	424	—	—	
1876	9,555	3,612	13,167	13,329	—	162	—	—	
1877	9,808	2,973	12,781	18,007	—	5,226	5,500	—	
1878	10,517	3,681	14,198	12,815	1,383	—	—	—	
1879	10,470	3,685	14,155	12,486	1,669	—	—	—	
1880	8,547	3,403	11,950	11,870	80	—	—	—	
1881	9,198	3,228	12,426	12,801	—	375	—	—	
1882	8,253	3,247	11,500	11,212	288	—	Grants for Mail Service.	—	
1883	7,091	5,175	10,266	11,145	—	879	—	—	
1884	6,611	3,360	9,971	10,807	—	836	450	—	
1885	6,017	3,032	9,049	*13,099	—	4,050	2,050	—	
1886	6,580	3,606	10,186	*11,210	—	1,024	2,000	—	
1887	4,590	3,454	8,044	*11,382	—	3,338	3,000	—	
1888	5,841	3,425	9,266	*10,448	—	1,182	2,275	—	
1889	4,891	3,518	8,409	*8,979	—	570	150	—	
Total grant in aid for Mail Service							—	£9,875	
* Including payments for Mail Service amounting in the five years to							—	£9,848	

ST. HELENA.

APPENDIX 3.

Year.	Ships sighted.	Passed without any communication.	Traded with Boatmen.	Called.	Called and Traded with Boatmen.
1886	686	290	19	377	396
1887	619	193	109	317	427
1888	641	145	166	330	496
1889	604	55	261	288	549

APPENDIX 4.

Year.	Revenue, exclusive of Parliamentary Grant.	Expenditure, exclusive of Mail Subsidy.	Surplus.	Deficit.	Parliamentary Grant.	Payments for Mail Subsidy.
1884	£ 9,971	£ 10,807	—	£ 836	£ 450	—
1885	9,049	9,446	—	397	2,050	3,653
1886	10,186	9,024	1,162	—	2,000	2,187
1887	8,044	9,605	—	1,561	3,000	1,777
1888	9,266	9,081	185	—	2,275	1,867
1889	8,409	8,942	—	533	100	36
					£9,875	£9,020
Cost of "sea transit" included in Expenditure, 1884-9 -						£828
Total cost of Mails, 1884-9 -						£9,848