

in the north-west and the south-east, where they formerly resorted in hundreds, they are now only to be found in tens. It must however be borne in mind that the seasons vary considerably.

Phosphate and Guano.—A small shipment of guano was made in 1926 and investigations and operations are continuing.

H. J. PINK,
Colonial Treasurer.

The Castle,
24th March, 1927.

No. 1343.

ST. HELENA.

REPORT FOR 1926.

(For Report for 1924 see No. 1251, and for Report for 1925 see No. 1297 (Price 6d. each.))



LONDON:

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE.
To be purchased directly from H.M. STATIONERY OFFICE at the following addresses:
Adastral House, Kingsway, London, W.C.2; 120, George Street, Edinburgh;
York Street, Manchester; 1, St. Andrew's Crescent, Cardiff;
15, Donegall Square West, Belfast;
or through any Bookseller.

1927.

Price 9d. Net.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
Historical	3
Description	4
Communications	5
Industries, Trade, etc.	5
Climate	6
Health	6
St. Helena as a place of residence	7
Accommodation	8
Cost of Living	8
Education	8
Outfit	8
General	8
Ascension Island	9
I. Financial :—	
Revenue	9
Expenditure	9
Assets and Liabilities	10
Currency	10
Remittances	10
Crown Agents for the Colonies	10
II. Trade, Agriculture and Industries :—	
Trade :	
Expenditure	11
Imports	11
Exports	12
Agriculture and Gardens	12
Industries	13
Shipping	13
III. Education	13
IV. Government Institutions	14
V. Judicial Statistics	14
VI. Legislation	15
VII. Vital Statistics	16
VIII. Post, Telegraph, and Telephone Services :—	
(a) Post Office	18
(b) Telegraphs	19
(c) Telephones	19
IX. General Observations :—	
St. Helena	19
Ascension Island	21

ST. HELENA.

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1926.

HISTORICAL.

St. Helena was discovered by the Portuguese Commander Juan de Nova Castella on St. Helena's day, 21st May, 1502, during his return from India with a squadron of three Portuguese vessels.

The Portuguese did not colonise the Island but were satisfied in keeping secret its situation until 1588, when it was visited by Captain Cavendish on his return from a voyage round the world.

The Dutch entered into possession of the Island and held it from 1645 to 1690, when they preferred to establish themselves at the Cape of Good Hope. St. Helena was then occupied by the East India Company and a Charter for its administration was granted in 1661.

In 1665, according to some accounts, the Island was captured by the Dutch, who were expelled the same year. Again they seized it in January, 1673, but only held it until May of that year when they were finally driven out by Captain Sir Richard Munden of the King's Navy.

In December, 1673, a new Charter was issued to the East India Company and, with the exception of the term of Napoleon's exile, the Island remained under the Company until the 22nd April, 1834, when it was brought under the direct administration of the Crown.

An instrument entitled "The Laws and Constitution of the Island of St. Helena" was issued by Charles II in 1681. This document, bearing the seal of the East India Company, is still in the possession of the Governor of St. Helena, as are also the records of the Colony from 1678 to the present day.

The outstanding feature in the history of St. Helena is its connection with the exile of the Emperor Napoleon. The house occupied by him at Longwood, and the tomb in which his remains lay for 20 years till their removal in 1840, are maintained by the French Government, who were granted the freehold in 1858.

Apart from its Napoleonic associations St. Helena has an interesting history and the Island has fluctuated between extreme poverty and comparative prosperity almost since its occupation.

It was chiefly celebrated in the East India Company's days as a port of call and half-way house between India and England. Large quantities of fruit and vegetables were grown for the provisioning of ships calling. Records show that upwards of 900 ships were entered at the port annually. The opening of the Suez

Canal sounded the death-knell of St. Helena as a shipping port and from that time shipping has gradually declined. The average number of ships now calling is about 40 per annum.

St. Helena has intimate associations with the suppression of the slave trade between West Africa and the Americas.

Slave ships captured by British warships were brought into St. Helena for condemnation, and a settlement for freed slaves was founded at Rupert's Bay. A few took service in the Island but about 10,000 were conveyed to the West Indies and British Guiana.

During the Boer war of 1899-1901 St. Helena was used as a place of incarceration for prisoners of war, and upwards of 4,000 were detained in the Island. This necessitated a garrison of about 3,000 troops.

For a few years after the repatriation of the Boer prisoners a garrison was maintained at St. Helena. Its withdrawal in 1906-7 caused considerable hardship among the population, who had learnt to depend on the garrison for their livelihood. The departure of the troops was not, however, an unmixed evil for it threw the Island on its own resources and led to the creation of the flax industry on which the prosperity of the inhabitants now so greatly depends.

A lace industry has been established since 1907, and gives employment to a number of women and children.

St. Helena was visited in 1910 by His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught on his way to open the first Parliament of the Union of South Africa, and in 1925 it had the honour of a visit from His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, who remained for two days on his way from South Africa to South America.

DESCRIPTION.

St. Helena lies in latitude 15.55 South and longitude 5.42 West. It is about 950 miles due south of the Equator, 4,000 miles from England, and 1,700 miles from Cape Town. The voyage from England occupies 17 days, and from Cape Town 6 days.

The area of the Island is 47 square miles; there are about 60 miles of roads.

The aspect of St. Helena from the sea is forbidding. It rises abruptly in bare cliffs, which vary in height from 450 to 2,400 feet. The face of this wall of rock is cut by deep narrow gorges.

Above the cliffs the ground rises in a fairly regular slope, but with numerous valleys, to a ridge lying across the middle of the Island. This ridge is serrated in form; its general altitude is about 2,000 feet, but two of its peaks, easily accessible and affording magnificent views, rise to 2,700 feet.

The Island has been divided into three zones, "Coast," "Middle," and "Central."

The "Coast" zone extends from about a mile to a mile and a-half round the Island. Except in some of the valleys, where fruit and vegetables may be grown, the only vegetation is prickly pear.

The "Middle" zone, at an altitude of 400 to 1,800 feet, succeeds the "Coast" zone. The hills and valleys and pleasing scenery in the higher levels of this area are suggestive of parts of Wales and Devon. Oaks, Scotch pines, gorse and blackberries flourish there, and in 1926 at Plantation during a prolonged winter some primroses made their appearance. It is the pleasantest part of the Island in which to live and it contains Plantation (Government House), Bishopsholme, Rosemary Hall, Princes Lodge, Longwood, and other residences.

The "Central" zone, about three miles long by two miles wide, is ground each side of the central ridge, the highest ground in the Island. In some parts the ground is precipitous, in others undulating with grassy slopes.

The population of the Island is about 3,700, of whom about 1,500 live in Jamestown, the capital, situated in the "Coast" zone, while the rest dwell in the "country" as the other two zones are locally designated.

Transport is by horse, either driven or ridden. Owing to the hilly nature of the country the rate of progress is slow, but time is rarely of the essence of any undertaking in St. Helena. The drive, for instance, from the town to Plantation or to Longwood, where the golf links are, or from Plantation to Longwood, in each case a distance of five miles, occupies an hour and a-quarter. The introduction of motor transport is under consideration.

COMMUNICATIONS.

There are regular mails outward and homeward by Union-Castle Liners once a month, and occasional ships also bring or take mails.

Cable connection exists with all parts of the world. The charges are, for ordinary telegrams 2s. a word, for deferred telegrams 1s. a word, and for deferred letter telegrams 10s. for twenty words and 6d. for each word in excess.

There is no internal post but there is a fairly efficient telephone service.

INDUSTRIES, TRADE, ETC.

The cultivation of New Zealand flax is the staple industry of the Island. The flax is grown by large landowners and smallholders, while the milling of the flax is in the hands of four firms.

There is a certain amount of general farming, but owing to the development of the flax industry in recent years it has tended to decrease.

The Colony depends on the Imperial Treasury for an annual grant-in-aid of about £2,500 to balance its budget.

CLIMATE.

Situated far from any land-mass, in the heart of the South-East Trades, and surrounded by the cool waters of the South Atlantic current, St. Helena possesses a mild and equable climate.

There are four seasons in the year, which, however, are not so sharply differentiated as they are in England. Spring is from October to December, summer from January to March, autumn from April to June, winter from July to September.

The length of day varies from 13 hours on 21st December, to 11 hours on 21st June.

The sun is vertical on 5th February and on 6th November.

The temperature in the "Coast" zone ranges in summer between 68 degrees and 84 degrees and in winter between 57 degrees and 70 degrees. In the country at about 2,000 feet it is 10 degrees cooler.

In Jamestown, during summer, the heat is sometimes apt to be oppressive. In the country, during winter, fires are often necessary.

The atmosphere is humid; the monthly mean at 9 a.m. in the country varies from 89 degrees in January to 92 degrees in September.

The average annual rainfall in Jamestown is about 9 inches and the average number of raindays in the year is about 90. In the country at Plantation, 1,650 feet, the annual average of rainfall over 15 years is $38\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and the average number of raindays 211. On two occasions during the 15 years the greatest fall in 24 hours amounted to 2 inches; apart from those two occasions the greatest fall did not exceed $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

At Plantation the driest months are September to January inclusive, when the average rainfall does not exceed 3 inches each month; the lowest record being .15 and the highest 4.66, both in September. The wettest months are March, May, June, and July when the average is between 4 and 5 inches; the lowest record being 1.26 in March and the highest being 8.92 in July.

The average force of the wind, which blows almost every day in the year, is 14 miles per hour. On only one occasion in the last 30 years has the wind attained the velocity of 50 miles per hour.

Thunderstorms are of very rare occurrence, the last two recorded being in 1874 and 1888.

Earthquakes in the formidable sense are unknown. Only four "tremors" have been put on record in 400 years.

HEALTH.

"St. Helena," in the words of Sir Daniel Morris, Adviser in Tropical Agriculture to the Secretary of State for the Colonies,

"stands pre-eminent in possessing a remarkably fine and healthy climate. . . . In respect to its climate I regard St. Helena as a most valuable station for recruiting health."

The Island is completely free from any of the ills associated with tropical or sub-tropical countries. In particular the climate seems an excellent one for young children or elderly persons. It is also considered beneficial for tubercular or lung trouble.

It is generally held that after three or four years a change of environment is desirable.

No particular precautions are needed. The sun very rarely causes any inconvenience, though on occasions during the summer in exceptional seasons of prolonged drought the direct solar heat may be intense. In the last 25 years there has been only one case of fatal result from the effect of sun.

About February or March an epidemic of influenza often visits the Island; it attacks chiefly the indigenous population and its consequences are rarely of serious proportion.

The death-rate for the 10 years ending 1926 was 10.47 per 1,000.

ST. HELENA AS A PLACE OF RESIDENCE.

There is little opening for labour or capital, and no one should come to St. Helena for employment except under agreement.

For persons possessed of moderate private means the Island has possible attractions as a place of residence. Retired officials and generally persons with professional or technical qualifications might find occasional work to occupy some of their time. Anyone with a taste for botany, geology, forestry, gardening or fruit-growing on a small scale, would find much to interest him on the Island.

About 50 families, official, clergy, business, Eastern Telegraph Company, and private residents, go to make up local society. The social life is, therefore, that of a small community and is unpretentious.

The standard of recreation is of the kind to appeal to the average person. There is golf, tennis, cricket, in the winter months occasional pheasant and partridge shooting, and some sea-fishing.

The St. Helenians are an attractive people. They are of pleasant appearance, of good manners, soft-spoken, and peaceful. Visitors are greatly impressed with their civility and the general courtesy shown by young and old.

The women are good at lace and needlework. They can be trained into good servants and some find employment in South Africa and occasionally in England.

With its English speech, its English scenery, its English ways, St. Helena might well seem a part of England. Life passes amid picturesque surroundings in quiet and uneventful fashion, similar, one imagines, to life in a retired country district in England before the advent of railways. Residents in St. Helena, as in most small

communities, are to some extent dependent on their own resources for their diversions and for filling their time.

ACCOMMODATION.

There is no hotel on the Island but there is a boarding-house in Jamestown where visitors frequently stay for brief periods.

There are houses in the country, available from time to time for renting. It is advisable that persons intending to reside in St. Helena should make inquiries beforehand as to vacant houses and bungalows.

The rent of a house with garden is about £3 to £4 a month, unfurnished, and from £5 to £6 a month partially furnished.

COST OF LIVING.

The cost of living is cheaper than in England. Customs duties are light and rating also is low, at present 5*d.* in the pound.

Wages for indoor servants are from 15*s.* to 30*s.* a month and board. Men working in the garden or stables earn about 2*s.* 6*d.* a day.

A horse and carriage is in most cases a necessity and can be hired by the year. Including wages and cost of hire, a horse and carriage can be maintained for about £90 a year.

The charges for occasional hiring are 15*s.* for a whole day, 10*s.* for half a day, and £1 1*s.* for the evening.

Two people could live comfortably and in full enjoyment of all the Island has to offer on £35 to £40 a month. This estimate covers hire and maintenance of horse and carriage, wages of groom-gardener, and of two indoor servants, house rent, and generally all local expenses.

With a more limited range of social activity and with stricter housekeeping two people could live within £250 to £300 a year for local expenses. This sum does not include the upkeep or occasional hire of a horse and carriage.

(See also page 16.)

EDUCATION.

There are no facilities locally for the education of English children, who have to be sent either to South Africa or to England for their schooling.

OUTFIT.

Clothes worn in England during spring and a warm summer will be found suitable. Woollen sweaters and jumpers are necessary, and so also is stout footwear.

GENERAL.

Apart from the Government Savings Bank there are no banking facilities. Government, however, issues Bills of Exchange on the Crown Agents for the Colonies at low rates.

Interesting books on the Island are : Brooke's "History", published in 1808; Melliss' "St. Helena", published in 1875, giving an historical and scientific account of the Island; Jackson's "St. Helena", published in 1903; Norwood Young's "Napoleon in Exile in St. Helena", two volumes, published in 1915.

ASCENSION ISLAND.

Ascension Island, lying in latitude 7.53 South and longitude 14.18 West, about 700 miles north-west of St. Helena, was discovered by the Portuguese on 20th May, 1501. It became noted for its abundance of sea fowl and excellent turtle, the latter "freeing sailors entirely from the scurvy and other diseases of the blood."

The Island was occupied by the British in 1815 at the time Napoleon was a prisoner in St. Helena. In 1821 the garrison was formed of marines, and the Admiralty continued control over the Island until 12th September, 1922, when Ascension became a Dependency of St. Helena.

At the present time the Eastern Telegraph Company have a station there, and officers of the Company are invested with administrative powers.

A company has been formed to exploit the guano and phosphate deposits on the Island, but the export has not yet assumed large proportions.

Ascension has an area of 34 square miles; it is of volcanic origin, and its appearance from the sea is rugged and desolate. Green Mountain, however, 2,800 feet high, relieves with its vegetation the barren and depressing aspect of the larger part of the Island, and affords pasture for a certain number of sheep and cattle.

The pure and dry air of Ascension has given its climate a reputation for being singularly healthy.

I.—FINANCIAL.

REVENUE.

Revenue for the year amounted to £21,444 exclusive of any grant-in-aid; this is an increase of £6,713 over 1925.

This increase was mainly due to the absorption by the Colonial Government of the outstanding assets of the Government Flax Mill, and bringing back into revenue the Cypress timber purchased in 1925.

There was a grant-in-aid of £2,500 to general revenue.

EXPENDITURE.

Expenditure amounted to £23,154, but of this sum £7,727 was expenditure of an extraordinary nature and represents the writing off of doubtful assets. In these circumstances only £15,427 can be regarded as normal expenditure. The revenue, exclusive of the

extraordinary revenue mentioned above, but including grant-in-aid, can be read as:—

	£
Total Revenue	23,944
Less extraordinary revenue. Flax Mill assets, etc.	8,323
Revenue including grant-in-aid	15,621
Normal expenditure	15,427
Surplus	£194

ASSETS AND LIABILITIES.

The statement of Assets and Liabilities after writing off doubtful assets to the amount of over £7,000 shows an excess of Assets over Liabilities amounting to £4,955 11s. 8d.

CURRENCY.

Bills of Exchange on the Crown Agents for the Colonies, issued during the year, amounted to £15,794, as compared with £15,889 in the previous year.

£1,000 in specie was exported during the year.

By an Order in Council dated 12th October, 1925, brought into force in St. Helena on 1st January, 1926, South African currency was made legal tender in St. Helena and such currency is now acceptable on the same conditions as sterling currency.

REMITTANCES.

£3,588 was remitted to the Crown Agents during the year chiefly in the form of Bills on His Majesty's Paymaster-General.

CROWN AGENTS FOR THE COLONIES.

The Colony had an overdraft at the Crown Agents at the end of the year amounting to £500, but the Crown Agents held cash to the credit of the Colony on Current Account to the amount of £530, so that actually the Colony had a credit balance on 31st December, 1926, of £30.

The following figures show the state of the Colony's overdraft and cash balance at Crown Agents for the past six years:—

	Overdraft.	Cash balance on
	£	current account.
31st December, 1922	8,100	Cr. £165
31st December, 1923	7,500	Dr. £501
31st December, 1924	1,500	Dr. £478
31st December, 1925	1,500	Cr. £607
31st December, 1926	500	Cr. £530

II.—Trade, Agriculture and Industries.

(a) TRADE.

The Customs revenue collected during 1926 amounted to £4,999 18s. 9d. as against £4,294 1s. in 1925, showing a substantial increase of £705 17s. 9d. An increase of revenue, estimated at £400, was anticipated on the enactment of the Customs (Consolidation) Ordinance No. 1 of 1926. This Ordinance came into operation on the 22nd of March. It embodied the war taxation dues on spirits, wines, and tobacco, and also imposed a further increase of duty.

Increases of revenue appear under:—

Wharfage on Imports £154 19s. 8d., mainly due to a two years' supply of paraffin oil being imported direct from the United States of America.

Duty on Imports £820 10s. 3d. The increased duty mentioned above partly accounts for this increase, while 322 gallons of spirits were cleared from bond in excess of 1925 consumption. It is peculiar to note that the consumption of cigarettes fell off by 551 lb. in 1926, whilst tobacco increased by 515 lb.

Tonnage dues £65 3s. 6d., due to Admiralty coal arriving on which 1s. per ton was paid. No Admiralty coal was imported in 1925.

Ad valorem duty £39 11s. There being a regular demand for labour, better conditions prevailed and more luxuries were indulged in.

Decrease of revenue is found under "*Permits*" £4 4s., "*Special War Dues*" £281 13s. 8d., and "*Export Wharfage*" £87 16s. 8d. The Special War Dues Ordinance being repealed by Customs (Consolidation) Ordinance No. 1 of 1926 resulted in the dues being absorbed in duty on imports; and one flax mill suspending operations during the year lessened the export wharfage.

Expenditure.

Customs expenditure amounted to £521 2s. 3d., as compared with £500 3s. 2d. in 1925. The increase is due to transfer of personal bonus from "*Miscellaneous*" to "*Personal Emoluments.*"

Imports.

The value of imports during 1926 amounted to £56,040 as against £57,805 in 1925, showing a decrease of £1,765.

This total includes Government imports exclusive of munitions of war, to the amount of £598.

The principal increases in value over 1925 are in :—

	£
Beef and Pork (salt)	326
Boats	800
Butter and Margarine	158
Hardware, metals, &c.	898
Oil, paraffin	1,603
Tea	240

The principal decreases are :—

	£
Live animals	126
Drapery and dry goods	565
Flour	1,268
Machinery	218
Rice	403
Timber	2,775
Stationery	322
Sugar	1,405

Exports.

The value of exports during 1926 amounted to £39,977 as against £47,476 in 1925, showing a decrease of £7,499.

The principal increases were :—

	£
Rope, cord, and twine	605
Specie	500

and decrease :—

	£
Fibre and tow	7,593

The weight of fibre and tow exported during the year was 751 tons and 417 tons respectively, as compared with 923 tons and 420 tons respectively, in 1925. This is due to one mill suspending operations during 1926.

It has been customary in the past to count live stock for Ascension Island as an export. This has been deleted in the current report.

(b) AGRICULTURE AND GARDENS.

Botley's Lay.—The revenue derived from the Government pasture lands at Botley's Lay or Common amounted to £98 1s. 8d., the expenditure being £93 11s. 2d. The balance standing to the credit of this fund at 31st December was £56 16s. 6d.

Maldivia Garden.—The amount derived from the sale of fruit and vegetables from Maldivia Garden, situated at Jamestown, amounted to £110 8s. 2d., against an expenditure of £108 8s. 9d. The balance standing to the credit of this fund at 31st December was £62 10s. 7d.

Flax.—A small crop only of Government flax was harvested in 1926 as the bulk of Government-owned flax was reaped in 1925. Flax seed to the value of £243 and flax suckers to the value of £20 was exported during the year.

General.—The yield of forage, etc., from Government lands was very satisfactory.

The lawns, fencing and grounds of Government House were maintained in excellent order and the flower-beds kept up to the very high standard set in 1925 when they received special attention.

Destruction of White Ants.—During the year experiments were undertaken with a view to checking the serious depredations of white ants. Some useful information is being collected on the habits of these ants and a certain amount of success has attended the use of various preparations for their destruction.

(c) INDUSTRIES.

There are six flax mills operating for the extraction of fibre and tow from the leaves of *Phormium Tenax* (New Zealand flax). There is also a factory for the manufacture of binder twine and rope. These industries give employment to about 500 men and women.

The area under flax cultivation amounts to approximately 1,800 acres.

2. Experiments are being made in connection with the breeding and rearing of valuable fur-bearing rabbits and 26 stock rabbits were imported in the latter part of the year. This experiment is not sufficiently far advanced to make any report upon at the moment, but the stock had increased to about 60 animals at the end of the year.

3. The demand for lace has been maintained and the quality of the work has been kept at its usual high standard.

(d) SHIPPING.

The number of vessels calling at the Port during the year was 40, being the same number as in 1925. The total tonnage entering and clearing the Port was 164,327 as compared with 173,450 in 1925.

The vessels calling were made up as follows :—

British war ships	4
British merchant ships	34
German surveying vessel	1
American yacht	1

Normal mail service was maintained throughout the year.

III.—Education.

The total number of children under instruction is 674. This is an increase of 54 as compared with 1925.

It was not possible during the year to commence the technical instruction mentioned in the 1925 Report, owing partly to the difficulty of finding accommodation for the classes. This difficulty has been overcome and the scheme will now go forward.

The Superintendent of Education reports that the quarterly and annual examinations showed a satisfactory state of affairs; his report on the pupil teachers is equally satisfactory.

For the first time in its history a lady member was appointed to the Board of Education. This lady, at the end of the year, examined the girls' needlework and knitting and awarded certificates.

His Excellency the Governor visited each of the schools at the end of the year and was pleased to place on record his appreciation of the work being done by the teaching staff.

IV.—Government Institutions.

(a) HOSPITAL.

There were 132 admissions to hospital during the year, compared with 104 during 1925. The daily average number of in-patients was 8, and of out-patients 18.

A general anaesthetic was administered in 23 cases.

Two cases of beri-beri (both Lascars), were admitted to hospital from a ship; both of these patients died within five days of their admission.

(b) SAVINGS BANK.

There were 243 depositors having accounts with the Government Savings Bank at 31st December, 1926, as compared with 219 at 31st December, 1925.

Deposits during the year amounted to £2,412; deposits in 1925 were £2,754 7s. 7d.

Withdrawals during the year totalled £2,713 1s. 8½d., as compared with £2,172 18s. 7d. in 1925.

Stock to the value of £12,082 0s. 10d. (cost price) was held on behalf of Savings Bank depositors at 31st December, 1926.

V.—Judicial Statistics.

SUPREME COURT.

Five criminal cases came up for trial, and of these, two cases were committed from Ascension. The results of these cases were three convictions and two acquittals.

Three civil actions were tried, one for the recovery of land and two for recovery of debt.

There were sundry applications for probate and administration.

POLICE COURT.

Forty-three cases were dealt with in this Court as compared with eighteen in 1925 and there were thirty-four convictions as compared with twelve in the previous year. These figures do not necessarily indicate an increase in crime as many of the cases were infringements of Education and Revenue Regulations.

POLICE.

The police performed their duties in a satisfactory manner throughout the year. There was no change in the personnel.

The rural police have been placed in charge of the country telephone stations in order that they may be in telephonic communication with the remainder of the Island.

GAOL.

The number of prisoners committed to gaol during the year under review was 9, and 3 were placed under remand, giving a total of 12, an increase of 4 compared with the previous year. Ten were discharged during the year, two prisoners remaining in gaol on 31st December, 1926.

The total cost of the gaol during the year was £114 10s. 4d., an increase of £27 18s. over the expenditure of 1925, which is accounted for by the increase in the number of prisoners.

There has been no sickness during the year under review.

VI.—Legislation.

Eleven Ordinances were promulgated in 1926, being:—

No. 1. The Customs (Consolidation) Ordinance.—This is a consolidation of the various enactments relating to Customs dues.

No. 2. The Commissions of Enquiry Ordinance.—This Ordinance enables the Governor to appoint a commission to inquire into any subject matter which His Excellency may consider desirable in the public interest.

No. 3 The Road Tax (Repeal) Ordinance.—This is an Ordinance repealing the imposition of a road tax on all males in the Colony between the ages of 18 and 60 years.

No. 4. The Registration (Amendment) Ordinance.—This Ordinance is (a) To constitute the Office of Registrar-General of Births, Marriages and Deaths for the Colony, with a separate office, and (b) to provide for a duplicate set of records, including those of the Dependency of Ascension.

No. 5. The Ascension Island Workmens' Protection Ordinance.—The purpose of this Ordinance is to safeguard the interests of labour imported into the Island of Ascension.

No. 6.—The Appropriation Ordinance for the Current year.

No. 7. The Police Court (Fees) Ordinance.

No. 8. *The Supplementary Expenditure (1925) Ordinance.*

No. 9. *The Local Legislation (Declaratory) Ordinance.*—This measure constitutes the preliminary step towards the preparation of a Revised Edition of the Ordinances.

No. 10. *The new Edition of the Ordinances Ordinance,* approving the issue of a Revised Edition of the Ordinances.

No. 11. *The Reciprocal Judgments Enforcements Ordinance.*—This is in the nature of reciprocal legislation based on Part II of the Administration of Justice Act, 1920, of England.

VII.—Vital Statistics.

(a) POPULATION.

The estimated civil population on the 31st December, was 3,728, as compared with 3,699 at 31st December, 1925.

Deaths during the year numbered 67 (including three seamen landed for hospital treatment) as against 44 in 1925. The death-rate (excluding the three seamen) works out at 17.97 per 1,000 as compared with 12.16 per 1,000 in 1925.

Births registered numbered 111 (not including three still-born). These figures are identical with those of 1925. The birth-rate per 1,000 in 1926 works out at 29.77 as against 30.00 in the previous year.

There were 41 marriages in 1926 as against 29 in 1925.

(b) PUBLIC HEALTH.

The general health of the community has been satisfactory. A mild epidemic of influenza occurred in February and March; one death was attributable to this epidemic.

It is to be noted that out of a total of 67 deaths, 21 were of persons over the age of 70.

The water supply and drainage systems have proved adequate.

There have been no complaints regarding slaughter-houses and bakeries, and there have been no prosecutions under the Board of Health Ordinance.

(c) WAGES AND COST OF LIVING.

Skilled and Semi-skilled Workmen,	} 3s. 6d. to 6s. per day.
Carpenters, Masons, Smiths, &c.	
Labourers, agricultural 2s. 6d. per day.
„ „ female 1s. 6d. to 2s. per day.
Labourers, general 2s. 6d. per day.

Under certain circumstances, when performing work of a particularly arduous nature, e.g., coaling or discharging coal from ships, labourers are paid at a higher rate and earn from 3s. to 5s. per day.

Night work is paid for at the rate of 1s. per hour.

Domestics :—

Housemaids 10s. to 25s. per month, with board and lodging.

Cooks 20s. to 60s. per month, with board and lodging.

Male servants 30s. to 60s. per month, with board and lodging.

Grooms and Gardeners 2s. 6d. per day.

The cost of the principal articles of consumption during the year under review was as follows :—

Meat 1s. per lb.

Fish cheap and good.

Eggs 2s. per dozen.

Butter, Fresh 2s. 6d., Tinned 3s., per lb.

Bread 5d. per 1½ lb. loaf.

Milk 4d. per bottle.

Tea 3s. per lb.

Coffee 2s. 6d. per lb.

Sugar 3½d. per lb.

Rice 3½d. per lb.

Tobacco 11s. per lb.

Whisky 6s. 9d.- 9s. 6d. per bottle.

Kerosene 15s. 6d. per case.

(c) CLIMATE.

Barometer.—The mean barometric pressure for the year was 10,152.2 mb. M.S.L. (29.9 ins.).

The mean temperature was 60.1.

The absolute maximum was reached on 29th October, 76.0.

The absolute minimum was reached on 16th September, 50.0.

The mean wind force for the year under review was 9.7 m.p.h. (3.9 Beaufort notation).

The wind direction for the year was as follows :—

	Days.
E.N.E.	4
E.S.E.	36
S.S.E.	210
S.E.	75
S.	29
S.S.W.	3
Calm	2
No observation	6

Rainfall.—The total rainfall for the year was 28.922 inches. The greatest fall was on the 8th May, 0.892 inches.

These records are taken at Hutts' Gate Observatory, height 2,045 feet.

In Jamestown, about sea-level, the rainfall was 6.022 inches, and number of raindays 66. Average per rainday .09 inches. The greatest fall was .16 inches on the 12th April.

At the Briars Station, height 900 feet, the total for the year was 20.04 inches.

At Plantation, 1,600 feet, the rainfall was 30.16 inches, the greatest fall being 1.37 inches on 8th May, and the number of raindays 227.

VIII.—Post, Telegraph and Telephone Services.

(a) POST OFFICE.

Revenue.

The total postal revenue from all sources amounted to £2,666 7s. 1d., being an increase of £413 9s. as compared with 1925. This increase is chiefly due to the demand for stamps from overseas.

Expenditure.

The expenditure in this department amounted to £982 7s. 3d., an increase of £547 9s. 7d. as compared with 1925. This increase was chiefly due to the necessity for meeting a demand for the carriage of mails for the years 1924 and 1925, and to the printing of stamps.

Mail Matter.

Received from United Kingdom and Ascension :—

	1925.	1926.
Bags of mail	282	221
Parcels	2,207	1,743
Registered articles	1,453	1,038
Insured letters	3	10

Received from South Africa :—

Bags of mail	70	74
Parcels	429	469
Registered articles	463	398

Despatched to United Kingdom and Ascension :—

Bags of mail	73	73
Parcels	305	160
Registered articles	1,815	1,610

Despatched to South Africa :—

Bags of mail	44	48
Parcels	168	166
Registered articles	469	458

Money and Postal Orders.

Issues to United Kingdom and South Africa :—

	1925.	1926.
	£10,364	£8,737

Issues from United Kingdom and South Africa :—

	£2,073	£2,403
--	--------	--------

No insured or registered article was lost during the year under review.

(b) TELEGRAPHS.

There is no postal or inland telegraph. There is, however, an important cable station, maintained by the Eastern Telegraph Company, where messages are accepted for all parts of the world. This station has recently been brought right up-to-date by the installation of rapid transmission apparatus.

(c) TELEPHONES.

A telephone system is maintained by private subscribers. The rates for telephone service are £5 per instrument per annum.

IX.—General Observations.

(a) REPAIRS TO BUILDINGS.

The building staff were employed on minor repairs at the Castle, Government House, and the Hospital. They also completed the re-building of a cottage which it had been necessary to raze. The erection of the Arnold Memorial and the installation of the electric light plant at the hospital were also undertaken by the Public Works Department.

(b) ROADS.

The roads, always a difficult proposition, were maintained at their usual standard, and visitors from overseas frequently expressed surprise at the good condition of the roads in the face of such difficulties as exist.

(c) MAINTENANCE OF WATER SERVICE.

The water service remained in a satisfactory condition but there is no doubt that it will be necessary to incur expenditure in this connection at an early date. The present pipe line and the storage tanks have been in existence for very many years, and the Superintendent of Works has expressed the opinion that the town storage tanks are now beyond repair.

DEPARTMENTS AND INSTITUTIONS.

(a) Crown Property.

There was one meeting of the Commissioners of Crown Property during the year. Four grants of land for flax cultivation were approved.

(b) Quarantine Station.

The quarantine station was open for a period of twenty-one days in the early part of the year owing to the arrival of passengers from a ship having a case of cerebro-spinal meningitis on board. The quarantine arrangements were satisfactory and there was no development of the disease in the Colony.

(c) Poor Board.

Revenue arising on account of the relief of the poor amounted to £991 2s. 7d. as compared with £1,089 14s. 10d. in 1925.

Expenditure amounted to £985 13s. 6d. as compared with £902 13s. 6d. in 1925.

(d) Public Market.

	1925.			1926.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Revenue	29	12	2	30	17	2
Expenditure	24	8	11	21	12	5

(e) Girl Guides.

The Girl Guide movement is popular in St. Helena and there are two companies, viz. :—

1. 1st Jamestown (St. James).
2. St. Paul's.

The former is made up of 20 Rangers, 35 Guides and 18 Brownies, while the latter has 8 Rangers and 42 Guides.

Both companies report satisfactory progress for 1926, the usual programme of tests and training having been carried out.

(f) Boy Scouts.

There is one troop of Boy Scouts, in the Colony, consisting of six patrols. The total number of scouts is 48, and of this number 6 will have completed six years' service in June, 1927. Two boys rank as King's Scouts and there are three "all round cords".

The Vicar of Jamestown acts as Scoutmaster and this officer received the medal of merit from the Boy Scouts' Association during the year, the presentation being made by His Excellency the Governor on the occasion of a rally in Government House grounds.

(g) Church Lads Brigade.

There are two companies of the Church Lads Brigade in the Colony. One at St. Paul's consisting of 50 Cadets ranging in age from 14 years to 19 years, and 47 boys in the training corps whose ages range from 9 years to 14 years. The second company is at St. Matthew's and consists of 40 boys of all ranks.

ASCENSION ISLAND.

STATISTICS.

Population.

	1925.	1926.
Men	277	265
Women	27	26
Children	24	12
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	328	303
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Shipping.

Ships entered and cleared, 34.

Hospital.

In-patients, 71.

Out-patients, 167.

There was one death at Ascension in 1926, that of a St. Helenian who died from tuberculosis.

Rainfall.—The rainfall at Green Mountain was 42.68 inches, and in Georgetown, 10.1 inches.

Temperature.—The temperature taken at 21 hours at 38 feet above sea-level was mean maximum 84.1°, minimum 73.4°. Green Mountain is about 10° Fahrenheit cooler than Georgetown.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

There are on the Island 534 sheep, 29 cattle, 27 pigs, 7 mules, 2 horses, and 12 donkeys. In addition to these domestic animals there are a few wild donkeys roaming the hills.

The year under review has been exceptionally good and an excellent crop of vegetables has been raised, although not enough to supply the inhabitants. Additional supplies are imported from St. Helena and South Africa.

The rainfall having been sufficient it was not necessary to condense water in 1926.

The rainfall was not, however, well distributed, five inches fell in one day in March and nine inches in a few hours in May. The bulk of this heavy fall was lost owing to the insufficient storage provided.

Turtles.—Forty-five turtles were captured in 1926. The season must be regarded as a poor one and the turtles seemingly no longer land in the vicinity of the town, while at the more remote beaches