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COLONIAL REPORTS—ANNUAL

No. 1381.

ST. HELENA

REPORT FOR 1927

*(For Reports for 1925 and 1926 see Nos. 1297
and 1343, price 6d. and 9d. respectively.)*



LONDON:

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE.
To be purchased directly from H.M. STATIONERY OFFICE at the following addresses:
Astral House, Kingsway, London, W.C.2; 120, George Street, Edinburgh;
York Street, Manchester; 1, St. Andrew's Crescent, Cardiff;
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1928.

Price 9d. Net

ST. HELENA.

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1927.

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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 1650, when they preferred to establish themselves at the Cape of Good Hope. St. Helena was thereupon 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 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 a 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 refreshment house between England and India. 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 the British warships were brought to 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.

Geographical.

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 the Cape 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 from 450 to 2,400 feet in height. 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.

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 certain administrative powers.

A company has been formed to exploit the guano and phosphate deposits of 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.

General.

The question of the rehabilitation of agriculture and horticulture in St. Helena has occupied the attention of Government for some time.

During the year under review the Colony was fortunate in that its agricultural and forestry possibilities excited the interest of Mr. Davy, Deputy Director of Agriculture, Nyasaland, and of Mr. Legat, Chief Conservator of Forests to the Union Government of South Africa.

The result of the interest thus aroused was a brief visit from Mr. Davy, which has been followed up by correspondence and the receipt of seeds and literature; and an interesting correspondence with Mr. Legat.

Under date 1st August, His Excellency the Governor addressed a despatch to the Secretary of State on the subject of the appointment of a Horticultural or Agricultural Officer, an appointment which has now been sanctioned. In this despatch His Excellency dwelt at length on the past agricultural and horticultural history of the Island and quoted from the reports of Sir Daniel Morris, who reported on the agricultural possibilities of the Island in 1884, and that of Mr. Mason, who rendered a similar report in 1921.

The despatch was printed and copies were supplied to all land-owners and other persons interested in the agricultural possibilities of the Colony.

Another important subject that was dealt with at great length during the year was the question of the introduction of motor transport.

Under Ordinance No. 2 of 1919 the use of motor transport is practically prohibited, and under the conditions thus established, transport has to be effected by horse, ox and donkey. The horse is used chiefly for personal transport and for the handling of small merchandise. Oxen are used for heavy loads, and while ox transport is cheap it is very slow and cumbrous. Donkeys are largely used for the conveyance of "flax" leaves from the place of cutting to the mills. They are also very largely used by the "country" people for the transport of their own marketing. Donkeys will never be displaced in any economic scheme in St. Helena. They cost practically nothing to keep and they carry an astonishing load into places that neither motor, horse nor ox could possibly reach.

The chief consideration in the matter of introducing motor transport was that of roads, and this question had two aspects, i.e., grade and width. The roads of St. Helena are very largely mountain roads and are both steep and narrow. A large amount of correspondence took place between St. Helena and other Colonies on the subject of road conditions, and much assistance was afforded by those Colonies that were approached on this subject. Within the Island itself something was done in the way of road survey and the plotting of gradients, etc.

Under date 11th August His Excellency the Governor addressed a despatch to the Secretary of State reviewing the whole question of motor transport, and under date 28th October the Secretary of State authorised the repeal of Ordinance No. 2 of 1919. Subject to the repeal of this Ordinance and to regulations about to be framed, motor transport will be permitted in the Island.

This despatch was printed for public information.

Important work in connection with land titles was undertaken during the year. For some considerable time certain confusion had existed owing to the obscurity of some of the land records. The land registers have now been reviewed, and, with the exception of a few outstanding queries, the status of all properties has been determined.

The question of infant welfare has received considerable attention during the year. A complete medical and dental examination of all school children has been carried out. In the case of the medical examination the results are highly satisfactory; the dental condition of the children, however, leaves much to be desired.

St. Helena was noted in the past for its good and abundant water-supply

Captain Breckman, describing St. Helena in the account of his voyage to Borneo, 1715, observed, "The greatest conveniency of this Island for ships is the plenty and goodness of the water." During the year the question of the supply of water to shipping was under consideration. The existing facilities were unable to meet the existing or possible demand, and it is proposed to erect additional storage tanks on the wharf.

The improvement of the water-supplies in the country districts is also engaging the attention of Government.

I.—Financial.

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE.

The revenue for the year amounted to £17,986 exclusive of any grant-in-aid, showing a decrease of £3,458 as compared with 1926. It will be borne in mind that in 1926 the outstanding assets of the Government Flax Mill were absorbed by the Colonial Government, and cypress timber purchased in 1925 was brought into revenue. These two items amounted to £8,323; thus, apart from this extraordinary figure, the revenue for 1927 shows a decidedly healthy aspect.

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

Expenditure amounted to £16,740 showing a decrease of £6,414 as compared with that of the previous year, in which £7,727 doubtful assets were written off.

The revenue as compared with expenditure is therefore:—

					£
Total Revenue	...	...	...	...	20,486
Total Expenditure	...	...	...	...	16,740
					<hr/>
Surplus	...	...	...	...	£3,746

Statement of revenue and expenditure for the past five years:—

	<i>Revenue.</i>	<i>Expenditure.</i>	<i>Grant-in-aid.</i>
	£	£	£
1923	11,509	13,959	—
1924	16,727	14,182	4,000
1925	21,731	19,566	7,000
1926	23,945	23,154	2,500
1927	20,486	16,740	2,500

ASSETS AND LIABILITIES.

The statement of Assets and Liabilities shows an excess of Assets over Liabilities amounting to £8,701.

CURRENCY.

Bills of Exchange on the Crown Agents for the Colonies issued during 1927 amounted to £14,148, as against £15,794 in 1926. £391 in specie was exported during the year.

REMITTANCES.

£5,184 was remitted to the Crown Agents during the year, the main bulk being in the form of Bills on His Majesty's Paymaster-General.

CROWN AGENTS FOR THE COLONIES.

For many years past there has been an overdraft with the Crown Agents, but it is pleasing to note that for the year under report £4,000 was advanced to the Crown Agents at interest and £500 deposit at call. That is to say, on 31st December, 1927, the Crown Agents held £4,500 of the Colony's money, whilst the Colony owed them only £34.

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

	Overdraft.	Cash.
	£	£
December 31, 1923	7,500	Dr. 501
December 31, 1924	1,500	Dr. 478
December 31, 1925	1,500	Cr. 607
December 31, 1926	500	Cr. 530
Advance to Crown Agents		
December 31, 1927	4,500	Dr. 34

II.—Production.

AGRICULTURE.

The only agricultural product of any importance in St. Helena is *Phormium Tenax*, from which the fibre known as New Zealand flax is produced.

The quality of the fibre remained constant during the year. It is estimated that there are 2,000 acres under flax cultivation.

Botley's Lay.—The revenue derived from the Government pasture lands at Botley's Lay or Common amounted to £92 11s. 7½d., while expenditure amounted to £75 4s. 2d. The chief items of expenditure were the wages of the shepherd and the rent and rates.

Maldivia Gardens.—The sale of fruit from Maldivia Gardens produced £32 5s. 5d., against an expenditure of £46 14s. 6d. The chief item of expenditure was wages.

White Ants.—An intensive campaign against white ants within the grounds of Government House was undertaken during the year, and was attended with marked success.

An area within a radius of about 200 yards of Government House was selected for operations, and within this area about 60 nests have been destroyed and about 250 trees chemically treated. The result, it is hoped, will tend to the practical elimination of the pest within the area of operations.

III.—Trade and Economics.

CUSTOMS REVENUE.

The Customs revenue collected during 1927 amounted to £5,011 10s. 6d., as against £4,999 18s. 9d. in 1926, showing a small increase of £11 11s. 9d.

Increases of revenue appear under :—

Duty on Imports £71 4s. 11d. An increase in the consumption of spirits and cigarettes accounts for this.

Water £74 4s. The shipping agents, on the understanding that the Government would reduce the dues on water supplied to shipping, imported a 70-ton water-boat. The dues were reduced from 2s. to 1s. per ton under amending Ordinance No. 1 of 1927, which came into operation on 8th June. The results have justified this reduction.

Increases of £3 1s. 0d. and £1 13s. 0d. are found under Permits and Warehouse Rent respectively.

Decreases of revenue appear under Wharfage on Imports £12 12s. 11d., Wharfage on Exports £18 12s. 8d., Tonnage Dues £13 13s. 3d., *Ad Valorem* Duty £14 5s. 11d., and War Dues £79 6s. 5d.

The decrease under Wharfage on Exports was unexpected as, although a mill, closed in 1926, was re-opened in 1927, another mill exported 94 tons of fibre and 50 tons of tow less than in the previous year.

The decrease on War Dues is due to the fact that they were abolished in 1926 and therefore do not appear in 1927.

Comparative Statement of Customs Revenue for the years 1926 and 1927.

	1926.		1927.		Increase.		Decrease.	
	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
Duty on Imports ...	2,304	4 0	2,375	8 11	71	4 11	—	—
Wharfage on Imports	1,502	11 7	1,489	18 8	—	—	12	12 11
Wharfage on Exports	479	1 6	460	8 10	—	—	18	12 8
Water	55	6 0	129	10 0	74	4 0	—	—
Permits	31	18 0	34	19 0	3	1 0	—	—
Warehouse Rent ...	23	1 0	24	14 0	1	13 0	—	—
Tonnage Dues ...	380	11 6	366	18 3	—	—	13	13 3
5% Duty	143	18 9	129	12 10	—	—	14	5 11
War Dues	79	6 5	—	—	—	—	79	6 5
Totals ...	£4,999	18 9	£5,011	10 6	£150	2 11	£138	11 2

CUSTOMS EXPENDITURE.

Customs expenditure amounted to £564 2s. 8d., as compared with £521 2s. 3d. in 1926.

The increase appears under Equipment. The growing demand and quicker delivery of water supplied to shipping necessitated the installation of a larger hose between the wharf hydrant and the water-boat.

In using the 2½-inch hose it took a little over 3½ hours to fill the water-boat; but, now that a 4-inch hose is fitted, the time is reduced to 2 hours.

IMPORTS.

The value of imports for 1927 amounted to £49,678, as against £56,040 in 1926, showing a decrease of £6,362. This total includes Government imports, exclusive of munitions of war, to the amount of £1,827.

The principal increases in value over 1926 are in :—	£
Coal and coke	299
Rice	341
Spirits	162
Sugar	622
Timber	588

The principal decreases are :—

*Boats	800
Chemicals, Drugs, etc.	219
Drapery and Dry Goods	1,792
Earthenware and Glassware	273
Flour	269
Foodstuffs (other than enumerated)	1,273
Grain	616
Machinery	698
Margarine and Butter	388
Oilman's stores	627
Paraffin Oil	955
Stationery	124
Tea	369

*A water-boat to the value of £800 was imported in 1926

Two large shipments of paraffin oil were imported in 1926, as against one in 1927.

EXPORTS.

The value of exports in 1927 amounted to £34,274, as against £39,977 in 1926, showing a decrease of £5,703.

The principal increases were :—	£
Flax Seed	174
Wool	101
and decreases :—	
Fibre and Tow	3,877
Rope and Twine	1,295
Hides	183
Specie	609

The weight of fibre and tow exported during the year was 738 and 365 tons respectively, as compared with 751 and 417 tons respectively in 1926.

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.
Labourers, agricultural, 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. per lb., tinned 3s. per lb.

Bread 5d. per 1½-lb. loaf.

Milk 4d. per bottle.

Tea 3s. per lb.

Coffee 2s. 6d. per lb. Local coffee 2s. 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.

IV.—Communications.

SHIPPING.

The number of vessels calling at the port during the year was 39, as compared with 40 during 1926. The total tonnage entering and clearing the port was 143,131, as compared with 164,327 in 1926. The vessels calling were made up as follows :—

British warships	4
British merchant ships	34
German cruiser	1

Normal mail service, that is, one outward and one homeward mail each month, was maintained throughout the year.

TELEGRAPHS.

The Eastern Telegraph Company maintains a cable station in the Colony, where messages are accepted for all parts of the world. There is no internal postal service nor inland telegraph.

TELEPHONES.

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

ROADS.

The maintenance of the roads under existing conditions is still a difficult proposition.

Expenditure on this service amounted to £900. The repeal of the Ordinance prohibiting motor traffic has been approved and the matter of a Motor Traffic Ordinance and of Regulations is now under consideration. Consideration is also being given to the introduction of road-making machinery, e.g., stone-crushers, rollers, &c.

V.—Justice, Police, Prisons.

SUPREME COURT.

There were no cases on the criminal side of the Supreme Court during the year under review. There was one civil action only. This was a matrimonial cause in which a decree *nisi* was granted.

POLICE COURT.

Ninety-six cases were heard in the Police Court, resulting in fifty-four convictions.

Comparative table of Police Court convictions for the past five years is appended:—

The increase in Police Court convictions partly arises from the enforcement of the Education Ordinance.

<i>Previous Years.</i>	1923.	1924.	1925.	1926.	1927.
Assaults and other offences against the person.	4	2	3	3	14
Malicious injury to property ...	3	2	2	2	2
Offences other than malicious against property.	3	1	2	2	3
Offences against Highways and other Laws tending to the social economy of the Island.	6	1	14	14	17
Educational	—	—	4	4	10
Others	2	6	9	9	8
Total ...	18	12	34	34	54

GAOL.

There were two prisoners in gaol at the end of 1926. The number of prisoners committed during the year was fifteen, of which total three were committed on remand.

The total cost of the gaol during the year was £139 4s. 1d., as compared with £114 10s. 4d. for the previous year.

VI.—Public Works.

The Public Works Department carried out an extensive programme during the year. Major operations of the Department during the year were the building of servants' quarters and stables to complete the Olive Cottage property, the razing and re-erection of the Government Forester's cottage, the razing and re-erection of the Old Country School. This building, by arrangement with the Lord Bishop of St. Helena, has been rebuilt as a vicarage for St. Paul's Church, and a comfortable and substantial residence is now available for this purpose.

Maintenance of Roads.—See under Communications.

Maintenance of Water.—The increased demand for water for shipping has exercised the mind of Government to a considerable extent and arrangements were made during the latter part of the year for the provision of new tanks for the purpose.

The following extensive repairs to water-lines were carried out during the year:—

1. The replacement of the water-line and old ram which provides the public water-supply to Francis Plain.
2. The renewal of the old pipe-lines leading from Wills' land to the cattle-troughs in the Longwood area.

A considerable programme of minor repairs was also carried out.

VII.—Public Health.

There was a widespread epidemic of influenza at the beginning of the year. There were upwards of 2,000 cases and the resources of the Medical Department were tried to the utmost. Happily there were few deaths attributable to this epidemic.

The number of admissions to hospital was 113. 6,066 out-patients were treated.

There were 124 children vaccinated during the year. This is more than double the number of vaccinations in 1926. This extraordinary increase is chiefly due to the fact that attention was particularly drawn to the Vaccination Ordinance and to the obligations of parents, &c., under the Ordinance.

A medical examination of all the school children was made during the year. This is the first time that such an examination has been made. A highly satisfactory state of general health was revealed, with the exception of the dental condition of the children. A dental surgeon was appointed during the latter part of the year and arrived in the Colony about the middle of December.

VIII.—Vital Statistics.

POPULATION.

The estimated civil population on 31st December was 3,754, as compared with 3,728 at 31st December, 1926. Deaths during the year numbered 63, as compared with 67 in the previous year. The death-rate for 1927 was 16.78 per 1,000, as compared with 17.97 for 1926.

There were 99 births during the year, the birth-rate being 26.55 per 1,000, as compared with 29.77 in 1926.

The percentage of illegitimate births for the year was 21.21.

There were 36 marriages during the year.

INFANT MORTALITY.

The infant mortality rate for the year was 3.99 per 1,000. For the years 1923 to 1927 infant mortality was 9, 11, 7, 14, 15.

The question of infant mortality has been occupying the attention of Government to a considerable extent, and the question of the establishment of Mothercraft and Infant Welfare centres is under consideration.

SANITARY.

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.

IX.—Education.

The total number of children under instruction was 680.

The technical training class for boys mentioned in the 1925 and 1926 Reports was started during the year and the Superintendent of Education has reported on this class as follows:—

“The woodwork class in the Boys’ School is now well under way, and, considering the initial paucity of equipment, has already done good work. Instruction is given for two hours on each of two afternoons in the week. The boys are interested and keen and quick to learn, and the progress they have already made is gratifying and has amply justified the establishment of the class.”

The Superintendent of Education has rendered a satisfactory report as a result of his quarterly examinations.

X.—Lands and Survey.

There were five meetings of the Commissioners of Crown Property held during the year. Forty-one grants of land for building and flax-planting were sanctioned.

XI.—Labour.

See under Trade and Economics.

XII.—Miscellaneous.

LEGISLATION.

Five Ordinances were enacted in 1927, as follows:—

No. 1.—Consolidation of Customs Ordinances.

No. 2.—To provide for the registration in the Colony of Letters Patent granted in the United Kingdom.

No. 3.—Supplementary Expenditure of 1926.

No. 4.—To provide for Sessions of the Supreme Court to be held in Ascension Island.

No. 5.—An amendment of the Ascension Island Police Ordinance of 1923.

CLIMATE.

Barometer.—The mean barometric pressure for the year was 1014.825.

The mean temperature was 61.2.

The absolute maximum, reached on 28th February, was 73.0.

The absolute minimum, 52.0, was reached on 24th July.

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:—

	<i>Days.</i>
E.	6
E.N.E.	4
E.S.E.	12
S.S.E.	251
S.E.	43
S.	37
S.W.	6
Calm	2
No observations	4

RAINFALL.

The total rainfall for the year was 27.928 inches. The greatest fall was on the 1st May, 1.120 inches.

These records are taken at Hutt’s Gate Observatory, height 2,045 feet.

In Jamestown, about sea-level, the rainfall was 6.006 inches, and number of rain-days 59. Average per rain-day .017 inch. The greatest fall was .075 inch on the 16th April.

At Plantation, 1,600 feet, the rainfall was 31.60 inches, the greatest fall being 1.59 inches on 1st May, and the number of rain-days 180.

At the Briers Station, height 900 feet, the total for the year was 18.58 inches.

POST OFFICE.

The total number of letter-bags received at the Post Office from the United Kingdom and Ascension was 228, as compared with 221 in 1926; while there were 230 parcels post receptacles received, as compared with 226 in 1926.

21,862 letters and other packages were forwarded from the Post Office, as compared with 22,540 in 1926.

SAVINGS BANK.

The total number of depositors into the Savings Bank in 1927 was 246, as compared with 243 in 1926. Total deposits amounted to £4,048, as compared with £2,412 in 1926. This very considerable increase is due to increased internal prosperity and to the fact that some overseas visitors made use of the Savings Bank.

Stock to the value of £12,082 (cost price) is held by Government on behalf of Savings Bank depositors.

POOR BOARD.

Details of revenue and expenditure of the Poor Board are not yet available as the Board's financial year does not end until 31st March.

PUBLIC MARKET.

Revenue from the Public Market during 1927 amounted to £34, while expenditure totalled £23 13s. 2d. This compares with 1926 as £30 17s. 2d. and £21 12s. 6d. respectively. The finance and control of the Public Market are in the hands of the Poor Board.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.

The Inspector of Weights and Measures reports that all weights and measures are accurate. During the year under review, four weighing-machines have been adjusted, one weighing-machine was condemned, 10 weights were readjusted, and 7 weights condemned.

BOY SCOUTS.

There is one troop of Boy Scouts on the Island, consisting of 6 patrols of 8 boys each and a small pack of 6 wolf cubs. These patrols are divided into two sections each under an Assistant Scoutmaster, while a Scoutmaster is in command of the whole troop.

CHURCH LADS' BRIGADE.

There are two Companies of the Church Lads' Brigade, one at St. Paul's and one at St. Matthew's. St. Paul's Company consists of 3 officers, 11 non-commissioned officers, 42 cadets, and 43 boys in the Training Corps, while St. Matthew's Company consists of 26 lads under 3 officers.

GIRL GUIDES.

There are two Companies of Girl Guides, one in Jamestown (1st Jamestown Company) and one at St. Paul's (1st St. Paul's Company).

In the Jamestown Company there are 40 guides and 24 Brownies, while the Country Company consists of 3 officers, 24 rangers, 36 guides, and 7 Brownies.

ASCENSION ISLAND.

STATISTICS.

Population.—The population of Ascension Island on 31st December, 1927, was 298, made up of 111 Europeans and 187 St. Helenians.

Shipping.—29 ships entered and cleared the port during the year, as compared with 34 in 1926.

Hospital.—In-patients 22. Out-patients (including 19 dental) 243.

Rainfall.—The rainfall for Green Mountain was 39.83 inches and at Georgetown 5.73 inches. 1927 was, therefore, considerably drier than 1926 when the rainfall for Green Mountain was 42.68 inches and for Georgetown 10.1 inches.

Temperature.—The temperature taken at 21 hours at 38 feet above sea-level was mean maximum 83.7°, minimum 73.2°.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

The farm at Green Mountain carries the following stock:—

Sheep	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	439
Pigs	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	44
Cattle	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	26
Mules	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5
Donkeys	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7
Horse	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1

Water-Supply.—The rainfall was spread fairly evenly over the year except for the months of May and June which were very dry. September and November were the wettest months with 5 inches and 5.72 inches respectively.

Turtles.—113 turtles were captured in 1927, as compared with 45 in 1926.

H. J. PINK,
Officer-in-Charge, Secretariat.

SECRETARIAT,
17th March, 1928.