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COLONIAL REPORTS—ANNUAL.

No. 1041.

NYASALAND.

REPORT FOR 1918-19.

(For Report for 1917-18 see No 996.)

Presented to Parliament by Command of His Majesty.

September, 1920.



LONDON:
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1920.

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No. 1041.

NYASALAND.

 REPORT ON THE BLUE BOOK FOR THE YEAR 1918-19.*

I.—FINANCIAL.

REVENUE.

The total revenue for the year, including land sales, amounted to £187,645 or an increase of £43,406 over that of the previous financial year, and thus reaches the highest figure yet recorded in the financial history of the Protectorate.

Revenue for the past five years :—

| | £ |
|-----------------|---------|
| 1914-15 | 118,523 |
| 1915-16 | 137,911 |
| 1916-17 | 148,284 |
| 1917-18 | 144,239 |
| 1918-19 | 187,645 |

Revenue increase in past four years 58·3 per cent.

While nearly all heads of revenue shewed an increase over the estimate "Customs Duties" contributed 80 per cent. of the total increase, and this highly satisfactory position is undoubtedly due to the cessation of hostilities and consequent impetus to trade.

EXPENDITURE.

The expenditure for the year, exclusive of loan expenditure, was estimated at £157,375, while the actual expenditure amounted to £150,198, shewing a net saving of £7,177.

Expenditure for the past five years :—

| | £ |
|-----------------|---------|
| 1914-15 | 143,161 |
| 1915-16 | 125,666 |
| 1916-17 | 128,272 |
| 1917-18 | 143,639 |
| 1918-19 | 150,198 |

Increase in expenditure in 4 years 4·9 per cent.

The gross savings on the authorized estimates amounted to £21,097.

* A map of the Protectorate will be found in the Report for 1912-13 No. 772 [Cd. 7050-13].

WAR EXPENDITURE AND PUBLIC DEBT.

The Public Debt outstanding at the 31st of March, 1919, amounted to £3,190,800, but included in this sum £2,998,000 represents advances made by the War Office in connection with the local campaign against German East Africa. No decision has as yet been arrived at as to the proportion of this sum for which the Nyasaland Government is responsible.

The actual loans are as follows :—

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| Loan for Redemption of Railway Subsidy Lands | £180,800 |
| East Africa Protectorates Loan 1914— Railway and Roads | 12,000 |
| Total .. | <u>£192,800</u> |

The final payment of £15,800 on account of the loan for the redemption of subsidy lands was paid to the British Central Africa Company during the year, on satisfactory completion of the railway contract.

The sum of £12,000 represents the initial advance made out of a total of £803,000 sanctioned by the Imperial Government for the extension of the Railway to Lake Nyasa, and for the development of road communications, further advances having been postponed on account of the outbreak of war.

Interest at the rate of 4 per cent. is payable on this loan, and the mode of the repayment of the advance is by way of annuity at the rate of £626 17s. 6d. per annum. The advance has been expended, and in addition an amount of £2,891 8s. 3d. has been met from the Protectorate's revenues pending the receipt of further instalments of the loan for the completion of the preliminary survey of the route of the railway extension to Lake Nyasa.

ASSETS AND LIABILITIES.

At the close of the year, the balance of assets over liabilities stood at £100,406 as shown below, or an increase of £37,447 over the balance for the previous financial year.

| | | | |
|---|----------------|-----------------|-------------|
| Balance of Assets over Liabilities at 1st April, 1918.. | £62,959 | 6 | 1 |
| Revenue for year 1918-19 .. | £187,645 | 8 | 4 |
| Expenditure do. .. | £150,198 | 2 | 1 |
| | <u>£37,447</u> | <u>6</u> | <u>3</u> |
| | | <u>£100,406</u> | <u>12 4</u> |

CURRENCY AND BANKING.

The currency of the Protectorate consists of British coin, gold, silver and bronze. There is no note circulation. No reliable statistics are available as to the currency in circulation at the end of the year under review.

The Banking business of the Protectorate is provided for by the Standard Bank of South Africa, Limited, with branches at Blantyre, Limbe and Zomba, and the National Bank of South Africa with branches at Blantyre, Limbe, Zomba and Fort Johnston.

SAVINGS BANK.

The amount deposited with accrued interest in the Post Office Savings Bank during the year ended on the 31st December, 1918, was £14,905, as compared with £11,479 during the previous year. The amounts withdrawn totalled £13,075, as against £7,890 in 1917.

New accounts opened during the year under review were 234, whilst 178 were closed, a net increase of 56. On 31st December, 1918, there were 522 active accounts as compared with 466 on the same date in the preceding year; the average amount standing to the credit of each depositor being £33 11s. 9d., as compared with £33 14s. at the close of the previous year.

The total amount deposited, with accrued interest since the establishment of the Savings Bank in 1911 was £57,300 18s. 11d., and the amount withdrawn £39,767 7s. 5d., leaving a sum of £17,533 11s. 6d. due to depositors.

The rate of interest payable on deposit account is 2½ per cent. per annum, and the interest earned by the depositors during the year amounted to £415 0s. 8d., as against £483 5s. 1d. for the year ended 31st December, 1917, a decrease of £68 4s. 5d.

II.—TRADE AND SHIPPING.

TRADE.

The effect on trade caused by the declaration of peace is nowhere better reflected than in the revenue receipts of the Customs Department. The gross receipts during the year amounted to £74,572, as against £39,253 in the previous year, an increase of £35,319 or 89·97 per cent. over those of the financial year 1917-18.

The large increase referred to above is attributable in some measure to the arrival within the year under review of imports which were held up at Beira and Chinde during the previous year through lack of shipping facilities, but principally to the restocking of stores depleted under stress of war conditions and to the high prime cost of commodities on which Customs dues are assessed.

The external trade (import and export), excluding goods in transit, specie and military stores amounted in value to £1,160,172 as against £476,531 in the previous year.

The following statement shews the total value of Imports and Exports for the last five years:—

| | Imports. | Exports. |
|-----------------|----------|----------|
| 1914-15 | £181,387 | £182,413 |
| 1915-16 | 238,076 | 198,173 |
| 1916-17 | 385,567 | 289,467 |
| 1917-18 | 331,657 | 144,874 |
| 1918-19 | 648,979 | 511,193 |

IMPORTS.

The total value of imports for home consumption, excluding specie, military and civil Government importations, amounted to £648,979, classified as follows, viz., "Food Drink and Tobacco," £85,557; "Raw materials," £6,004; "Manufactured articles," £486,028; and "Miscellaneous," £71,390.

Of the total imports, the United Kingdom supplied 48·53 per cent., British possessions, 23·79 per cent., and Foreign countries, 27·68 per cent., as compared with 55·6 per cent., 21·4 per cent., and 23 per cent., respectively, for the preceding year—all exclusive of specie.

EXPORTS.

Exclusive of Government and military exports, the total value of exports during the year was £511,193, as compared with £144,874 in the preceding year, classified as follows, viz., "Food, Drink and Tobacco," £315,683; "Raw materials," £172,839; "Miscellaneous," £16,218.

Planters to some extent are reducing their cultivation of cotton in favour of tobacco, and this is no doubt due to the prevailing high prices obtainable on the home market for the latter commodity. A steady increase in the export of fibre (mainly sisal) is noticeable, and it is probable that its cultivation and export will continue to develop.

The countries of destination of exports were as follows, viz., United Kingdom, 94·3 per cent., British possessions, 2·5 per cent., Foreign countries, 3·2 per cent.

TRANSIT TRADE.

The transit trade of the Protectorate during the year shewed an improvement to the extent of £14,678, or 42·23 per cent. over the preceding year. The value of goods which passed through the Protectorate outwards during 1918-19 was £20,628, as against £12,041 in 1917-18, and inwards £28,807, as compared with £22,716 in the previous financial year.

Both inwards and outwards the transit trade is confined to the following territories, viz., Northern Rhodesia, Occupied German East Africa, and Portuguese East Africa.

TRAFFIC.

Ten British steamers and fourteen flying foreign flags ply between Nyasaland and Chinde, the ocean port. The tonnage manifested during the year from Chinde and other Portuguese ports to Chindio, the terminus of the Central Africa Railway on the Zambezi River, and Port Herald, the port of entry into the Protectorate, aggregated 23,521 tons, while from Port Herald and Chindio 5,227 tons were carried down river. Clearances outwards from Port Herald and Chindio to Chinde totalled 100, as compared with 84 in the previous year, and inwards 413, as against 231 in 1917-18.

Six British steamers ply on Lake Nyasa, and are mainly engaged in the transport of passengers and trade goods to up-country stations.

III.—AGRICULTURE.

As in the previous year, the principal crops grown for export were cotton, tobacco, tea, coffee, chillies, ground-nuts, fibre and rubber. The total acreage under European cultivation during the year under review was 52,837, as against 54,098 in 1917-18.

COTTON.

A serious decrease in the production of cotton must be reported. The area under European cultivation fell from 28,372 acres in 1917-18 to 18,141 in the year under report, and the production in terms of 400 lbs. bales lint from 4,448 to 1,911. The decline in the area cultivated is in part attributable to the compulsory cultivation of foodstuffs by planters for military purposes, but chiefly, it is thought, to a general dissatisfaction with the crop amongst planters in the Shire Highlands owing to the indifferent yields obtained in recent years. This no doubt led to the cultivation of tobacco in preference to cotton, where the soil and climate were suitable to both crops. The deterioration of Nyasaland cotton is probably due to the neglect to use selected seed, and to errors in cultivation, such as continuous cropping of land without manure or rotation of crops. These matters will receive the earnest attention of the Agricultural Department so soon as its staff, which has been much depleted owing to the war, is brought up to full strength.

The native cotton crop, principally owing to unfavourable climatic conditions, also declined, the production being 365 tons of seed cotton as against 1,070 in the previous year.

TOBACCO.

The area under tobacco was 6,027 acres and the crop 23,164 cwts., or an average of 395 lbs., per acre. The acreage under cultivation in the previous year was 9,516, and the decrease is almost entirely attributable to the fact that all planters were compelled to devote 25 per cent. of their cultivation to the production of native foodstuffs for use by the military. In spite of adverse weather conditions the quality of the crop was generally good. Prices ruled high both locally and in the home market, 2s. 9d., a lb. being obtained in some instances by growers who shipped direct to the United Kingdom.

TEA.

The harvested crop of tea amounted to 5,667 cwts., as compared with 5,548 cwts. in the previous year, and represents the yield of 4,433 acres under cultivation.

OTHER PRODUCTS.

The acreage under coffee was 1,194 and produced a yield of 1,187 cwts. 33,150 lbs. of Ceara rubber were obtained from an area of 3,323 acres; 1,280 acres under Para rubber produced 54,206 lbs. 144 cwts. represents the chillies crop from 127 acres; and the fibre crop totalled 4,132 cwts. from 1,281 acres. Capsicums, beans, ground-nuts, wheat and millet were all cultivated with success, and found a ready market.

EXPERIMENTAL FARMS.

Owing to the depleted state of the staff of the Agricultural Department, practically no experimental work was carried out at the two Government farms. All effort by the Department was concentrated on the organisation of increased food production throughout the Protectorate to meet the needs of the military authorities, and all available labour on the farms at Nyachiperi in the lower Shire District, and Namiwawa in the Zomba District was utilized in the growing of foodstuffs. Cotton was grown at Nyachiperi, but owing to unfavourable weather and heavy infection with boll-worm, the crop was much below the average of former years.

VETERINARY.

As in the preceding year, the Veterinary staff was chiefly employed throughout the year on measures connected with the eradication of rinderpest in the southern portion of German East Africa, and with the prevention of its spread to Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

The position at the close of the year may be briefly summarised as follows:—south of the Songwe there is a cattle-free belt extending from Lake Nyasa to Lake Tanganyika, and in another belt north of the river all cattle have been immunised by inoculation. All movement of cattle between German East Africa and Nyasaland and Rhodesia is prohibited. So far no case of rinderpest has been reported in Nyasaland.

Isolated outbreaks of Redwater fever, and Trypanosomiasis have occurred in the Shire Highlands during the year, but with systematic dipping the former disease should disappear.

FORESTRY.

Owing to the scarcity of native labour throughout the year, forestry operations had to be restricted to the maintenance of nurseries and existing plantations, and the cutting of Mlanje timber for the Public Works Department and the Shire Highlands Railway. The quantity of timber sawn was 68,818 lineal feet, varying in thickness from 2 to 6 inches, and in breadth from 4 to 12 inches.

ENTOMOLOGICAL.

No entomological work could be undertaken, as the post of Entomologist is still vacant.

IV.—INDUSTRIES AND MINES.

No new trades or industries were introduced during the year. The mica mining operations referred to in the report for 1917-18 were continued throughout the year under review, but without satisfactory results. The total quantity shipped to the Ministry of Munitions during the year was 8,478 lbs., and realized an average price of 2s. 6d. per lb.

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The Government Geologist arrived in September, 1918, and for the remainder of the year was fully occupied in examining and reporting on the various known mica deposits distributed throughout the Protectorate.

V.—EDUCATION.

There are no Government schools in the Protectorate, nor are there any schools where European children can be educated, but provision for this service is under consideration. Native schools are controlled and maintained by various missionary societies established throughout the Protectorate, ten of which share in the annual Government grant of £1,000 in aid of education.

On the 31st March there were 1,991 schools established, as compared with 2,112 on the same date in the previous year. The total number of scholars on the roll was 72,328 boys and 52,831 girls, the average attendance being 45,094 boys and 32,858 girls. The vast majority of these schools are village schools in charge of native teachers superintended by Europeans from the headquarters of the various Missions.

Native artizans are trained in industrial schools attached to the headquarters of most of the Missions, where carpentry, printing, bookbinding, agriculture, horticulture, and other practical trades are taught.

VI.—JUDICIAL, POLICE, AND PRISONS.

POLICE.

The authorised establishment of the district native police on the 31st March, 1919, was 434, as compared with 418 in the previous year.

CASES.

The number of new civil cases entered in the High Court during the year was 62, as against 54 in the previous year. In addition 11 criminal cases were entered and dealt with, as against 7 in the preceding year.

ADMINISTRATION OF ESTATES.

The estates of 41 deceased persons were under administration during the year, 13 of which to the value of £2,010 were finally wound up, leaving 28 under administration at the close of the year. In addition 31 military estates representing a combined value of £2,500 were disposed of during the year.

VII.—POPULATION.

The number of Europeans resident in the Protectorate on 31st March, 1919, including officials and non-officials, was 492 males and 232 females, or a total of 724, as compared with 463 males and 252 females, or a total of 715 in the previous year. The Asiatic population amounted to 407 as against 422 in the preceding year.

The native population is estimated at 1,216,000, being approximately 551,600 males and 664,400 females.

VIII.—PUBLIC HEALTH.

GENERAL.

Owing to the presence during the year 1918 of the German enemy forces along the eastern borders of Nyasaland and of Lake Nyasa, there was a widespread and continuous movement of our troops, followers, and carriers within the Protectorate throughout the year, movements which afforded every facility for the spread of infectious and contagious diseases.

Small-pox was confined to the districts in which it was prevalent last year, though sporadic outbreaks occurred in other areas, but with the assistance of the military medical officers these outbreaks were promptly dealt with and did not assume an epidemic intensity.

There were only five cases of bubonic plague reported (two of these having been returned as "suspected cases") from the North Nyasa district in the neighbourhood of Karonga, as against 28 in the previous year, and 13 in the year before that.

No further recurrence of cerebro-spinal meningitis occurred during the year, and this disease may now be regarded as non-existent in Nyasaland.

From the epidemiological point of view one of the most notable events of the year, and a factor affecting the public health of the Protectorate more prejudicially than any other, was the appearance of influenza in the month of November. This epidemic rapidly spread throughout the Protectorate, reached its maximum intensity in December, and declined steadily during the month of January.

IX.—COMMUNICATIONS.

RAILWAYS.

There are no Government railways in the Protectorate. The Shire Highlands Railway Nyasaland Limited, owns and works a railway from Port Herald to Blantyre, a distance of 113½ miles, and is connected at Port Herald with the Central Africa Railway which runs thence to Chindio on the Zambezi river, a distance of 60½ miles from Port Herald. Sanction was obtained in 1914 for the extension of the railway system to Lake Nyasa, but owing to the War it has not been possible to proceed with more than a survey of the proposed route.

MARINE TRANSPORT.

All vessels on Lake Nyasa were, throughout the War, in commission for Government in connection with military operations against German East Africa, and with the conclusion of the Armistice privately-owned vessels were handed back to their owners, and the Government Marine Transport Department resumed a peace footing on the 31st of March, 1919. The success which attended the campaign in East Africa was in no small part due to the excellent service performed, often under the greatest pressure, by the vessels forming the Lake Nyasa Flotilla.

ROAD TRANSPORT.

The Government motor transport service was maintained throughout the year, and the following motor vehicles were purchased from the Military Salvage Commission, viz., 3 Packhard lorries, 3 light Reo and 3 Hupmobile cars, and 2 motor cycles.

X.—NATIVE AFFAIRS.

The native population remained peaceable and loyal throughout the year under report, but in all districts in the Protectorate a marked disinclination on the part of natives to engage for plantation work was in evidence, although in the attempt to secure an adequate labour supply European planters offered very largely increased wages. This state of affairs may be accounted for partly by the fact that the natives still hold considerable sums of money remaining from their earnings during the War, when high wages were paid for their services as carriers, etc., by the military authorities, and partly to the ravages of the influenza epidemic which swept throughout the Protectorate during the year.

It is extremely improbable that the standard rate of wage for native labour will ever drop to its pre-war level, nor would it be reasonable to expect that it should, so long as the prices of native truck remain at their present height. While the War was still in progress the native could be made to understand the reasons for the high cost of cloth, etc., but with the cessation of hostilities, and victory to the Allies, he has expected that prices would drop to their former level.

As was not unusual in former years, scarcity of food, amounting almost to a famine in certain localities, occurred towards the end of the financial year under review, and to relieve the distress it became necessary for the Government to distribute some 1,246 tons of grain obtained for the most part from surplus military stocks. The bulk of this grain was issued to natives on payment; a small quantity was issued to aged or infirm persons free of charge. The food shortage was caused, in part, by the failure of the early rains, which necessitated repeated planting up of the gardens, and so reducing, and in many cases completely exhausting, the small stocks of grain conserved as food to tide the population over until the reaping of the next harvest. The famine was, however, due in a large measure to the fact that the gardens planted during the previous season were much smaller than usual owing to large numbers of able-bodied men having been employed on military service, leaving only the older men, women, and children to cultivate the ground, and this, coupled with the return of large numbers of natives from military service, added considerably to the difficulties of the situation.

XI.—TELEGRAPHS AND TELEPHONES.

TELEGRAPHS.

There are no Government telegraphs. The telegraph service is owned and managed by the African Transcontinental Telegraph Company and extends from Chikwawa to Blantyre and Zomba, and

thence to Karonga at the north end of Lake Nyasa, via other lake stations. A branch line connects Domina Bay on Lake Nyasa with Fort Jameson in Northern Rhodesia. Other branches connect Dedza with Ntakataka and Mlanje with Luchenza.

The Shire Highlands Railway and the Central Africa Railway have a telegraph system between Blantyre and Chindio, and telegraphic communication with Chinde, the ocean port, is maintained by means of a Portuguese line.

TELEPHONES.

The Government telephone system now totals 23 miles, and the number of calls registered at the exchange during the year 1918-19 was 48,220.

XII.—GENERAL.

With the conclusion of peace it may not be out of place here to offer some observations on the effect of the War on the prosperity of Nyasaland and its future prospects. Although a heavy strain was thrown throughout the War on the resources of the whole population, European and native, it is clear that the Protectorate suffered no serious setback in the yield of its staple products. The shortage of shipping and heavy freight charges were compensated for by the abnormally high prices obtained on the home markets, and with the assistance afforded by the shipping control there was not undue delay, in the circumstances, of the time in getting produce away. Greater difficulty was experienced with imports, due principally to the requirements of military transport, but no serious hardships were suffered at any time in this regard.

The prospects of the Protectorate have probably been improved by the War. Many of those who came from South Africa, England, and elsewhere to serve in the local campaign remained behind after demobilization, and are now engaged in planting, and if effect be given to the many schemes for the development of the Empire's resources that it may be self-supporting and independent of foreign supplies, Nyasaland may become a substantial contributor in many important products if Imperial help be accorded in improving its communications. The development of the Protectorate depends on transport facilities being afforded which will give it easy access to an open port and improve its internal communications. In Lake Nyasa, the Protectorate has an important and valuable waterway for two thirds of its length, but if the fertile lands in its vicinity, eminently suitable for the cultivation of tobacco, cotton, or cereals, are to be developed rapidly, the existing railway must be extended at one end to the Lake, and at the other to a good ocean port.

COLONIAL REPORTS, &c.

The following recent reports, &c., relating to His Majesty's Colonial Possessions have been issued, and may be obtained from the sources indicated on the title page:--

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| 1012 | Ashanti | " |
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MISCELLANEOUS.

| No. | Colony, &c. | Subject. |
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| 80 | Nyasaland | Mineral Survey, 1908-9. |
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| 82 | Imperial Institute | Rubber and Gutta-percha. |
| 83 | Southern Nigeria | Mineral Survey, 1910. |
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| 85 | Southern Nigeria | Mineral Survey, 1911. |
| 86 | Southern Nigeria | Mineral Survey, 1912. |
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| 91 | East Africa Protectorate | Geology and Geography of the Northern Part of the Protectorate. |
| 92 | Colonies—General | Fishes of the Colonies. |