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No. 1075.

NYASALAND.

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REPORT FOR 1919-1920.

(For Report for 1918-19 see No. 1041.)



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No. 1075:

**NYASALAND.**  
**ANNUAL GENERAL REPORT**  
**FOR THE YEAR 1919-1920.\***

## I.—FINANCIAL.

*Revenue.*

Excluding Loan Accounts the revenue for the year, including £416 from sales of land, amounted to £186,927, which is only £718 below that of the previous financial year, when the revenue of the Protectorate reached its highest recorded figures.

Revenue for the past five years :—

1915/16 .. .. .	£	137,911	
1916/17 .. .. .		148,284	Inc. 7.5 per cent.
1917/18 .. .. .		144,239	Dec. 2.7 ..
1918/19 .. .. .		187,645	Inc. 30.1 ..
1919/20 .. .. .		186,926	Dec. 38 ..

Revenue increase in past four years, 35.5 per cent.

The revenue is in excess of the estimates under most of the heads.

The noteworthy increase of £14,357 under "Customs Duties" is partly attributable to enhanced prices and partly to the continued impetus to trade caused by the steady influx of settlers, which was maintained throughout the period under review.

*Expenditure.*

Excluding loan expenditure, the total expenditure for the year was £217,659, which was £43,669 in excess of the estimate.

Expenditure for the past five years :—

1915/16 .. .. .	£	125,666	
1916/17 .. .. .		128,272	Inc. 2.0 per cent.
1917/18 .. .. .		143,639	.. 12.0 ..
1918/19 .. .. .		150,198	.. 4.3 ..
1919/20 .. .. .		217,659	.. 44.9 ..

Increase in expenditure in four years, 73.2 per cent.

The principal causes of this large increase in expenditure are the necessity for increases in salaries and wages due to the rise in the cost of living and the enhanced prices of raw material.

\* A map of the Protectorate will be found in the Report for 1912-13, No. 172 [Cd. 7050-13].

A net sum of £43,669 remained to be met from surplus balances which, taking surplus revenues into account, were reduced by £30,732 from the amount of £100,406 at which they stood at the beginning of the year.

*Public Debt.*

The actual loans outstanding on the 31st March, 1920, were the following :—

(a) Loan for Redemption of Subsidy Lands .. .. .	£	s.	d.
	172,190	1	3
(b) East African Protectorates Loan 1914 (on account) .. .. .	39,700	7	8
	<hr/>		
	£211,890	8	11

The total amount of (a) was £180,800, raised for the purpose of redeeming lands granted in connection with the construction of the Shire Highlands Railway. Annual instalments paid to the sinking fund have reduced the total to £172,190.

A second instalment of the loan under (b) above, amounting to £28,000, was received in March, 1920, bringing the amount received to £40,000 out of a sanctioned total of £803,000. The following table shows the actual expenditure down to the 31st March, 1920 :—

	Roads.	Railway Survey.	Interest.	Total.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£	£ s. d.
To 31st March, 1919	6,108 6 11	7,343 1 4	1,440	14,891 8 3
In 1919/20 .. .. .	—	2 13 3	—	2 13 3
	6,108 6 11	7,345 14 7	1,440	14,894 1 6

The balance will, it is hoped, shortly be utilised for the construction of the much-needed railway extension to Lake Nyasa.

*War Expenditure.*

During the year under review a net sum of £129,021 was paid out under this head, bringing the total disbursements to £2,963,610 2s. 11d. An amount of £34,389 17s. 1d. still remained to be accounted for out of the amount advanced by the War Office in connection with the local campaign.

*Assets and Liabilities.*

The close of the year 1919-20 showed that the balance of assets over liabilities had been reduced from £100,406 to £69,674, a decrease of £30,732 during the year.

*Currency and Banking.*

British gold, silver and bronze coin constitute the currency of the Nyasaland Protectorate. There is no legal circulation of notes; but the local banks accommodate their customers with South African notes when they leave the Protectorate. The export of gold and silver coin is prohibited.

Two Banks operate in the Protectorate, the Standard Bank of South Africa and the National Bank of South Africa. There are branches of these banks at Blantyre, Limbe, Zomba and Fort Johnston. Branches are in contemplation at Dedza and Port Herald.

*Post Office Savings Bank.*

The adverse position of the Post Office Savings Bank has become accentuated during the year. In June, 1918, the total investments on behalf of the Bank stood at £16,580. Since that date withdrawals have exceeded deposits, so that on the 31st March, 1920, the balance of deposits amounted to £3,826 15s. 11d. The difference of £7,753 4s. 1d. between investments and deposits has been advanced from the surplus balances of the Protectorate to avoid loss by realising investments at current prices.

In the first instance the reduction of deposits was caused by demobilised South African soldiers withdrawing their savings when they returned to the Union. Subsequently local European depositors withdrew money to take advantage of the higher rates of interest offered by the Banking Corporations, and native depositors have found it difficult to maintain or increase their savings owing to the high prices of clothing and other necessaries.

## II.—TRADE AND SHIPPING.

*Trade.*

The abnormal figures of the year 1918/19 were not fully maintained during the year under review. £65,315 was collected under the heads of Customs and Port and Harbour Dues, etc., as compared with £74,572 in the previous year, and £39,253 in 1917/18. In trade imports there was a decrease in value of 12 per cent. and in exports a decrease in weight of 28 per cent. on the figures of the preceding year. The results for the year are nevertheless satisfactory.

As affecting the general trade conditions of the Protectorate the following factors during the year are worthy of mention :—

- (1) The departure of the last of the military personnel with the exception of members of the local forces.
- (2) The military salvage sales which made available for private use large numbers of motor vehicles of various types.
- (3) The introduction of the Imperial preferential tariff on tea, coffee and tobacco.
- (4) Exchange difficulties which restricted trade with India and elsewhere.
- (5) The difficulty experienced in obtaining adequate supplies of Manchester soft goods for native trade, and the high prices obtaining for these articles.

(6) The large increase in the European population owing to the demand for land during the tobacco boom.

*Imports.*

The imports may be sub-divided under four comprehensive sub-heads, as follows:—

	1918/19	1919/20
1. Food, drink, and tobacco .. ..	£85,557	£79,846
2. Raw materials .. .. .	6,004	29,342
3. Manufactured articles .. .. .	486,028	377,564
4. Miscellaneous and unclassified .. ..	71,390	83,138
	<u>£648,979</u>	<u>569,890</u>

The most important falling off in imports is under the sub-head "Cotton manufactures of all kinds" for the reasons explained above, although Nyasaland is better off as regards these commodities than some of the surrounding territories.

The increase of £13,000 in preserved fruits, meats, and fish must rather be taken as due to replenishing stocks which were bought up by the Military, than as indicating that Nyasaland is unable to meet her own requirements as regards fresh meat and fruits. An interesting item is the increase of £23,000 in the value of non-edible oils imported to meet the increasing demands for mechanical transport.

An indication of the opening up of the country which is confidently expected during the next few years is shown by the increased values of the imports of Iron and Steel (£13,488), Agricultural Machinery and Implements (£21,170), and other Machinery (£8,392).

As usual, the principal country of origin of Nyasaland imports is the United Kingdom. Including goods in transit the main divisions are:—

From the United Kingdom .. .. .	£370,704
From British Possessions .. .. .	103,280
From Foreign Countries .. .. .	132,640
	<u>£606,624</u>

South Africa supplied £70,102 of the total under "British Possessions."

*Exports.*

The total exports during the year may conveniently be classified in the same way as the imports.

	1918/19	1919/20
1. Food, drink, and tobacco .. ..	£315,633	£308,901
2. Raw materials .. .. .	172,839	81,181
3. Manufactured articles .. .. .	—	—
4. Miscellaneous and unclassified .. ..	16,218	39,604
	<u>£504,740</u>	<u>£429,086</u>

It appears that the cessation of hostilities caused a reduction in the demand for capsicums and chillies which were used in the

manufacture of "tear" shells. Coffee is going out of cultivation owing to the better attractions of more lucrative crops; tobacco continues at its high level in recent years; tea shows an increase that is not due to a larger acreage being under cultivation, but to old gardens gradually coming into improved bearing; cotton shows a heavy fall due to the greater popularity of tobacco, adverse climatic conditions in some localities, and reduced native cultivation caused by influenza and threatened famine. As regards fibre the increase should prove greater in future as some of the large estates which have been planted begin to come into production. Better prices offered for strophanthus have drawn some attention to this commodity. Rubber has increased in quantity, but the acreage is declining, and unless rubber commands higher values in the next few years, the industry may be expected to die out.

Including Government exports, the countries of destination were:—

United Kingdom	..	..	..	..	£391,102
British Possessions	..	..	..	..	18,090
Foreign Countries	..	..	..	..	21,031
					£430,223

#### *Transit Trade.*

The improvement in the transit trade of the Protectorate was fully maintained during the year. There was an increase in value over the 1918/19 figures of £7,927 or 27 per cent. "to surrounding territories," and £27,500, or 1.33 per cent. "from surrounding territories." Northern Rhodesia, Portuguese East Africa and Tanganyika Territory are the countries that participate in this transit trade.

#### *Traffic.*

During the year 6,029 tons of cargo passed inwards at Port Herald, and 6,283 tons passed out. The registered shipping remains about the same, viz. :—

Under British Flag :	10 steamers and 83 barges on the Zambezi.
	6 steamers and 29 barges on Lake Nyasa.
Under Foreign Flags :	15 steamers on the Zambezi.

### III.—AGRICULTURE.

The total area under European cultivation during 1919/20 was 47,781 acres, which shows a reduction of 5,056 acres on the previous year. This reduction is chiefly due to the fact that many planters who served with the local forces took advantage of the leave in the United Kingdom granted by the military authorities. Towards the end of 1919 there was a great influx of new settlers who came either independently or under the auspices of the British Central Africa Company, which inaugurated a private settlement scheme for officers on the large tracts of land owned by the company. At the end of the year the planting

community had certainly reached more than double its pre-war strength.

The present is a very critical time in the agricultural development of the country. Land has increased in value in the districts nearest the railway and large towns from about 25s. an acre in 1914 to £3 in 1919. Many of the oldest settlers have taken advantage of these high prices, have sold their estates, and retired from the country.

*Tobacco.*

The area under tobacco during the year was 9,817 acres, as compared with 6,027 acres in the previous year; the yield increased from 23,164 cwt. to 35,691 cwt. The average crop, 407 lb. an acre, was satisfactory. It is to be regretted that the rising prices led to large quantities of very low grade tobacco being shipped which could not fail to affect the reputation of Nyasaland tobacco. Greater attention to grading and quality of tobacco shipped is needed.

Prices reached a record height during the year, and tobacco sold freely on the local market at from 1s. to 1s. 8d. per pound, as compared with the pre-war price of 4d. The preferential tariff in the United Kingdom has also had a considerable effect in encouraging the development of the tobacco industry, and there appears to be no reason why, if the preference is maintained, there should not be a much greater development in future.

*Cotton.*

The first recorded export of cotton from the Protectorate was in 1902, when 692 lb. were exported. Eight years later the annual export was 1,736,000 lb., and from 1911 to 1916 there was a steady expansion in the industry. The climatic conditions of 1913 and 1914, however, caused a temporary set-back. The crop in 1916 reached the highest recorded figure of 3,462,000 lb. During the War, the necessity for producing native foodstuffs for the local forces, combined with the unprecedentedly high prices obtainable for tobacco, caused many planters to abandon the cotton industry. In two years the acreage fell from 28,000 acres to 12,000. Signs are not wanting, however, that renewed interest is being taken in cotton production, and it may confidently be hoped that the next few years will see a revival in this industry. During the year under review the acreage under cotton again showed a fall, from 18,141 acres to 12,658 acres, and the yield declined from 1,911 to 1,467 bales of 400 lb. each.

The native cotton crop has received a severe check through war conditions; but it may be expected that the system of control of the native cotton markets by Government will make this industry more attractive to the natives.

*Tea.*

The tea industry continued to make some headway during the year 1919. The acreage increased from 4,433 acres to 4,846,



and the yield from 5,667 cwt. to 5,984 cwt. Unfortunately, the demand, which was good at the beginning of the year, fell away seriously towards the end of 1919, and in some instances the prices obtained did not cover the expenses of production. It is to be hoped that prices will recover so as to maintain interest in the cultivation of this product.

During the year the exports totalled 801,890 lb., an increase of 101,435 lb. over the previous year.

Other economic products of minor importance are referred to under "Trade and Shipping."

#### *Experimental Farms.*

Owing to the pressure of other duties and the continued shortage of staff no experimental work of any note was undertaken during the year.

#### *Veterinary.*

The Rinderpest Commission closed down in April, 1919. The position at the end of the year was quite satisfactory. To the south of the immune belt there lies a tract of country between Lakes Tanganyika and Nyasa which is completely cleared of cattle. In Nyasaland, to the south of this cattle free area, is a controlled area in which all the cattle are registered, records kept of births and deaths, and all movements of cattle prohibited except under permit.

No other cattle diseases have given any trouble during the year with the exception of Trypanosomiasis. There were outbreaks of this disease in various parts of the Shire Highlands. Indications are not wanting that Trypanosomiasis can be transmitted by blood-sucking flies other than the *Glossinae*. Gastroenteritis caused a fairly large number of deaths among cattle during the period under review.

#### *Forestry.*

Owing to the high wages offered by planters, it was difficult to procure native labour for forestry work. Nevertheless, 20 acres of eucalyptus and 15 acres of cypress were planted at Zomba, and 13 acres of cypress on Mlanje Plateau. The aggregate area of the timber plantations stood at 846 acres at the close of the year. During 1919/20 some 43,850 lineal feet of Mlanje cypress was sawn for the use of the Public Works Department.

### IV. —LANDS, INDUSTRIES AND MINES.

No new trades or industries were introduced during the year.

The Government Geologist continued his enquiries into the coal and other mineral deposits in the Protectorate and his

investigations should prove of great utility when the time comes to undertake the development of the mineral resources of Nyasaland. The profitable working of the coal deposits may, it is hoped, assist in no small measure in the solution of the fuel question which, with the increase of railway facilities, may become an urgent problem.

In no respect is the rapidly increasing development of Nyasaland so clearly shown, as in the abnormal demand for leases of Crown land during the year 1919/20, and the increase in the number of applications for yearly tenancy plots for purposes of native trade. The following comparative statement shows the numbers of leases and yearly tenancies granted during the past four years :—

	1916/17	1917/18	1918/19	1919/20
Leases .. ..	2	7	11	61
Yearly Tenancies	18	47	46	75

The acreages granted under lease during the year may be roughly divided as follows, so far as the intentions of the lessees have been clearly stated :—

(a) Cotton .. ..	12,792 acres
(b) Tobacco .. ..	6,530 "
(c) Dual Purpose (Cotton and Tobacco) ..	3,602 "
(d) General agriculture .. ..	1,385 "
	24,309

Owing to this sudden increase in the area of land leased the Survey Staff was unable to cope with the work of setting out the boundaries of the estates, and provision was made for the appointment of two extra surveyors.

## V.—EDUCATION.

No Government schools exist in Nyasaland, nor has any school for European children as yet come into existence. An annual grant of £1,000 in aid of education is divided between the ten principal missionary societies working in the Protectorate.

On the 31st March, 1920, there were 2,030 schools established in the Protectorate, providing education for 49,308 girls and 68,330 boys. The average attendance was 29,477 girls and 41,441 boys. The majority of these schools are in charge of native teachers, and the amount of European supervision is less than could be desired. The education imparted is of a very elementary character, except at the headquarters of the more important Missions. At these centres natives receive useful instruction in carpentry, printing, and other trades. Many artisans also receive their training in the various Government Departments.

## VI.—POPULATION.

On 31st March, 1920, the estimated European population of the Protectorate, including Government officials, was 729 males and 286 females, giving a total of 1,015 as compared with 492 males and 232 females, totalling 724 in the previous year.

The Asiatic population increased by 108 to 515 during the year.

The native population, which is estimated on the basis of the number of huts, was put down at 545,000 males and 658,000 females, or a total of 1,203,000.

## VII.—PUBLIC HEALTH.

The shortage of medical staff rendered it impossible to carry out any special investigations in connection with communicable diseases, except that investigations were continued in the North Nyasa District in the matter of Plague. The only recorded cases occurred in August. As statistics have shown that infection with this disease reaches its height in the rainy season, it is a matter for congratulation that no cases at all occurred from August, 1919, to the end of March, 1920, i.e., throughout a whole wet season. From April to December the preventive measures were continually enforced, and during that period a total of 1,247,068 rats were killed.

One hundred and seventy European officials received medical treatment, 20 were invalided, but there were no deaths.

A total of 313 non-official Europeans came under treatment, of whom seven died.

## VIII.—COMMUNICATIONS.

*Railways.*

There are no Government railways in Nyasaland. The Shire Highlands Railway Limited owns and works a railway from Port Herald, the port of entry into the Protectorate, to Blantyre, the commercial centre, a distance of 113½ miles. From Port Herald the Central Africa Railway runs through Portuguese territory to Chindio on the Zambezi River, a distance of 60½ miles. The construction of the projected railway from Luchenza on the Shire Highlands Railway to Lake Nyasa has not yet been proceeded with, although the route has been surveyed.

*Mechanical Transport.*

The Government fleet of motor vehicles consisted during the year of an Albion lorry, three Packard lorries, three Reo lorries, three Hup cars. Many privately owned lorries and cars are now in use in the Protectorate, and a few years from now should see

mechanical transport largely displacing human portorage, and thus releasing native labour for the agricultural development of the country.

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IX.—NATIVE AFFAIRS.

There is nothing calling for special comment under this head during the year under review. The natives remained peaceful and loyal; but there was some disinclination to work, which was one of the legacies of the local campaign.

Larceny, housebreaking, and burglary by natives has been of more frequent occurrence than in previous years.

The scarcity and dearness of native cloth continued to be a cause of dissatisfaction to the natives, and was one of the contributing causes to their disinclination to work.

There was no noticeable shortage of foodstuffs during the year, and no special measures had to be adopted in this respect.

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X.—PUBLIC WORKS.

The total expenditure on Public Works, exclusive of military expenditure, was £23,027 as against £15,839 in the preceding year, and £14,027 in 1917/18. The extra cost is mainly due to increased salaries, enhanced price of materials, and the necessity of rebuilding the Government Offices which were destroyed by fire early in 1919.

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XI.—POSTAL.

The postal revenue for the year 1919/20 amounted to £7,300 5s. 2d., and the expenditure to £9,948 18s. 6d. The figures for the preceding year were £9,193 9s. 3d. and £1,166 17s. 3d. respectively. Expenditure thus exceeded revenue by £2,648 13s. 4d. The loss on the year is attributable to war bonuses to Europeans and increased pay of the native staff, together with the cost of replacing telephone material destroyed in the fire of February, 1919. Revenue suffered from the rescinding of the war tax on postage.

The telegraph system in the Protectorate is owned and worked by the African Transcontinental Telegraph Company. The total length of line open for public service is 869 miles.

The Government owns a telephone system of 23 miles in Zomba, and during the year 14,988 calls were registered.

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XII.—GENERAL.

The year 1919/20 may be regarded as confirming the belief that the prosperity which awaited the future progress of this Protectorate at the conclusion of hostilities is likely to be

maintained. It is now apparent that the War has had no permanent ill effect on the prospects of the country; and when once the native character reverts to its normal condition, and the general conditions of trade recover from their present stagnant state, it is confidently to be expected that Nyasaland will take an ever increasingly important place in the Empire.

The future prospects of the Protectorate are encouraging. Mechanical transport is being introduced and utilised on a much larger scale than heretofore contemplated. Increasing numbers of settlers are arriving and will be of great help in opening up the country. Plans for new roads and railways are being considered on a scale which if carried out will render Nyasaland an indispensable means of communication between the interior of Africa and ports of shipment to the commercial centres of Europe.

It may confidently be expected that, when transport difficulties have been overcome, the potential trade with Tanganyika Territory will be fully developed. When the railway is extended to Lake Nyasa there will be a much greater scope for enterprise. On the ranges of the Livingstonia Mountains are large areas suitable for wheat; on the lower ranges suitable pasturage for cattle. Cotton grows wild in some districts, and its cultivation on a commercial basis will become possible when transport facilities are available. Sisal hemp should develop into an important industry. Although Nyasaland in pre-war days had but little commercial intercourse with its neighbour on the north, the opening up of communications between Lake Nyasa and Beira will almost certainly lead to a great expansion of trade between the two Protectorates.

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### COLONIAL REPORTS, ETC.

The following recent reports, etc., 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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1043	Grenada .. .. .	"
1044	Bermuda .. .. .	"
1045	Basutoland .. .. .	1919-1920
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1048	Straits Settlements .. .. .	"
1049	Ceylon .. .. .	"
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1065	Sierra Leone .. .. .	"
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#### MISCELLANEOUS.

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82	Imperial Institute .. .. .	Rubber and Gutta-percha.
83	Southern Nigeria .. .. .	Mineral Survey, 1910.
84	West Indies .. .. .	Preservation of Ancient Monuments, etc.
85	Southern Nigeria .. .. .	Mineral Survey, 1911.
86	Southern Nigeria .. .. .	Mineral Survey, 1912.
87	Ceylon .. .. .	Mineral Survey.
88	Imperial Institute .. .. .	Oilseeds, Oils, etc.
89	Southern Nigeria .. .. .	Mineral Survey, 1913.
90	St. Vincent .. .. .	Roads and Land Settlement.
91	East Africa Protectorate .. .. .	Geology and Geography of the northern part of the Protectorate.
92	Colonies—General .. .. .	Fishes of the Colonies.