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COLONIAL REPORTS—ANNUAL.

No. 284.

LAGOS.

REPORT FOR 1898.

(For Report for 1897, see No. 232.)

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.
December, 1899.



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1899.

COLONIAL REPORTS.

The following, among other, reports relating to Her Majesty's Colonial Possessions have been issued, and may be obtained for a few pence from the sources indicated on the title page :—

ANNUAL.

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No.	Colony.	Subject.
1	Gold Coast... ..	Economic Agriculture.
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4	Canada	Emigration.
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6	Hong Kong	Bubonic Plague.
7	Newfoundland	Mineral Resources.
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9	Dominica	Agriculture.
10	Virgin Islands	Condition during 1897.
11	Grenada	Agriculture in Carriacou.
12	Anguilla	Vital Statistics, 1898.

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(For Report for 1897, see No. 232.)

CAPTAIN G. C. DENTON to GOVERNOR SIR WM.
MACGREGOR.

October 31st, 1899.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to submit the Report on the Blue Book for 1898.

I.—GENERAL REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE.

2. The revenue for the year, inclusive of a Parliamentary grant of £10,000 in aid of telegraph construction to the Hinterland, was £206,444, as against £177,420 in 1897. The local revenue may therefore be taken to have been £196,444. This is by far the largest amount ever collected, and no doubt the very large sums expended in wages of carriers employed in the Hinterland, in consequence of the troubles with the French, both by the Imperial and Colonial Government, were to a great extent responsible for the increase.

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3. The following statement shows the amounts collected under different headings in 1898 as compared with 1897 :—

	1897.	1898.
	£	£
Customs	159,819	179,792
Harbour, wharf, and light-house dues ...	673	644
Licenses, &c.	7,793	6,447
Fees, reimbursements, &c.	3,089	3,361
Postal revenue	2,147	1,865
Rent of Government property	389	424
Interest on investments	2,257	2,125
Miscellaneous	1,129	1,485
Land sales	121	296
Parliamentary grant	Nil.	10,000
Total £	177,420	206,444

The revenue for the past five years was :—

Year.	Amount.
1894	£ 137,017
1895	142,049
1896	179,745
1897	177,420
1898	206,444
Total £	842,675

4. The expenditure for 1898 was £203,802, and of this sum the Hinterland telegraph absorbed £11,809.

5. The following is a comparative statement of the heads of expenditure for the years 1897 and 1898 :—

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1898.

	1897.	1898.
	£	£
Governor	5,756	5,093
Colonial Secretariat	2,265	5,257
Queen's Advocate	1,072	985
Treasury and Savings Bank	1,861	1,977
Customs	5,776	5,500
„ special	90	70
Audit Office	993	1,101
Post Office	1,713	1,806
„ special	Nil.	138
Printing Office	855	992
„ special	Nil.	327
Harbour Master	2,494	2,483
„ special	168	2,327
Government vessels	7,306	3,231
„ special	12,205	3,426
Engineer's Department	Nil.	5,476
Supreme Court	5,877	5,849
Ecclesiastical	12	Nil.
Charitable	308	229
Educational	2,500	2,373
Hausa Force	23,083	24,074
Police	11,223	10,862
„ special... ..	Nil.	111
Prisons	2,586	2,498
Medical	9,021	10,468
Sanitary	2,296	Nil.
Botanical	Nil.	834

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1898.

	1897.	1898.
	£	£
Registrar-General	307	305
Transport	9,373	6,673
Aborigines Interior	7,831	9,352
Miscellaneous... ..	6,304	5,273
Pensions	2,570	3,171
Rents	582	522
Land Department	Nil	1,438

6. As will be seen from the figures given there was no deficit at the end of 1898, the revenue exceeding the expenditure by £2,642.

TAXATION.

7. By Ordinance No. 1 of 1898 the duty on wines, liqueurs, and cordials was raised from 1s. to 2s. per gallon, but no other change took place.

ASSETS AND LIABILITIES.

8. The statement of assets and liabilities is, I consider, satisfactory, as, notwithstanding heavy and unusual expenditure, the amount carried forward on the 31st December 1898 exceeds the excess of assets on the 31st December 1897 by over £2,000.

PUBLIC DEBT.

9. The only debt incurred by the Colony is in respect of the amount required to construct two bridges connecting Lagos Island with the mainland at Ebutte Metta, and a railway from Ebutte Metta to Ibadan. Legislative authority to raise a sum of £780,000 for these purposes has been obtained, but at the end of 1898 only £350,000 had been borrowed. The general revenue is the security for the amount raised, and it is to be paid off from the same source by means of a sinking fund.

CURRENCY.

10. Although by Ordinance No. 2 of 1880 the following gold coins, viz., Spanish and South American doubloons and half-doubloons, American double eagle, eagle, half eagle, and quarter eagle and French twenty-franc pieces are legal tender as well as British sterling, the currency is almost entirely confined to the latter. A noticeable point in this connection is that British silver coin is at a premium on the West Coast of Africa, and as far as I am aware it is the only part of the world of which this can be said.

II.—IMPORTS AND EXPORTS.

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1898.

11. The values of all kinds of articles imported into the Colony in 1898 was estimated at £892,863, as against £758,515 in 1897.

12. The principal articles of import were :—

	1897.	1898.
	£	£
Beads	18,488	12,623
Bridge and railway materials	3,273	33,130
Building materials	18,049	22,621
Cotton goods	297,615	339,778
Haberdashery... ..	16,404	14,429
Hardware	13,980	18,314
Kola nuts	21,190	23,052
Provisions	9,028	10,539
Specie	69,505	148,820
Wines and spirits	69,476	79,769

13. The imports for the past five years were :—

Year.	Amount.
	£
1894	690,794
1895	771,843
1896	881,696
1897	758,515
1898	892,863
Total... ..	3,995,711

14. These figures may be said to shew a steady increase in the import trade, as 1897 was an abnormal year owing to the troubles with the French in the Hinterland, and the constant moving about of troops there.

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15. The value of the exports in 1898 is calculated at £882,329, as against £810,974 in 1897, and the following is a comparative statement for the years 1897-98 of the principal articles :—

	1897.	1898.
	£	£
Cotton goods	10,747	22,557
Palm oil	97,590	97,337
Palm kernels	306,834	362,539
Rubber	283,184	285,409

16. The value of the exports for the past five years was :—

Year.	Amount.
	£
1894	891,681
1895	985,595
1896	975,263
1897	810,974
1898	882,329
Total... ..	4,545,842

17. In this connection I append a further comparative statement of the three principal exports for the past five years which is of much interest :—

Year.	Palm Oil.	Palm Kernels.	Rubber.
	£	£	£
1894... ..	187,927	440,065	324
1895... ..	205,553	320,434	269,892
1896... ..	159,150	343,206	347,721
1897... ..	97,590	306,834	283,184
1898... ..	97,337	362,539	285,409

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18. From this it appears that the palm oil trade is less than half what it was in 1894 and 1895, but the export of kernels remains much the same. The falling off in the former is no doubt due to rubber having become, since 1894, such a very large article of export from the Colony, but owing to the injury inflicted on the trees from the reckless way in which it has been collected, it appears to me almost certain that this will not continue, and that for some years—say five or six—this industry will fall off almost entirely. If my supposition is correct, it is of the first importance to encourage the natives to return to the palm oil industry which they have been tempted to give up because of the higher profits which the collection of rubber yielded. As the *Elais Guineensis* (the tree from which palm oil and kernels are obtained) requires very little cultivation, and abounds throughout the Hinterland, there should be very little difficulty in bringing this about. There should also, now, be more labour for preparing the produce, as quite three-fourths of the carriers engaged on the Hinterland operations in 1898 have been discharged, and are available for agricultural work.

MINES, MANUFACTURES, AND FISHERIES.

19. Though steps have been taken in the direction of ascertaining if valuable minerals exist in the Hinterland of Lagos, no definite conclusion has so far been arrived at. In certain districts the prospects are, I have reason to think, promising, but this is all that can be said. At the present time there are no mines within the sphere of influence of the Colony.

20. The manufactures of the Colony, which are limited in extent, are very fully given on page 107 of the Blue Book. No doubt some of them may be capable of development, but taken as a whole they are not suitable for export, and it will, in my opinion, be a long time before a sufficient supply for the country itself even will be obtained from local resources.

21. The natives do not attempt sea fishing. Large quantities of fish are, however, taken by them in the lagoon and dried and sent to the Hinterland. A large trade with the interior towns is also done in dried prawns, which during the rainy season are very plentiful in the neighbourhood of Lagos.

AGRICULTURE, INDUSTRIES, AND BOTANIC STATIONS.

22. The principal crops cultivated by the natives are corn, cassada, and yams, and a very large proportion of the open country in the Colony, Protectorate and Hinterland, is covered with them. As far as I have means of forming an opinion, the supply of these products is more than sufficient to meet local demands, so much so that in 1895, when there was a failure of the crops on

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the Gold Coast, corn to the value of £5,718 was exported to Accra and Cape Coast. Previous to that year hardly any had been sent out of the Colony, but since then there has been an export of this product valued at £1,260 in 1896, £931 in 1897, and £662 in 1898.

23. There are several coffee plantations—two of which are under European management, but the price of this product (Liberian coffee) is so poor at present that planters are very much discouraged just now.

24. At Itele, Captain Davies, a native of good position, has a cacao plantation, but I cannot say that the trees on it compare at all favourably with those I have seen in the West Indies. As both the situation and soil appear favourable, I fancy the fault must lie in the method of cultivation adopted.

25. The Roman Catholic Mission has established a large cocoa nut plantation on the strip of land lying between the lagoon and the sea opposite Topo in the Western District, and it is doing well; but the Fathers have no modern appliances for making the copra, and to export the nuts in bulk is out of the question on account of the heavy cost of freight. At Leckie and Badagry the Government have many thousand trees, but of late years all cultivation has been abandoned for the reason given above. If mills were established it is possible the industry might be made to pay, but I am told that the cocoa nut does not thrive nearly so well on the West Coast of Africa as in Ceylon and Fiji.

26. The Botanical Station which was established in 1827 has done good work in the Colony and neighbourhood, but it is not large enough to be of much practical use, nor is its situation suitable; a new station is, however, to be started further inland, probably near Abeokuta on the line of railway, which will I believe tend much to develop minor industries. As land is plentiful it will be possible to grow economic plants in such quantities as will form object lessons to the natives, and thus supply a want which has long been felt.

LAND GRANTS AND GENERAL VALUE OF LAND.

27. Except on Lagos Island, and perhaps to a small extent at Ebutte Metta, the value of land can hardly be said to have been practically ascertained, but steps are being taken, I believe, to deal with the matter. In Lagos Island land has been granted by the Government to individuals since the year 1863 on what are known as Crown grants. These grants confer a freehold title, and land held under them has frequently changed hands, the price in each case depending very much upon situation, but I think it is fair to say that 2s. 6d. per square yard is accepted as about the average value.

SHIPPING.

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1898.

29. In 1898, 478 steamers with a tonnage of 409,790 tons, and crews numbering 15,620 were entered at the port of Lagos. Of these, 180 vessels of 110,119 tons burden, with crews numbering 5,628, were German, the remainder being owned by British firms. In 1897, the steamers were 453, with a tonnage of 398,003 and crews numbering 15,361; German firms being the owners of 202 vessels of a tonnage of 97,770 tons, and having crews amounting to 5,150 men. Three steamers of French nationality were entered at the port, whose tonnage and crews amounted to 4,194 and 125 respectively.

30. The number of steamers that cleared from the port in 1898 was 478, and their tonnage and crews were 411,960 and 15,635. Of these, 132 were German, their tonnage and crews being 114,802 and 8,378 respectively.

31. In 1897, 492 steamers, tonnage 401,824 and crews 15,290, cleared from Lagos, of which 201 with tonnage and crews amounting to 97,332 and 5,065 were foreign. One sailing vessel entered and cleared in 1897, and one in 1898. Both were foreign (Brazilian).

The following is a comparative statement of the shipping for the past five years:—

Inwards.

Year.	Number of Vessels.	Tonnage.	Crews.
1894... ..	445	385,152	15,737
1895.	485	399,352	15,523
1896... ..	406	403,574	15,087
1897... ..	487	398,352	15,372
1898... ..	479	410,104	15,631

LAGOS,
1898.*Outwards.*

Year.	Number of Vessels.	Tonnage.	Crews.
1894... ..	446	385,447	15,746
1895... ..	499	395,637	15,595
1896... ..	472	401,831	15,374
1897... ..	493	402,176	15,301
1898... ..	479	412,174	15,536

III.—LEGISLATION.

32. Ten Ordinances were passed in 1898. No. 1 dealt with the change in the Custom duties to which I have already referred. Nos. 4 and 8 were the ordinary supply Ordinances. Nos. 2, 3, 5, and 6 amend enactments already in force. No. 7 deals with the management of the Queen's Gardens and Glover Hall. No. 9 provides for the administration of the estates of Africans dying in foreign employment by vesting them in an Administrator-General, which was much required; and No. 10 regulates the establishment, control, and management of all markets within the Colony and Protectorate. This last enactment has an important bearing on the trade of the Colony, and has for its principal object the administration of the different markets on the Lagoon side, to which the produce is brought from the interior and then sold to the Lagos native traders, who convey it to Lagos and dispose of it to the European merchants there. The administration is conducted by means of committees, composed of traders attending the market and natives locally interested in it, who are appointed by the Governor and with his approval have the power of making bye-laws for the better regulation of the markets. Of these committees the District Commissioner is *ex officio* Chairman.

IV.—EDUCATION.

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33. There are in all 33 schools, of which five are secondary. The schools may be said to be almost entirely under the control of the different missionary societies, but the Government gives assistance in the shape of grants-in-aid, based partially on results and partially on capitation payments. The general control of educational matters is governed by an Ordinance which provides for a Board of Education composed of the Governor, the members of the Legislative Council, and four nominated members, under whose immediate direction all details are carried out. (The allotment and proportion of the grants-in-aid are fixed by examinations held by the Inspector of Schools once in every twelve months.)

34. There is only one industrial or technical school in the Colony. To this the Government contributes £500 per annum, and in it are taught carpentry, blacksmith's work, and gardening. It is under a European superintendent, and was established in connection with the Hussay Slave Institute in 1895. Some 18 to 20 boys, who were originally slaves, are the inmates of the institution as first established, and these are housed, fed, and clothed at the expense of the charity. In addition, about a dozen boys whose parents can provide for their maintenance &c. are received for training in the workshops, and I am glad to be able to say that though great difficulty was experienced in starting the technical branch it is now in full swing and doing excellent work.

V.—GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS.

35. There is a general hospital and a contagious diseases hospital, both of which are entirely maintained by the Government. Paying patients are, however, received. A leper asylum has also been established on the mainland, about four miles from Ebutte Metta, and a small lunatic asylum is in course of construction.

36. There is no poor house, but a certain number of paupers, who are unable to work, are maintained by the Government under the supervision of the Chief Medical Officer. There is no reformatory.

37. A Government Savings Bank was established in 1886. At the end of 1898, £15,908 stood to the credit of the depositors, who numbered 965. The rate of interest is 2½ per cent. per annum, and a sum of £14,350 is specially invested on account of the Savings Bank.

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VI.—JUDICIAL STATISTICS.

POLICE.

38. The strength and detail of the police force will be found on page 30 of the Blue Book, under "Return of Military." It is a semi-military force, and in addition to its civic duties is regularly drilled and trained to the use of arms. It is armed with the .303 Martini-Netford rifle, a very efficient weapon, and is almost entirely recruited from the Yoruba tribe.

PRISON.

39. The only prison in existence in the Colony in 1898 was that at Lagos. During the year, 676 males, 26 females, and 11 juveniles were committed to prison, and the average daily number of convicts was 134. There were 82 admissions to hospital during the year, and the average daily number on the sick list was 1.29. The prison was frequently visited by the Officer Administering the Government, and was found in good order.

CRIMINAL STATISTICS.

40. On page 114 of the Blue Book a comparative statement of summary convictions, convictions in the Supreme or Superior Court, and acquittals for the past four years will be found. From this it will be seen that 1898 was a fairly normal year as far as convictions were concerned, the number being 933 against an average of 869 for the four previous years, and 926 for 1896, 1897, and 1898. The acquittals were the smallest in number for the past four years, being 171 as against an average of 228.

VII.—VITAL STATISTICS.

POPULATION.

41. In a place where it is so difficult to obtain reliable returns of births and deaths it is impossible to say with any certainty if the population has increased or become less since the census of 1891. Even in Lagos itself the floating population is so large that anything like an accurate estimate cannot be formed. I believe, however, that when the census of 1901 is taken a slight increase will be found in the population of Lagos Island, whilst that of the Colony must be considerably larger, in view of the fact that an extensive portion of the Jebu country was ceded to Her Majesty in 1894.

PUBLIC HEALTH.

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42. The health of Lagos Island was, as far as Europeans were concerned, undoubtedly more satisfactory in 1898 than for some years previous. The native population, however, suffered severely, the death-rate being the highest known except that in 1897.

43. The death-rate for the past five years was as follows :—

Year.	Europeans.	Natives.	Total.	Death-rate per mil.
1894	23	1,464	1,487	46
1895	16	1,759	1,775	53
1896	28	1,674	1,702	52
1897	23	1,903	1,926	59
1898	8	1,869	1,877	58

SANITATION.

44. The question of improving the sanitary condition of Lagos has engaged the attention of the Government for some years past, but, so far, it has not been found possible to devise a scheme likely to give satisfactory results which the Colony is able to afford. There are hardly any drains, and what there are are only to carry off the surface water in wet weather. There are both land latrines and latrines over the water, and all Government buildings and some private houses are supplied with earth closets.

CLIMATE.

45. 1898 was an unusually wet year, the rainfall being 80·20 inches. As 1896 and 1897 were quite the reverse, rain was much wanted, and the country has greatly benefited from the heavy fall in the year under report.

TEMPERATURE.

46. The minimum temperature was 71·2, the maximum 90·2, and the mean 77·2.

DIRECTION AND FORCE OF WIND.

47. The direction of the wind appears to have been principally from the south and south-west, but the force of it was never excessive, and, as far as the year went, matters in this respect were normal.

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VIII.—POSTAL TELEGRAPH AND TELEPHONE SERVICES.

POSTAL.

48. The Post Office revenue was £1,978 and the expenditure £1,514. Post offices, in addition to the central one at Lagos, have been established at Badagry, Epe, and Ikoradu within the Colony, and at Jebu Ode, Ibadan, and Abeokuta in the Hinterland. 272,334 letters, parcels, &c. were dealt with by the Postal Department in 1898, as against 240,358 in 1897.

TELEGRAPHS.

49. The Colony is connected with England by a cable belonging to the African Direct Telegraph Company, the charge per word being 7s. 10d. to the general public. The Company receives a subsidy of £1,000 per annum from the Lagos Government, and, in consideration of this, Government messages have priority over all others, and are conveyed at the reduced rate of 3s. 9d.

50. In 1898, an inland telegraph line connecting Lagos with Jebba on the Niger and with Saki, a Yoruba town to the north of Abeokuta, was completed. As far as Ogbomosho and Saki the expenditure involved in the upkeep of this line falls upon Lagos, but from Ogbomosho to Jebba it is a charge upon the West African Frontier Force. A sum of £10,000 was, however, granted by the Imperial Government in 1897 towards the cost of the construction and maintenance of this line, the actual amount expended in 1898 on the service being £11,809.

TELEPHONES.

51. Nearly all the Government offices and the Beach Signal Station are connected by telephone, the exchange being at the Secretariat. A separate system of telephonic communication between the police stations in the town of Lagos has also been established.

IX.—MILITARY FORCES AND EXPENDITURE.

REGULAR FORCES.

52. During the first half of 1898 portions of the 1st and 2nd W. I. Regiments were stationed in Lagos, but the expenditure in connection with the Imperial troops was discharged by the Imperial Government.

53. There are neither militia nor volunteers in the Colony.

CONSTABULARY OR SEMI-MILITARY COLONIAL FORCE.

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54. The Colony possesses a force which is purely military in character, called the Hausa force. It consists of an inspector-general, 3 inspectors, 17 assistant inspectors, paymaster, quartermaster, 3 native officers, and 828 of other ranks, and it is armed with the Martini-Metford carbine. It has also the following:— Five 7-pr. R.M.L. steel guns, four rocket troughs, one 3-pr. quick-firing Nordenfeldt gun, five Maxim guns, and two 3-barrel Nordenfeldt guns.

55. The expenditure on this force for 1898 was £24,074.

56. The Lagos police is a semi-military force, but I have dealt with its constitution under paragraph VI. of this report.

X.—GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

57. The most important event of the year to the Colony was, undoubtedly, the conclusion of an agreement with France, under which certain territory situated between Lagos and the Niger was recognised as within the sphere of British influence. British rights were also acknowledged over the empire of Sokoto on the left bank of the river. It is early days to speak of what will be the results of this arrangement, but it means, without question, the pacification of a large extent of country, and it is to be hoped that a developed cultivation of economic products will follow as a natural consequence.

58. The construction of the railway made good progress, as did also that of the bridges connecting Lagos Island with the mainland. At the present time the line is open for the conveyance of passengers to Abeokúta, but it has not yet been handed over to a railway department immediately under the control of the Local Government. If all goes well the line to Ibádan should be completed by the end of next year, and it is hoped that the bridges will be opened for traffic at the end of January or beginning of February next.

59. During the year a good many miles of road were constructed in the neighbourhood of Otta, in Jebu Remo, Jebu Ode, Ibádan, Iwo, and Oyo territory, a sum of over £7,000 being expended on this service.

60. The completion of the new hospital was very nearly effected, £6,368 being expended on it during the year. A leper asylum at Yabba, four miles from Ebutte Metta, was finished at a cost of £1,677. Alterations to, and the enlargement of, the Secretariat were carried out at a cost of £1,999; £1,973 was expended on a club house, to finish which a further sum of £1,027 is allowed, and considerable improvements, involving an expenditure of £2,665, were effected in connection with the brick works at Ebutte Metta. The installation of the electric light was completed

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in the streets of Lagos at the beginning of the year, but Government House and the Colonial Hospital were not lit by electricity until September. It is proposed to extend the electric light to the different public buildings and quarters, and during the current year those to the south-east of the works will be brought into the connection. A property known as Fabres, on which the printing office has been erected, was purchased from a French firm for £3,600: it also gave the necessary ground for the alterations to the Secretariat, and there still remains space to construct two sets of quarters on it.

61. The only important change in the establishment of the Colony was the appointment of Sir Henry McCallum to the Governorship of Newfoundland. He was succeeded in Lagos by Sir William MacGregor, who, however, did not take up the administration of the Government until May 1899.

62. It is not easy to predict the future of the trade of the Colony. 1898 was, on the whole, a good year, but it was alleged by many that competition had so seriously affected prices that it had become impossible to do a remunerative business. In the timber trade there was marked development, the export of mahogany, as it is called, being valued at £12,944, as against £6,291 in 1897. In 1895 the value of the timber exported from Lagos was only £24, whilst in 1896 it was £275.

63. The rubber industry will, I fear, fall off to almost nothing for some few years. This is due to the reckless way in which the sap has been collected. In many instances the trees have been cut down, and in other cases the incisions have been made so very deep that they have caused the death of the trees. In my opinion the formation of plantations of the *Kickxia Africana* is the only way to resuscitate the rubber trade, and I am glad to say one European firm had taken the matter up before I left. The natives, also, had promised to do their best to conserve the few remaining trees, and, under the direction of the Superintendent of Woods and Forests, nurseries of the various rubber yielding plants had been established in different parts of the Colony and Protectorate. In this way there are, I consider, reasonable grounds for hope that the export of rubber will resume its former dimension within the next seven years.

64. The import trade is expanding gradually, and I think as soon as the railway is finished it will receive a great impetus. At present, although the line is open to passengers as far as Abeokuta, only comparatively small packages are carried over it.

65. There will, I have no doubt, be a falling off in the spirit trade in consequence of the increase in the duty, but I think we may safely calculate an additional revenue to the extent of nearly £40,000 a year under this head.

66. The dangers of the climate of West Africa are so well known that it is unnecessary for me to say much on this point, except that I have found no improvement in it since I first went

there in 1888. It is quite unsuited for white labour, and even those Europeans who are occupied in the superintendence of the different public works suffer very much.

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67. The ordinary daily wage of a labourer or carrier is from 9d. to 1s. per day; when sent away from the Colony they are generally allowed an extra 3d. per day subsistence money. Carpenters, masons, printers, blacksmiths, tailors, shoemakers, painters, and coopers obtain from 1s. 6d. to 4s. 6d. per day, according to their attainments, and canoe men may be placed in the same category as labourers and carriers.

68. The rate for labourers, &c. is undoubtedly high, and endeavours are being made to reduce it, but so far, the supply being barely equal to the demand, it has been almost impossible to effect very much.

69. Domestic servants are paid by the month, their wages varying from 15s to £2 10s. A good steward or cook, however, can always command a higher salary, as much as £4 being given in some instances.

70. The cost of living has very materially increased during the last eight years. This was in the first instance due to the establishment of the Niger Coast Protectorate, and, recently, the formation of the West African Force has still further raised wages and prices. Roughly speaking, the cost of living in Lagos may be said to have gone up 33 per cent. since I first went there in 1888, and this, from what I am told, is equally applicable to natives as well as Europeans.

71. In Lagos Island large numbers of the inhabitants have been educated on English lines and conform to a great extent to English habits and customs. The bulk, however, of the population is essentially native in its manner of living, and my experience leads me to think that they are quite as industrious and happier, and more contented when not too much trammelled by the restrictions of civilisation. Polygamy, of course, prevails in this section of the community, the numerous wives supporting themselves and their children by trading. The husband is the centre of the family and affords them protection and house room.

72. The general condition of the Colony is decidedly satisfactory, the progress made during the past ten years being very great. The import and export trade in 1898 was £1,775,192, as against £839,504 in 1889, whilst the revenues for the respective years were £196,444 (exclusive of a Parliamentary grant of £10,000) and £57,633. The development of the Hinterland has also proceeded with rapid strides, and British influence has made itself felt as far as the Niger.

73. The raiding and sale of slaves in the interior has almost entirely been put a stop to, and the offering of human sacrifices, which was by no means uncommon even in the recent past, may be said to be abolished, though it is possible that it may, on very rare occasions, be practised at the present time in some of the

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out of the way places, of course without the knowledge of the Lagos Government.

74. I believe the people of the country are very happy and contented, and they have undoubtedly extended the area under cultivation very much since 1893, which must tend to their prosperity. Altogether things look bright, and, in my opinion, there is a great future before Lagos, and when the railway is opened to Ibadan I hope to see the export trade of the Colony materially increase. It is unfortunate that the harbour can only be entered by vessels of comparatively small draught, as this undoubtedly checks the development of the place, but perhaps it may be possible later on to undertake the opening of the bar by a permanent work, though the estimated cost (£800,000) of such an undertaking appears almost prohibitive at the present time.

I have, &c.,

GEORGE C. DENTON,

Colonial Secretary of Lagos.
