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COLONIAL REPORTS—ANNUAL.

No. 614.

BECHUANALAND PRO-
TECTORATE.

REPORT FOR 1908-9.

(For Report for 1907-8, see No. 593.)

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty
October, 1909.



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No. 614.

**BECHUANALAND PRO-
TECTORATE.**

(For Report for 1907-8, see No. 593.)

THE HIGH COMMISSIONER to THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

Government House,

Cape Town,

August 11th, 1909.

MY LORD,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you a copy of a report from the Government Secretary, Mafeking, on the Bechuanaland Protectorate Blue Book for the year 1908-9.

I have, &c.,

WALTER HELY-HUTCHINSON,

High Commissioner.

The Right Honourable

The Earl of Crewe, K.G.,

&c., &c., &c.

**REPORT ON THE BECHUANALAND PRO-
TECTORATE BLUE BOOK FOR THE YEAR 1908-9.**

FINANCIAL.

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE.

The total revenue collected during the year ended the 31st of March, 1909, amounted to £42,050, and the expenditure incurred during the same period totalled £75,801.

The following table shows the revenue collected during the past five years:—

	1904-5.	1905-6.	1906-7.	1907-8.	1908-9.
	£	£	£	£	£
Customs	9,867	9,764	9,821	10,534	8,972
Hut tax	11,529	11,268	11,606	13,526	25,656
Licences	2,638	2,515	2,716	2,375	2,912
Revenue stamps	291	246	232	461	385
Posts	3,351	3,387	3,350	3,938	3,074
Sales of Government property	617	310	340	231	64
Sundries	2,483	1,163	982	1,198	987
	30,776	28,653	29,047	31,563	42,050

A decrease of £1,562 from the sum collected the previous year under the head Customs is a serious loss to revenue. A sum of £589 4s. 3d. was paid as duty on Colonial spirits imported into the Protectorate, and an amount of approximately £500 was derived from over-sea importations of spirits. This duty was paid by the European inhabitants of the Protectorate, numbering about a thousand, alone, so that the actual contribution of the native population of over one hundred and thirty thousand persons to the Customs revenue probably did not exceed £7,000, being approximately one shilling per head.

By the High Commissioner's Proclamation, No. 1 of 1907, it was provided that the amount payable as Hut Tax should, from the 1st of April, 1908, be increased from 10s. to £1 in respect of each hut used as a dwelling place. The additional burden thus placed on the natives was cheerfully borne, and resulted in the substantial addition of a little over £12,000 to the revenue of the Protectorate for the current financial year.

It is not easy to see how any considerable addition to the revenue now collected can be made, while it would be difficult to effect any great reduction of expenditure exclusive of the item of Railway Subsidy, the final payment of which was made this year. Apparently, the revenue will not under ordinary conditions greatly exceed £40,000 per annum.

The expenditure incurred during the past five years is shown in the following table:—

	1904-5.	1905-6.	1906-7.	1907-8.	1908-9.
	£	£	£	£	£
Pensions... ..	513	576	550	565	908
Resident Commissioner ...	3,789	3,608	3,644	3,854	3,854
Legal	1,785	1,588	1,511	1,305	1,720
District administration ...	3,472	3,331	3,492	3,368	3,584
Posts	2,994	2,490	2,546	2,500	2,492
Customs... ..	413	241	240	240	270
Police	34,516	33,325	35,040	38,580	39,559
Miscellaneous	3,802	3,384	3,416	3,407	5,807
Public works recurrent ...	1,717	1,860	1,710	1,839	2,081
Public works extraordinary ...	3,613	1,683	1,902	2,753	3,877
Medical	621	826	404	354	696
Railway subsidy	20,000	20,000	20,000	15,000	8,333
Demarcation of boundary ...	123	359	—	—	—
Education	650	823	813	850	1,000
Census	155	—	—	—	—
Veterinary	98	689	721	793	1,039
High Commissioner's visit ...	—	—	1,122	—	—
Locust destruction	—	—	—	443	581
Total	78,261	74,783	77,111	75,851	75,801

The various items of expenditure do not present any special features. The increase under Miscellaneous was caused by the extra payment of commission on Hut Tax, paid to the Paramount Chiefs, necessitated by the large increase in the tax. Of the sum spent under the head Public Works Extraordinary an amount of nearly two thousand pounds was devoted to an extension of the fence along the Protectorate-Transvaal border, which is now considerably over one hundred miles in length. The increase under the head Veterinary was caused by measures taken for the eradication of the disease known as "lung-sickness" to which further reference will be made elsewhere in this report.

ASSETS AND LIABILITIES.

On the 31st of March, 1909, the assets of the Protectorate exceeded the liabilities by a sum of £6,788 5s. 2d., being an increase of about £5,000 over the figures of the previous year.

PUBLIC DEBT.

A glance at the statements of revenue and expenditure for the last five years would give one every reason to suppose that the territory was burdened with a public debt of large proportions. That this is not the case is due to the fact that the annual deficiency is made good by an Imperial grant. This grant for the year 1908-9 amounted to the sum of £39,000.

PUBLIC WORKS.

Since the establishment of the Protectorate Administration Headquarters on the Imperial reserve at Mafeking, water has been supplied by a private company which owns a spring situated two or three miles from the town. Of recent years, owing to protracted drought, the yield from the spring has become much reduced, and the supply of water scarcely adequate for requirements. This, and the comparatively large sum paid annually for water, rendered it desirable to endeavour to obtain a supply upon the reserve itself. The use of a drill was obtained from the Cape Colonial Government, and a borehole put down to a depth of 78 feet, which yields 25,000 gallons of water per diem. A wind-mill pump and a large iron service tank were erected, and from the latter all buildings on the reserve are supplied through pipes. Since the mill was started nearly a year ago there has been no lack of water. The scheme, which cost £703 13s. 9d., has proved a gratifying success.

At a cost of £1,957 6s. 5d. the fence along the Transvaal border was extended northwards from Sequani along the Marico River for a distance of 40 miles. Unfortunately, before it was completed unprecedented rains in the Western Transvaal sent the river down in flood, which overflowed its banks and covered the country on both sides for miles. For many weeks the newly-erected fence could only be seen here and there standing out from the sea of water, and even now the water has not sufficiently subsided to enable it to be definitely determined to what extent the fence has suffered from its long period of submersion.

Two rooms for use as a post office and orderly room, and a bath room, were built at Gaberones, and the water supply service there was extended at a total cost of £335.

At Lobatsi, the centre of a little settlement of farmers who are occupying land belonging to the British South Africa Company, a building was erected for use as a court-room and as quarters for the police officer, who is also a special justice of the peace, stationed there.

During the year a police station was established on the Zambesi at Kazingula, where it was necessary to provide accommodation for the officer in charge and men of the detachment. Suitable quarters were built at a cost of £134.

LEGISLATION.

Legislation is vested in the High Commissioner for South Africa, who, under Section 4 of Order in Council of the 9th of May, 1891, was empowered to provide by Proclamation for "the administration of justice, the raising of revenue, and generally for the peace, order, and good government of all persons within the limits of this Order, including the prohibition and punishment of acts tending to disturb the public peace."

The following Proclamations were issued during the year 1908-9:—

- No. 39, 9th July, 1908.—Altering the tariff of fees to be allowed in certain civil cases.
- No. 45, 7th August, 1908.—Amending Proclamation No. 9 of 1906 relative to Customs.
- No. 53, 17th September, 1908.—Amending Proclamation No. 14 of 1908 relative to the surrender of fugitive criminals.
- No. 55, 17th September, 1908.—Amending Proclamation No. 9 of 1899 defining native reserves.
- No. 58, 17th September, 1908.—Restricting the exportation of Angora goats.
- No. 61, 23rd September, 1908.—Amending the Pensions Proclamation No. 26 of 1906.
- No. 2, 26th January, 1909.—Making provision for the eradication of “lung-sickness.”
- No. 5, 26th January, 1909.—Amending Proclamation No. 61 of 1908.
- No. 7, 9th February, 1909.—Making further provisions relative to the recruiting of native labour.
- No. 9, 24th February, 1909.—Consolidating and amending the law relative to the payment of Hut Tax.

An amendment to Proclamation No. 9 of 1899, which established and defined the boundaries of the native reserves, was rendered necessary as the result of the actual survey of a portion of the boundary between the Bakwena and Bangwaketsi tribes. Prior to this survey the position of the boundary on the ground, although clearly described in the Proclamation, could not be accurately determined, and consequently a good deal of friction occurred from time to time between members of the tribes living in the immediate vicinity of the boundary. When the survey was made it was discovered that what had been tacitly accepted as the boundary was not in reality so, and that to insist upon the adoption of the actual line as surveyed would be to impose considerable hardship on the Bakwena people. Feeling between the two people began to run high, and to calm it and to effect a settlement of the question the Resident Commissioner arranged to meet both tribes on the Mafatelwa River, from which the piece of disputed boundary line extended. There was a very large attendance of people under the respective Chiefs, Sebele and Bathoen, and the matter was very thoroughly discussed at a meeting which was distinguished by even more than the usual exuberance of native oratory. It became clear that to avoid hardship and injustice some modification of the original Proclamation was necessary. This was effected by the issue of Proclamation No. 55 of 1908, which has removed the difficulty and settled the question in fairness to both tribes.

The issue of Proclamation No. 2 of 1909, making provision for the eradication of “lung-sickness,” constituted an important event in the administration of the territory. As has many times

been mentioned, the wealth of the natives in the Bechuanaland Protectorate consists almost entirely of their cattle, which have been described as "the staple product, the chief means of livelihood, an important item of the food supply, and the capital currency of the country." This asset, almost entirely destroyed by rinderpest in 1896, has to-day recovered its former proportions, but its value has been partly destroyed by the prevalence of pleuropneumonia or lung-sickness among the native herds.

The presence of this disease has cost us the markets of the Transvaal after the unfortunate transmission of one or two cases in stock sent into that Colony, and is responsible for the fact that the exportation of cattle to the Cape Colony is hedged about with so many restrictions and difficulties that trade in cattle has very nearly come to a standstill.

It became abundantly clear that if the "capital" of the country was to be of any real value to its possessors, it was necessary to provide an outlet for it, and that before this could be effected, it would be essential to eradicate the disease, the presence of which shuts the territory out of the markets of South Africa. It was decided to attempt eradication by the only method which, in the opinion of the veterinary profession, was likely to meet with complete success, viz., by the destruction of all animals which contract the disease and by the compulsory inoculation of "in contact" animals. To anyone acquainted with the Bechuana character it will be apparent at once that to decide on destruction of stock was a step of much boldness. The way had, however, been prepared by the instillation on every possible occasion of the scientific opinion as to the part played by the animals which recover from pleuro-pneumonia in the dissemination and continuation of the disease, and the natives as a whole had been taught to look with suspicion on what at one time they had been accustomed to set great store, viz., the "lunger," the animal "salted" from an attack of lung-sickness. The first step was taken in Khama's country, where for many years lung-sickness had prevailed. Thanks to the great influence among his people of the chief, who assisted the Administration to the utmost of his power in this matter, and to the persuasive efforts of Mr. Chase, the Government Veterinary Officer, the Bamangwato tribe was satisfied that the advice of the Government was good and decided to adopt and to be guided by it. In a great "kgotla" meeting at Serowe, the Bamangwato capital, it was decided, with only half-a-dozen dissentients among several hundred men, to agree to the destruction of affected cattle on payment of one-third of their value as compensation, and to the inoculation of all "in contact" animals being made compulsory under severe penalties. The result was equally a credit to the good sense of the natives and a triumph for the Administration in securing acceptance of a policy which must, to great numbers of the older people at any rate, appear revolutionary in the extreme.

No time was lost in issuing the Proclamation necessary to legalise the proposed action, and in beginning an active campaign against lung-sickness. So far, not a hitch has occurred; thousands of head of cattle have been successfully inoculated;

many outbreaks of the disease have been smothered by the prompt destruction of affected cattle; and throughout the country the people are awakening to the fact that the disease, from the devastation of which they have suffered so long, can be stamped out, and are clamouring for assistance to that end.

The cost of eradication will be considerable, amounting to perhaps more than a thousand pounds during the first year, but it will gradually become less and if, as there seems no reason to doubt, lung-sickness is stamped out entirely the direct gain to the country as a whole will be so great that the money will be more than recovered in the many indirect ways in which the revenue is benefited by general prosperity and improvement in trade.

IMPORTS AND EXPORTS.

The total value of imports during the year 1908 was £90,838, being £15,000 less than that for the previous year. Among the reasons explaining this large falling off must be placed in a prominent position the collapse of the diamond market. The great De Beers Company, which plays so large a part in spelling either prosperity or depression in the Cape Colony, has, quite unconsciously no doubt, been responsible to no small extent for much loss to the individual trader and storekeeper in the Protectorate and indirectly to the Government. To the Bechuanas the Kimberley Mines have long been familiar and to them they have been accustomed to go in large numbers in search of work, if not with pleasure at least with cheerful resignation. Suddenly they found that they were no longer wanted there. Those at work completed their terms and returned to their homes, but none were taken on in their place. The stream of labour previously constantly pouring in and out of Kimberley stopped abruptly, and the Bechuanas required time to consider the position. It is true Johannesburg was anxious to take them and there was no lack of Labour Agents to paint the advantages of a visit to that city, but they are distrustful of anything new, and in the great majority of cases were prepared to face a great deal of hardship and privation rather than venture to the Rand. Thus during a great portion of the year quite a large proportion of the wage earners of the country remained idle at home and the effect on trade soon became appreciable.

Of the total decrease of £15,000 in the value of imports, no less than £13,000 represents the falling off in the value of articles imported from over-sea. The value of articles grown, produced, or manufactured within the South African Customs Union, which, with the exception of spirits, are admitted duty free, was £35,367.

The total value of exports from the Protectorate during the year, as given by the South African Customs Statistical Bureau, was £64,538, but to this must be added the value of cattle

exported to the Transvaal and Cape Colony, in connection with which no Customs forms were furnished to the Bureau. In all, 3,983 head were exported, the value of which was approximately £26,000. It thus appears that the total value of exports, viz., £89,538, very nearly equalled that of imports.

The value of raw gold exported during the year was £20,188.

AGRICULTURE.

The season of 1908-9 enjoyed a heavier rainfall than had been experienced in the Protectorate for many years, and as the success or failure of the crops depends almost entirely on the amount of rain, the natives have obtained such a harvest as they have long been unaccustomed to. Mealies, but of a poor quality unfit for export over-sea, and Kafir corn have been reaped in abundance. Locusts, which for several years past have been numerous, disappeared almost entirely. The few isolated swarms which did hatch out were quickly disposed of by their natural enemies, and not a single crop was destroyed by them. The vast destruction of locusts by artificial means which has been effected in South Africa during the last two or three years has no doubt had a great deal to do with their disappearance from the Protectorate, but it does not in my opinion account for the fact that, although during the previous season the insects had been numerous and large numbers of swarms had deposited their eggs throughout the country during the autumn, there were practically no hatchings out in the following spring. The complete eradication of the pest was, I believe, brought about by the fall of heavy rain throughout the territory during the very heart of the winter. It is well known that locust eggs, if kept dry, may be preserved for years, but if damped soon spoil unless exposed to the temperature necessary for successful hatching. Winter rain in the Protectorate is almost unknown, and hence it is doubtless regarded as a desirable place for the depositing of locust eggs. On this occasion there was heavy rain succeeded by sharp frost, with the result that millions of eggs were destroyed and the country relieved in a moment of the plague from which it has so long suffered. We may, we probably shall, be re-infested by swarms coming from other parts, but at present it not too much to say that there are no locusts in the country.

GENERAL.

The exceptionally rainy season which was experienced was not without its drawbacks. The long-expected rain, longed for with an intensity which only those who have lived in a dry and thirsty

land can fully understand, came at last, but in coming brought both blessings and a curse in its train. On the one hand, flocks and herds became sleek and fat and crops everywhere flourished in a manner to delight the people's hearts, but, on the other, the plague of fever soon showed its head, and before long was devastating the country from end to end. Not for 12 years had malaria been so rife, and hopes were general that in some way the country was passing into a state of greater healthiness. This season has shattered them all, and has shown that it only requires a larger rainfall than usual to render the whole territory a fever-stricken land. To deal with the disease in any adequate manner among a native population scattered over a country measuring nearly 300,000 square miles in extent, with the scanty means and still scantier material at the disposal of the Administration, was out of the question. The distribution of a certain quantity of quinine was all that could be done, and this probably did not do very much good. When seriously ill the natives will seek European assistance and take the medicines given to them, but otherwise they rely upon the skill of their own native doctors. To ensure the general taking of quinine as a preventive prior to being attacked by fever would be a task beyond the power of the Administration. The one redeeming feature is the fact that the malaria met with is almost always of a mild type, and that given proper remedies and attention an attack is, as a rule, soon overcome. Only one European official of the Administration, a non-commissioned officer in the police, died of fever during the year.

A curious fact in connection with malarial fever in the Protectorate is its prevalence in the almost waterless Kalahari Desert. There a few water holes, very often a hundred miles or more apart, furnish all the water in tracts of country many hundreds of miles in extent. It is scarcely possible that anopheles can be bred in large numbers in the few pits, as the water is constantly being removed by buckets and all sorts of utensils, and its surface is rarely at rest, and yet in no part of the country is malaria more generally met with. It is possible that in that arid region anopheles mosquitoes have succeeded in so far changing their habits as to have become capable of breeding away from standing water, or the alternative would seem to be that in the Kalahari there exists some other carrier of the malaria germ.

Towards the end of last year news was received from the Magistrate at Lake N'gami to the effect that a disease which, from the description of it given by the natives, appeared to be similar to sleeping sickness had made its appearance at a village in the Okovango marshes where the tsetse fly is numerous. One man only was suffering from the disease at the time. The matter was felt to be so serious that it was decided to send a medical man to N'gamiland to investigate the matter at once. The services of Dr. R. Moffat, C.M.G., who had had great experience of sleeping sickness in Uganda, and who was in Bulawayo at the time, were secured and he left for Lake N'gami without delay. Unfortunately the native who was ill died

before Dr. Moffat reached him, and he saw nobody actually suffering from anything like sleeping sickness. He discovered no specimens of *Glossina palpalis*. The result of his investigation was therefore negative, but it is reassuring to note that he is of opinion that sleeping sickness does not at present exist in N'gamiland.

The various steps towards the consummation of the union of the British possessions in South Africa have been watched with great keenness and no little concern by the natives in the Bechuanaland Protectorate. Early in January the various tribes assembled in public meetings were officially informed of the progress which the movement towards Union had made, and of the probable effect on them in the future of South African Union when it came to be an accomplished fact.

Little beyond the matters I have touched upon occurred to mark the passing of the year 1908-9. If there is little to record in the way of progress it is because, from the very nature of the Protectorate which, broadly speaking, is divided between trackless desert and vast sparsely populated native reserves, progress and advancement must necessarily be slow. It is, however, no small thing to be able to say that from one end of the country to the other peace and tranquillity reigned undisturbed, and that the relations between the Administration and each one of the Paramount Chiefs were at all times of the most cordial and friendly character.

BARRY MAY.

Government Secretary.

Mafeking,

12th July, 1909.

COLONIAL REPORTS.

The following recent reports 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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57	Uganda	Governor's Tour.
58	British Colonies	Fibres.
59	Northern Nigeria	Mineral Survey, 1906-7.

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