

COLONIAL REPORTS--ANNUAL.

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No. 325.

GAMBIA.

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REPORT FOR 1900.

(For Report for 1899, see No. 300.)

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Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty.  
*June, 1901.*

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## COLONIAL REPORTS.

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302	Mauritius and Rodrigues ... ..	"
303	Trinidad and Tobago ... ..	"
304	Straits Settlements ... ..	"
305	Gibraltar... ..	"
306	Gold Coast ... ..	"
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No. 325.

GAMBIA,  
1900.

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G A M B I A.

(For Report for 1899, *see* No. 300.)

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GOVERNOR SIR G. C. DENTON to MR. CHAMBERLAIN.

Government House, Bathurst,  
30th May, 1901.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to forward, in manuscript, a copy of the Blue Book for the year 1900, together with my report on it.

I have, &c.,

GEORGE C. DENTON,

Governor.

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GAMBIA,  
1900.

REPORT ON GAMBIA BLUE BOOK FOR THE  
YEAR 1900.

I.—FINANCIAL.

A.—The revenue for 1900 was £49,160, the largest ever collected in the Gambia, and the export of ground nuts, the staple crop, was also bigger than in any previous year, being 35,805 tons, valued at £221,841, and yielding an export duty of £11,835.

2. The following table shows the principal sources from which the revenue is derived and the amounts collected in each case during the years 1898, 1899 and 1900 :—

	1898.	1899.	1900.
IMPORT DUTIES.	£	£	£
Ad valorem duty of 5 per cent....	5,499	4,556	4,716
Wines ... ..	853	878	823
Spirits ... ..	3,233	6,122	6,404
Malt liquors ... ..	201	266	171
Tobacco ... ..	3,737	4,031	3,337
Oils, &c., &c. ... ..	883	921	711
Sugar ... ..	1,147	1,650	2,073
Kola nuts ... ..	4,511	4,904	6,992
Rice ... ..	1,989	697	1,406
Guns, &c., &c. ... ..	426	113	146
Powder ... ..	152	220	94
Salt ... ..	286	157	347
Kerosine ... ..	89	118	162
Coffee ... ..	—	4	3

	1898.	1899.	1900.	GAMBIA, 1900.
	£	£	£	
<b>EXPORT DUTY.</b>				
Ground nuts ... ..	10,692	11,399	11,835	
<b>OTHER SOURCES.</b>				
Government vessels ... ..	971	1,174	1,135	
Protectorate ... ..	3,165	3,655	3,288	
Interest on surplus funds invested ...	359	998	1,498	

3. The total Customs revenue was :—

	1898.	1899.	1900.
	£	£	£
Import duties ... ..	23,069	24,851	27,399
Export duty ... ..	10,692	11,399	11,835

4. The most noteworthy conclusions to be gathered from these figures are the steady rise in the import trade of the Colony and the large increase in the quantity of kola nuts and sugar imported.

5. The net increases in the total revenue for the years given before are :—

1897-1898.	1898-1899.	1899-1900.
£	£	£
7,302	122	2,321

GAMBIA,  
1900.

EXPENDITURE.

6. The expenditure for 1900 was £29,817, as against £30,404 in 1899 and £29,035 in 1898, and calls for little comment. The Special Services were contribution to Patriotic War Fund, £500, and expenses connected with the Yellow Fever Epidemic, £503 5s. 6d.

B.—TAXATION.

7. No increase of any kind was made to taxation during the year under report.

C.—ASSETS AND LIABILITIES.

8. The credit balance brought forward to the 1901 account was £63,302, and of this amount £43,781 is invested in different Colonial Government Securities.

D.—PUBLIC DEBT.

9. There is no public debt.

F.—MUNICIPALITIES, LOCAL BOARDS, &C., &C.

10. The only institution of at all a municipal character is the Board of Health, which may be said to control the affairs of the town of Bathurst. It consists of a Board of five members, of which the Colonial Surgeon is Chairman, and had at its disposal, subject to the approval of the Administrator, a revenue of £801, made up as follows:—

	£
Local rates on house property, 3 per cent. on annual value ... ..	529
Slaughter-house fees ... ..	72
Government grant (nominally) ... ..	200
	—
	£801
	—

The amount actually expended by the Board was, however, £938, the additional £137 being found from general revenue.

11. The following shows the actual expenditure for the past three years and the sources from which the revenue was derived :— GAMBIA,  
1900.

—	1898.	1899.	1900.
	£	£	£
Local rates on house property ...	518	528	529
Slaughter-house fees ... ..	76	79	72
Government grant ... ..	93	332	337
Total ... ..	687	939	938

12. The following amounts were expended under the direction of the Board of Education for the past three years :—

1898.	1899.	1900
£ 434	£ 408	£ 416

## II.—TRADE, AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRIES.

### A.—IMPORTS AND EXPORTS.

13. The values of the imports for the past five years exclusive of specie, were as follows :—

Year.	Amount.
	£
1896 ... ..	91,062
1897 ... ..	139,812
1898 ... ..	187,062
1899 ... ..	171,572
1900 ... ..	194,408

GAMBIA,  
1900.

14. The following table gives a comparison of the value of the principal articles for the past three years :—

	1898.	1899.	1900.
	£	£	£
Bread ... ..	1,371	1,245	1,353
Flour ... ..	1,350	1,271	1,257
Kola nuts ... ..	21,638	33,951	39,937
Provisions ... ..	2,384	2,686	2,401
Rice... ..	38,222	16,050	25,189
Salt ... ..	996	479	1,185
Sugar ... ..	2,582	3,717	3,997
Spirits—			
Quantity... ..	Gallons. 37,567	Gallons. 40,220	Gallons. 19,099
Value ... ..	£ 3,718	£ 4,325	£ 2,648
Wines—			
Quantity... ..	Gallons. 14,308	Gallons. 18,839	Gallons. 13,129
Value ... ..	£ 1,911	£ 2,431	£ 1,778
Wood and timber ... ..	1,692	1,220	1,332
Wearing apparel ... ..	1,367	1,845	1,459
Empty bags ... ..	2,503	3,266	2,360
Cotton goods ... ..	60,786	51,460	61,263
Cutlery ... ..	1,101	1,250	1,083
Hardware ... ..	4,669	5,924	4,591
Beads ... ..	1,773	2,105	2,558
Haberdashery ... ..	3,730	4,179	5,212
Oil (ground nut) ... ..	2,303	2,631	2,726
Soap ... ..	1,694	1,663	3,025
Tobacco (unmanufactured) ... ..	6,991	4,085	4,517
Specie ... ..	59,030	69,335	83,251



EXPORTS.

GAMBIA,  
1900.

15. The value of the principal articles of export for the past three years was as given in the following table :—

—	1898.	1899.	1900.
	£	£	£
Kola nuts ... ..	1,345	2,199	2,280
Ground nuts ... ..	200,308	210,205	221,841
Palm kernels ... ..	919	953	1,020
Rubber ... ..	30,467	9,150	10,216
Wax ... ..	1,832	4,411	922
Hides ... ..	311	378	538
Empty packages ... ..	654	820	1,212

16. The value of the total exports from 1896 to 1900 inclusive, amounted year by year to :—

Year.	Amount.
	£
1896 ...	116,438
1897 ...	163,622
1898 ...	245,110
1899 ...	234,497
1900 ...	240,705

B.—MINES, MANUFACTURES, AND FISHERIES.

17. There are no mines in the Colony or the Protectorate, and the manufactures are confined to a little native pottery and the weaving of native cloths from home-grown cotton.

18. A considerable number of the inhabitants of Bathurst and of places along the sea coast towards Gunjur, and in the neighbourhood of Barra, are employed in fishing, and a large quantity of fish is taken, some of which is consumed as food, the remainder being dried and sent up the river.

GAMBIA,  
1900.

C.—AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRIES AND BOTANICAL  
STATION.

19. The cultivation of the ground nut is the principal agricultural industry, but foodstuffs, such as cassada, millet, maize, rice, sweet potatoes, and yams, are grown to some extent, but not in sufficient quantities to provide for the wants of the inhabitants of the country during the whole year. This necessitates the purchase by the people of rice, which is an important article of import in the Colony, as will be gathered from the following figures :—

	1898.	1899.	1900.
	Cwt.	Cwt.	Cwt.
Rice ... ..	80,956	35,900	53,641

The duty on rice is 6*d.* per cwt.

20. A Botanical Station was established in 1894, but it had not been persevered with for some time before my arrival in the Colony, and is in anything but a satisfactory condition. So far as I am able to judge it has had no effect on the development of minor industries.

II.—LAND GRANTS AND GENERAL VALUE OF  
LANDS.

21. No grants of land were issued during the year under report. The value of land is low, but, as it seldom or ever changes hands by purchase, it is impossible to give a definite price for it. The rent charged by the Government for lands in British Combs is at the rate of 2*s.* per acre.

E.—SHIPPING.

22. There was a falling-off in the total tonnage, amounting to 23,000 tons. This was due to the fact that during the epidemic of yellow fever the mail steamers outward did not make regular calls at Bathurst, owing to the fact that the other West African ports placed all vessels arriving from the Gambia in quarantine.

23. The following tables may be of interest in this connection :— GAMBIA,  
1900.  
Return showing Tonnage and Nationality of Steamers and Sailing Vessels Inwards and Outwards during the Years 1899 and 1900.

Nationality of Vessels.	1899.			1900.		
	Steamers	Sailing Vessels.	Total.	Steamers	Sailing Vessels.	Total.
British ... ..	210,534	156	210,690	197,935	164	198,099
French ... ..	31,864	3,018	34,882	27,155	3,251	30,406
German ... ..	9,170	—	9,170	5,471	—	5,471
Belgian ... ..	2,924	—	2,924	1,000	—	1,000
Russian ... ..	8,418	—	8,418	1,548	—	1,548
American ... ..	—	4,414	4,414	—	2,200	2,200
Norwegian ... ..	6,504	—	6,504	3,952	—	3,952
Italian ... ..	5,874	—	5,874	3,792	—	3,792
Greek ... ..	—	—	—	8,682	—	8,682
Swedish ... ..	—	—	—	1,622	—	1,622
Spanish ... ..	—	—	—	2,396	—	2,396
Portuguese ... ..	—	1,759	1,759	—	2,101	2,101
Total... ..	275,238	9,347	284,635	253,553	7,716	261,269

Return showing total Shipping Inwards and Outwards for the last five years.

Years.	British Tons.	Foreign Tons.	Total Tons.
1896... ..	151,987	79,638	231,625
1897... ..	164,939	93,459	258,398
1898... ..	225,385	102,760	328,145
1899... ..	210,690	73,945	284,635
1900... ..	198,099	63,170	261,269
Total ... ..	951,100	412,972	1,364,072

GAMBIA,  
1900.

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### III.—LEGISLATION.

24. Eight Ordinances were passed during the year 1900. No. 2, entitled "An Ordinance to recognise and enforce the title of Trustees and Assignees under the Bankrupt or Insolvent Laws of the United Kingdom in this Colony and Protectorate," is an important measure, the scope and intention of which is fully explained by the title. No. 5, "An Ordinance to regulate the granting of Patents for Inventions." No. 6, "An Ordinance providing for the Registration of Trade Marks," will no doubt be beneficial in the future, but at present there is little need for the provisions they contain.

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### IV.—EDUCATION.

#### A.—PRIMARY.

25. There are five primary schools in Bathurst and one at McCarthy Island. The total number of pupils on the rolls is 861, the average attendance being 675. All these schools are under the management of the different religious bodies who, again, are subject to the Board of Education. Grants-in-aid, based on capitation proficiency in proportion to educational results tested by examination, and a capitation grant in proportion to the average attendance at the schools, are given by the Government. The schools are supposed to be examined annually by the Inspector, Mr. Marke, who is also Inspector of Schools in Sierra Leone; but in consequence of this Colony being in quarantine for many months he was unable to visit the Gambia in 1900, and no examination could, therefore, be held. The grants calculated on the results obtained in 1899 were, however, paid to the Managers of Schools.

#### B.—SECONDARY EDUCATION.

26. There was no secondary school in the Gambia during the year 1900.

#### C.—INDUSTRIAL, TECHNICAL, AND AGRICULTURAL SCHOOLS.

27. Unfortunately schools of this nature are not to be found here. Their want is much felt, and it is to be hoped that it may be found possible to establish an Industrial and Technical School before long.

## V.—GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS.

GAMBIA,  
1900.

## A.—HOSPITAL.

28. There are two hospitals in the Colony, the Victoria (Colonial) Hospital and the Contagious Diseases Hospital. The former has accommodation for 22 male and 12 female patients; and at the latter, which is principally used for persons suffering from small-pox, 10 persons can be received.

29. The building used for male patients at the Colonial hospital is old and its arrangements inconvenient; that for females is a bungalow which has been condemned and will be destroyed as soon as the new hospital for females, which is in course of erection, is completed.

## B. C. AND D.

30. There are no asylums, poor-houses, or reformatories.

## E.—SAVINGS BANK.

31. The Government Savings Bank is under the management of the Treasurer. The total amount of deposits on the 31st December last was £4,477. The deposits during 1900 totalled £1,856, whilst £2,278 was withdrawn from the bank.

32. The following figures show the total amounts remaining in the bank to the credit of the depositors at the end of each of the three years given :—

	1898.	1899.	1900.
	£ 3,882	£ 5,082	£ 4,477

33. The interest paid by the Government to depositors is at the rate of 2½ per cent., and amounted to £152 in 1898, £198 in 1899, and £186 in 1900.

GAMBIA,  
1900.

## VI.—JUDICIAL STATISTICS.

### A.—POLICE.

34. The local police force consists of a superintendent, assistant superintendent, sergeant-major, quarter-master-sergeant, three first class sergeants, six second class sergeants, one armourer, two lance corporals, 18 first class constables, 26 second class constables, and 40 third class constables. The total expenditure on the force for the year 1900 was £4,031. The men are trained to the use of arms, and are a semi-military force, armed with the Martini-Enfield carbine. They also have three 7-pounder R.M.L. guns.

### B.—PRISONS.

35. The only prison in the Colony is at Bathurst, and has accommodation for 31 male prisoners and 7 female prisoners. It is not entirely on the separate system as there are four associated wards for male prisoners and two for female prisoners.

36. The total cost of the prison for 1900 was £680 as compared with £796 in 1899 and £758 in 1898.

37. The prison buildings are old, but are well kept and in good repair. It is, however, proposed to build a new prison at an early date, which is to be constructed on modern principles.

### C.—CRIMINAL STATISTICS.

38. There were only five cases committed for trial before the Supreme Court, and convictions were obtained in only two of these. One hundred and forty persons in all were charged with offences under the Summary Jurisdiction Ordinance of 1897; of these 92 were convicted—66 being fined, 8 suffering imprisonment in lieu of a fine, 14 being peremptorily imprisoned, and 4 being bound over with sureties to keep the peace. No whipping was inflicted during the year.

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## VII.—VITAL STATISTICS.

### A.—POPULATION.

39. The population does not appear from the Blue Books to have varied during the past four years.

40. The following table gives the birth and death rates per thousand for the past three years :—

GAMBIA,  
1900.

Year.	Births.	Deaths.
1898 ... ..	22·6	29·2
1899 ... ..	24·0	28·6
1900 ... ..	23·5	28·7

### B.—PUBLIC HEALTH.

41. Except for an epidemic of yellow fever which occurred during the months of June, July, and August, the general health of the community was good. The total number of deaths was 431, as against 429 in 1899, and 439 in 1898. The deaths amongst the European section of the community were 9, or at the rate of 140 per thousand. Of these six were due to yellow fever, one to bilious remittent fever, one to dysentery, and one to abscess of the brain.

### C.—SANITATION.

42. Only in Bathurst is it possible to enforce any sanitary measures, and even there little is done. There is, however, a Board of Health, which has at its disposal an income of about £800 a year, and out of this sum provides for the scavenging of the town, the cleaning of the streets, &c., and the repair of the roads. Very little attention is paid to other more important matters, such as the disposal of the sewage.

## IX.—CLIMATE.

### 1. RAINFALL.

43. Only 43·38 inches fell during 1900, the average for the three years being 49·39 inches.

### 2. TEMPERATURE.

44. The average maximum temperature in the shade at 3 p.m. was 85 degrees., whilst the average minimum at 7 a.m. was 68 degrees. No record is kept of the direction and force of the wind.

GAMBIA,  
1900.

## X.—POSTAL, TELEGRAPH, AND TELEPHONE SERVICES.

45. There are no inland services of this nature. Mails are, however, received from and forwarded to Liverpool once a fortnight, and there is a fortnightly postal communication with Sierra Leone and the other places on the West Coast. Bathurst is connected by cable with St. Vincent, Cape De Verde, and with Sierra Leone, and is thus in direct telegraphic communication with Europe on the one side and Cape Town on the other. Telephones have not yet been introduced into the Colony.

## XI.—MILITARY FORCES AND EXPENDITURE.

### A.—REGULAR FORCES. B.—MILITIA. C.—VOLUNTEERS.

46. During the year 1900, none of these Forces were to be found in the Gambia, but the Police Force may be termed a semi-military Force. (d) Its strength and the manner in which it is armed have been dealt with in paragraph 34 of this report, and I have only to add that the men are enlisted for five years and are paid as follows :—

			<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
1st class Constables	...	...	2	0
2nd class Constables	...	...	1	9
3rd class Constables	...	...	1	6

## XII.—GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

47. The year was marked by one very tragic event—the murder of Mr. Sitwell and Mr. Silva, Travelling Commissioners, six constables, and a Native Chief called Mansah Kotah, at Sankandi, in Kiang, on the 14th June. The history of this sad occurrence is shortly as follows :—A dispute had arisen between the inhabitants of Sankandi and those of a town called Batelling, of which Mansah Kotah was the Alkadi, on the subject of the ownership



of some rice fields lying between the two places. As Mr. Silva had only recently assumed his duties, Mr. Sitwell, who had considerable experience in the Protectorate, was sent with him to enquire into the dispute and to endeavour to bring about a better understanding between the Sankandi people and those of Mansah Kotah. On arrival at Sankandi the Commissioners proceeded into the town, the people having refused to accept Mr. Sitwell's proposal to meet him outside and discuss matters. When they reached the usual meeting place the Commissioners found no one there, but after a little delay the headman of Sankandi, Dari Bana Dabu, appeared alone, driving some goats. As he had shown himself to be very dissaffected to the Government, Mr. Sitwell left the native huts where he and his party had placed themselves and endeavoured to arrest him. He resisted and called upon his people, who it was suddenly discovered were lying in ambush amongst some houses close by, to fire, which they did, with the fatal results I have related. Further particulars than these it is impossible to give with any accuracy.

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1900.

48. Unfortunately it was for some little time difficult to punish the offenders, and the ringleaders escaped into French Territory. This gave rise to a strong spirit of opposition to constituted authority throughout the Protectorate, and it was found necessary in the early part of the present year to organise an expedition against some of the towns adjacent to Sankandi, especially one named Dumbutu. The Expedition, however, very soon brought about the desired result, and complete quiet is now to be found everywhere within the sphere of British influence.

49. In October, Sir Robert Llewelyn, who had been Administrator of the Gambia since 1891, was promoted to the government of the Windward Islands. He was succeeded at the Gambia by Sir George Denton, Colonial Secretary of Lagos.

50. The trade of the Gambia depends almost entirely upon the ground nut crop, now that the rubber industry has failed to such a great extent. This is almost entirely dependent on the rainfall, and is therefore a very uncertain staple upon which to rely. In 1900 over 35,000 tons were exported, but it is doubtful if the total for the current year will reach 25,000 tons. It is to be regretted that no other product is at present cultivated which would take the place of the ground nut in bad years.

51. As in the other West African Colonies, though perhaps not to so great an extent, the climate is unsuited to Europeans, and it is generally admitted that white labour would be useless; development, therefore, can only be arrived at through the natives of the country.

52. The rates of wages are high, 1s. being the ordinary daily pay of labourers; artisans are very scarce, and those there are

GAMBIA,  
1900

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are but indifferent workmen, who demand and receive a far higher wage than their skill entitles them to. As far as my experience goes the cost of living is far in excess of what it is in Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast, or Lagos, and this I understand applies to both Europeans and natives. For instance—yams, which are a great article of food amongst the natives, cost at least four or five times as much in Bathurst as they do in Lagos, and for a case of Sauerbrunnen (soda water), which can be obtained in Lagos for 15s., 25s. is paid here.

53. The social condition of the people of the country is on the whole prosperous. They seem to be contented and happy, but are not a bit more inclined to be industrious than their brother negroes further down the coast.

54. The general condition of the Colony and Protectorate is satisfactory, and it has decidedly advanced during the past five years. Revenue, imports, and exports, have increased very materially, the total trade for 1900 being fully 100 per cent. in excess of what it was in 1896.

GEORGE C. DENTON.

30th May, 1901.

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