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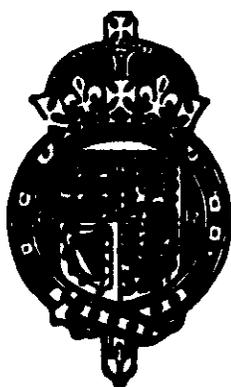
COLONIAL REPORTS—ANNUAL.

No. 1307.

SWAZILAND.

REPORT FOR 1925.

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SWAZILAND.

ANNUAL GENERAL REPORT, 1925.*

I.—Situation and Area.

Swaziland lies between the eastern slopes of the Drakensberg Mountains, which form the eastern border of the Transvaal, and the low-lying lands of northern Zululand and Portuguese East Africa.

It is bounded on the north, west and south by the Transvaal, and on the east by the Portuguese Territory and Tongaland, now part of the Natal Province, and is about the size of Wales, its area being 6,678 square miles. A little more than one-third of the Territory is native area and the remainder is owned by Europeans.

DESCRIPTION.

The Territory is divided geographically into three longitudinal regions of roughly equal breadth, running from north to south, and known locally as the high, middle, and low or bush veld. The high veld portion adjoining the eastern Transvaal consists of mountains, part of the Drakensberg Range. These mountains rise in parts to an altitude of over 5,000 feet.

The middle veld is about 2,000 feet lower, while the bush veld, bounded on the east by the Ubombo Mountains, has a height of from 300 to 1,000 feet, rising on the Ubombo Mountains to 1,500 feet.

II.—History.

The Swazis are akin to the Zulu and other tribes of the south-eastern littoral. Up to about 100 years ago they occupied the country just north of the Pongolo River, but a hostile chief in their vicinity forced them farther north and, under their Chief Sobhuza, they then occupied the territory now known as Swaziland. This Chief, who died in 1839, was succeeded by Mswazi II. The further order of succession has been Ludonga, Mbandini and Bhunu, whose son, Sobhuza II, was installed as Paramount Chief in 1921, after a long minority, during which his grandmother, Labotsibeni, acted as Regent.

* In this Report the Financial Statements, which are for the year ended 31st March, 1926, are preliminary and not completely audited. All other details are for the calendar year 1925.

The many concessions granted by Mbandini necessitated some form of European control, notwithstanding that the independence of the Swazis had been guaranteed in the Conventions of 1881 and 1884, entered into between the Government of Her late Majesty Queen Victoria and the Government of the late South African Republic. In 1890, soon after the death of Mbandini, a Provisional Government was established representative of the Swazis, the British and the South African Republic Governments. In 1894, under a Convention between the British and the South African Republic Governments, the latter was given powers of protection and administration, without incorporation, and Swaziland continued to be governed under this form of control until the outbreak of the Boer War in 1899.

In 1902, after the conclusion of hostilities in the Transvaal, a Special Commissioner took charge, and, under an Order in Council (1903), the Governor of the Transvaal administered the Territory, through the Special Commissioner, until the year 1907, when, under an Order in Council (1906), the High Commissioner assumed control and established the present form of administration. Previously to this, steps had been taken for the settlement of the concessions question by the definition of the boundaries of the land concessions and their partition between the concessionaires and the natives. The boundaries of the mineral concessions were also defined and all monopoly concessions were expropriated. Title to property is therefore now clear. In this connection a case brought by the Paramount Chief has been dismissed on appeal by the Privy Council (1926).

In 1912, a Special Court was established with an Advocate of the Provincial Division of the Transvaal as President. The other members of the Court consist of the Resident Commissioner, the Deputy Resident Commissioner, and the Assistant Commissioners of the various districts. The Court holds sessions twice a year. All cases are dealt with by three members sitting without a jury. The Court has jurisdiction in civil and criminal cases.

An elected Advisory Council, representative of the Europeans, was established in 1921, to advise the Administration on purely European affairs.

III.—General Events of the Year.

The visit of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales to Mbabane was the outstanding event of the year, and all the inhabitants of the Territory combined to give him a warm welcome.

The High Commissioner, the Earl of Athlone, also paid the Territory his first visit. His Excellency met many of the inhabitants and saw a good deal of the country.

In December the death took place at the Zombode Kraal of Labotsibeni, the ex-Chief Regent and grandmother of the present Paramount Chief, Sobhuza. She gave evidence of great personality and ability during her long term as Regent.

During the year there were 201 European emigrants and 305 immigrants, the latter being permanent settlers.

According to the census held on the 3rd May, 1921, the European population was 1,239 males and 996 females, total 2,235 persons, representing an increase of 103·6 per cent. since the 1911 census. The native Bantu population was 52,761 males and 57,534 females, total 110,295 persons, representing an increase of 5·34 per cent. since the 1911 census. Of this total 5,990 natives were recorded as being absent at labour centres outside Swaziland. Coloured and other races other than Bantu had increased from 143 to 308 over the same period.

The general health of the Territory has been fairly good. There was considerable malaria during the year and a quantity of quinine was distributed. There were several serious cases of typhoid, but cases of dysentery and enteric were rare. Syphilis continues to be a troublesome disease amongst the native population. Every effort is being made to deal with it. An extra building has been added to the hospital for treating cases of this disease, and 60 patients were admitted during the year. Only a few cases of influenza—of a mild type—occurred during the year. Cases admitted at the hospital numbered 166; there were three deaths. The number of out-patients treated was 5,110. Considering the size of the native population, the medical services are not yet adequate to requirements. The Swazis, however, are very conservative and generally prefer their own native doctors. Free treatment is taken advantage of to some extent, but a private medical practitioner could not make a living from native practice. Infant mortality is large owing principally to the methods of feeding. The Church of the Nazarene Mission has established a hospital at Bremersdorp with a resident surgeon, and steps are being taken for the provision of extended medical services elsewhere in the Territory.

Natives desiring to enter into contracts as labourers on mines in the Union continued to take advantage of the deferred pay system, the sum of £9,498 being paid out, as compared with £11,893 during 1924. The number of passes issued was 7,111 to recruited labourers and 5,790 to those desiring to travel outside the Territory.

IV.—Government Finance.

The total Revenue for the year amounted to £110,108, being a surplus of £19,617 over the Estimate, and the total Expenditure to £97,047, showing an excess of £5,356 on the Estimates.

Ordinary Revenue and Expenditure for the year amounted to £87,788 and £85,066 respectively, as compared with £80,467 and £79,639 respectively in 1924-1925.

The Extraordinary Revenue and Expenditure during the year amounted to £22,319 and £11,981 respectively.

Public Debt.—This amounted to £55,000, made up as follows :—

- (1) The Swaziland Consolidated Loan of £72,500 was reduced during 1923 by the repayment of a sum of £37,500. The Loan now amounts to the sum of £35,000, bearing interest at 3½ per cent. per annum and repayable, through the medium of a Sinking Fund, within 13 years from the 1st April, 1924.
- (2) The Swazi Nation Trust Fund, £20,000, bearing interest at 4 per cent. per annum.

Assets and Liabilities.—On 31st March, 1926, liabilities exceeded assets by £31,568 16s. 1d., inclusive of the Swazi Nation Trust Fund mentioned above.

V.—Progress of Trade, Agriculture and Industry.

TRADE.

During the year under review the volume of trade, except in grain, was very small. The native crops were not good. Sales of land were effected at fair prices.

No statistics of imports or exports are kept, as, by an agreement with the Government of the Union, Swaziland is treated, for Customs purposes, as a part of the Union. Payments due to Swaziland are assessed on a fixed proportion of the total Customs collection of the Union in each year. The amounts so received by Swaziland during the last three financial years were as follows :—

| 1923. | 1924. | 1925. |
|---------|---------|---------|
| £12,788 | £13,500 | £15,066 |

The above amounts include collections in Swaziland during the last three financial years in respect of spirits and beer manufactured in the Union, as follows :—

| 1923. | 1924. | 1925. |
|--------|--------|--------|
| £1,284 | £1,024 | £1,225 |

The imports consist principally of flour, sugar, groceries, hardware, clothing, boots, spirits, oils, farming implements, mining machinery, tools and general kaffir truck. Most of these goods are imported from wholesale dealers in the Union.

The following is a summary of the principal articles exported from Swaziland during the last three years :—

| | Quantities in lb. | | | Value. | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|-----------|-----------|--------|--------|--------|
| | 1923. | 1924. | 1925. | 1923. | 1924. | 1925. |
| | | | | £ | £ | £ |
| Cassiterite Tin | 337,713 | 539,907 | 621,600 | 29,246 | 59,082 | 67,722 |
| Cotton (unginned) | 171,000 | 373,370 | 430,000 | 3,056 | 6,221 | 7,013 |
| Cotton (ginned) | 73,800 | 72,850 | 59,725 | 5,175 | 3,640 | 2,984 |
| Hides | 37,000 | 33,644 | 38,340 | 1,054 | 1,298 | 1,038 |
| Slaughter Oxen | 3,000,000 | 4,478,400 | 4,681,600 | 45,000 | 64,688 | 36,759 |
| Tobacco | 322,350 | 240,500 | 250,190 | 8,140 | 7,909 | 6,981 |
| Bullion | 92·78 oz. | 376 oz. | 1,308 oz. | 417 | 1,693 | 5,558 |
| Specie | — | — | — | 2,090 | 2,164 | 5,339 |

CURRENCY AND BANKING.

The currency is British coin and coins of the late South African Republic, which are of similar denominations to the British. All such British and Transvaal coins are legal tender—in the case of gold coins, for payment of any amount; in the case of silver coins, for payment of an amount not exceeding forty shillings; and in the case of bronze coins, for payment of an amount not exceeding one shilling.

Barclays Bank (Dominion Colonial & Overseas) has branches at Mbabane and Hlatikulu. The amount on deposit at 31st March, 1926, at the Mbabane Branch was £35,800, as compared with £37,133 at 31st March, 1925.

The Bank also conducts savings bank business. The number of savings bank depositors at 31st March, 1926, at the Mbabane Branch was 111, with a total credit of £2,551, as compared with 90 and £827 for the previous year.

At the various post offices in the Territory, Post Office Savings Bank business is conducted. At the 31st March, 1926, the depositors numbered 326, with a total credit of £1,196, as compared with 248 and £1,553 for the previous year.

At the Post Office Savings Bank interest at 3½ per cent. was allowed on ordinary accounts and 4 per cent. on certificate accounts. Interest was allowed at 4 per cent. for 12 months and 3½ per cent. for six months on fixed deposits at the savings bank of Barclays Bank.

AGRICULTURE.

The beginning of the year gave great promise of a very successful season, but in March severe rains fell, doing a great deal of damage to all crops.

The maize crop was about 50 per cent. of the normal. The average price was 21s. a bag of 200 lb.

The cotton crop suffered very severely from the rain in March, probably more than any other crop; not only because of the rain, but owing to the great increase of pests which thrived as a consequence of the wet weather.

Mr. R. C. Wood, who has been appointed by the Empire Cotton Growing Corporation to undertake experiments with regard to cotton cultivation in Swaziland, arrived in September and made his headquarters at Bremersdorp, where he acquired some land and commenced his experiments. Sufficient time has not yet elapsed to allow of any definite results from these experiments, but with an officer of Mr. Wood's qualifications and experience there is no doubt that much valuable information for the cotton grower will be obtained. One of his efforts is to produce a seed suitable for the local conditions, and if this alone is the result of Mr. Wood's work, the benefits to the cotton grower will be invaluable.

Tobacco growing is increasing and is no doubt one of the most valuable crops suitable for Swaziland.

STOCK.

The country is especially suitable for cattle raising. It is estimated that the number of cattle in Swaziland to-day is approximately 300,000. There were exported 7,436 head during the year for slaughter purposes for which an average price of 30s. per 100 lb. was obtained.

The country is very free from stock diseases. The dipping operations have reduced tick-infestation to such a degree that tick-borne diseases, the principal diseases of South African stock, are gradually being wiped out. East Coast Fever is still a menace. During the year three new outbreaks occurred with a mortality in all areas of 299 head. This means a death-rate from this disease of 0.9 per 1,000 of the estimated number of cattle in the country, which is not a very serious matter.

The other diseases prevalent are Black Quarter, Heartwater and Gallsickness, but none of these causes a very high mortality. Horse-sickness was very prevalent, due no doubt to the abnormal rainfall.

All the sheep and goats in the western half of the Territory were dipped under European supervision. Scab is almost non-existent.

The usual Agricultural Shows were held and were as successful as could be expected in the circumstances of the season.

LAND.

Title to land in Swaziland is freehold, subject to the mineral rights which are in some cases owned by concessionaires and in others by the Crown.

During the year only 498 morgen of unencumbered Crown Land were sold at 7*s.* 6*d.* per morgen.

Unencumbered Crown Land sold in the Territory is subject, before title is issued, to beneficial occupation or, in the low veld areas, to stocking with breeding cattle, except in the case of allotments to returned soldiers. The purchase price is payable in ten equal yearly instalments, outstanding balances bearing interest at 5 per cent. per annum.

Encumbered Crown Land, that is, land subject to prior-dated servitudes of grazing or land rights, is sold to the registered holder of the servitude, and the purchase price is usually payable in four equal yearly instalments; there is no condition of beneficial occupation. All land is sold subject to existing mineral servitudes. (A morgen equals 2·11654 English acres.)

There was an increase in the number of private land transactions during the year. Prices for freehold land varied between 25*s.* and 45*s.* per morgen.

MINING.

Mining is conducted under mineral concessions granted by the late King Mbandini, and under the Crown Minerals Order in Council. No new deposits were discovered during the year.

The cassiterite produced during the year amounted to 277·5 tons (metallic content 70 per cent.) valued at £67,722, and gold amounted to 1,308·54 oz. valued at about £5,558, as compared with 241·03 tons of cassiterite and 376·13 oz. of gold produced in 1924.

Gold mining was carried on for some years at the Pigg's Peak and other mines, but, owing to the increased cost of this class of mining, all work has ceased. The Crown owns a few mineral areas, and legal provision has been made for the exploitation of these by the public in the event of payable minerals being discovered. Considerable quantities of gold have been recovered from the Forbes Reef and Pigg's Peak mines in the past and there appears to be no reason why further exploitation of this known mineralized area should not take place at an early date in the future. Large deposits of coal exist in the bushveld, but beyond prospecting operations nothing has been done to exploit them.

VI.—Legislation.

No important Proclamations were issued during the year.

VII.—Education.

Government primary schools for European children have been established in the Territory, and, at Mbabane, one for primary and secondary education.

The average attendance at these schools during the last three years was as follows :—

| | | | | | |
|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1923 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 314 |
| 1924 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 329 |
| 1925 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 325 |

At Zombode, the kraal of the late Chief Regent, there is a school for natives. The average attendance at this school during the last three years was as follows :—

| | | | | | |
|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1923 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 100 |
| 1924 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 92 |
| 1925 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 89 |

Archdeacon Watts, M.A., the founder of the school for Europeans at Mbabane, conducts the school for coloured children at Mpolonjeni, where the average attendance during the last three years was as follows :—

| | | | | | |
|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| 1923 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 58 |
| 1924 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 60 |
| 1925 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 59 |

This school receives a Government grant, as well as another school for coloured children at the Florence Mission in the Hlatikulu district, the average attendance at which was 26.

Boarding or transport bursaries at the rate of 4*s.* per child per week are paid by the Government for all European pupils whose parents are in poor circumstances and who reside three miles or more from a school.

In addition to the above, the various missions conduct schools and classes in connection with their mission work for natives. During the year the grant made to mission societies for this

purpose was £1,000, the same as for 1924. The average attendance at these mission schools during the last three years was as follows :—

| | | | | | |
|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| 1923 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 2,400 |
| 1924 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 2,532 |
| 1925 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 2,958 |

A number of the more advanced native pupils, both boys and girls, are sent out every year to be trained in the Union, at Lovedale, Tiger Kloof, and other Institutes. The cost of tuition and board for these pupils, who number about 30, is paid from the Swazi National Fund, which was created, with the concurrence of the Swazi Chiefs, for purposes of direct benefit to the natives. Each native taxpayer is required by law to pay 2*s.* per annum to the Fund, the expenditure from which is under the control of the Government. Apart from the regular schools, the natives receive religious instruction from sixteen religious bodies carrying on work in Swaziland at 197 different centres. The average attendance at these centres during the last three years was as follows :—

| | | | | | |
|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|--------|
| 1923 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 8,273 |
| 1924 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 9,743 |
| 1925 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 10,172 |

VIII.—Climate.

The climate of the high veld has been likened to that of the south of France. The air is bracing and invigorating; light frosts are prevalent during the months of June and July. The mean temperature in winter is about 60° Fahr. The summer is pleasantly warm, the mean temperature being about 75° Fahr. The rainfall is good, the average recorded at Mbabane over twenty-two years being 53·30 inches.

The middle veld is well watered by streams rising in the ranges on the west. Lying as it does some 2,000 feet below the mountains, the summer temperature of this area is warm and humid, but in winter is cool and refreshing. The mean temperature in summer is 80° Fahr. and in winter 65° Fahr. Frost at times occurs in the valley streams, but it is seldom found elsewhere. The rainfall recorded at Bremersdorp over twenty-three years averages 35·17 inches.

East of, and parallel to, the middle veld lies the bush veld, about 20 miles in width and running north and south through the whole area of the Territory. Many streams come down from the high veld and Drakensberg Range. These streams converge in the bush veld into five rivers. But for these this area is not well watered. The rainfall recorded at Natalia Ranch over eleven years averages 26·24 inches.

The high veld is free from malaria, which is, however, prevalent in the low veld during some of the summer months. The malaria is not of a virulent type, and is easily avoided by taking the precautions ordinarily considered necessary in any sub-tropical country.

IX.—Communications.

ROADS.

There are good roads to Mbabane from Ermelo, 96 miles; Breyten, 85 miles; and Carolina, 82 miles, and there is a fairly good road from Mbabane to the Portuguese border, from which point to Delagoa Bay the road is very good. This route is largely made use of by motorists from the Transvaal during the winter months. The main port of entry for the southern portion of Swaziland is from Piet Retief, whence roads extend to Hlatikulu and Mankaiana. The main ports of entry for the northern portion of Swaziland are from Ermelo and Carolina, via Oshoek, Barberton (by bridle path), Hectorspruit, Komati Poort and Goba. The main roads have been improved by the introduction of piped culverts, but much remains to be done for the betterment of existing roads and improvements in communications generally, for which adequate funds have not been available.

POST, TELEGRAPH AND TELEPHONE SERVICES.

These services are now, by agreement, under the control of the Postmaster-General of the Union, but are paid for from Swaziland funds.

Post Offices.—Proclamation No. 29 of 1916 extended to Swaziland, with certain exceptions, the provisions of the Post Office Administration Act, 1911, of the Union of South Africa. At the 31st March, 1926, there were sixteen post offices in the Territory, and the following is a summary showing the number of offices in the different classes:—

| | |
|---|----|
| Money Order, Savings Bank, Telegraph and Telephone Offices | 16 |
| Postal Order Agencies... .. | 5 |
| Telegraph and Telephone Offices | 7 |

Mail Services.—The following is a list of mail services in operation at 31st March, 1926 :—

| <i>Route.</i> | <i>Times Weekly.</i> | <i>Time. Hours.</i> | <i>Conveyance.</i> |
|---|----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Breyten — Bremersdorp via Oshoek, Mbabane and Ezulweni | 2 | 10½ | Motor. |
| Ezulweni—Malkerns | 2 | 4 | Foot. |
| Bremersdorp—Stegi | 1 | 30 | Pack-donkey. |
| Bremersdorp—White Mbuluzi | 2 | 6 | Foot. |
| Stegi—Portuguese border ... | 3 | 6 | Foot. |
| Mbabane—Forbes Reef ... | 2 | 4 | Foot. |
| Barberton—Pigg's Peak ... | 3 | 14 | Foot. |
| Amsterdam—Sandhlana ... | 1 | 6 | Foot. |
| Piet Retief—Mankaiana ... | 2 | 12 | Foot. |
| Piet Retief—Hlatikulu ... | 2 | 5 | Motor. |
| Hlatikulu—Mooihoek | 2 | 4 | Foot. |
| Dwaleni—Berbice | 2 | 4 | Foot. |
| Mhlotsheni—Berbice | 2 | 4 | Foot. |
| Hluti—Mhlotsheni | 2 | 9 | Foot. |

X.—Public Works.

No extensive public works were undertaken during the year. Owing to the exceptionally heavy rains at the beginning of the year, considerable repair work was necessary throughout the Territory.

L. J. PUTTICK.

(for Government Secretary).

Mbabane, Swaziland,
26th July, 1926.