

Report / Gambia.

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COLONIAL REPORTS—ANNUAL.

No. 609.



GAMBIA.

REPORT FOR 1908.

(For Report for 1907, see No. 576.)

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty.

August, 1909.



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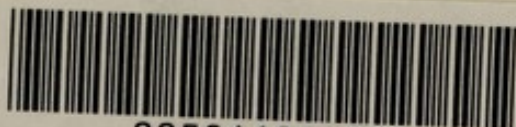
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No. 609.

GAMBIA.

(For Report for 1907, see No. 576.)

THE GOVERNOR TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

Government House,
Bathurst, Gambia,
29th June, 1909.

MY LORD,

I HAVE the honour to forward, in manuscript, the Blue Book for this Colony for the year 1908, together with a report on it by the Acting Colonial Secretary, Mr. F. B. Archer.

I have, &c.,

GEORGE C. DENTON,
Governor.

The Right Honourable

The Secretary of State for the Colonies,
Downing Street,
London, S.W.

REPORT ON THE BLUE BOOK FOR 1908.

I.—FINANCIAL.

1. The total revenue for the year amounted to £57,898, or an increase on the estimated revenue, £57,731, of £167. The receipts show a falling off of £7,994 as compared with those of 1907; but this reduction was anticipated owing to the large stock of goods in the hands of the mercantile houses and to the fact that the ground-nut crop was expected to be a small one. As the revenue actually collected slightly exceeded the estimate it will be seen that very accurate information had been obtained in assessing the Colony's receipts for the year under report. The years 1906 and 1907 were abnormal ones as regards revenue in this Colony, and although 1908 was not, it is to be regretted, up to the average for the past three years, it was well in advance of the receipts for any preceding year.

2. The following figures show the net revenue for the ten years ending 31st December, 1908:—

Year.	Amount. £
1899	46,840
1900	49,161
1901	43,726
1902	51,016
1903	55,564
1904	54,180
1905	51,868
1906	65,430
1907	65,892
1908	57,898

3. The increases which are recorded were chiefly—

Under "Licences," £98, due to a greater number of trading licences issued. They in a measure balance the loss in 1907.

Under "Rent of Government Property," £7, due to increased market dues collected. Bathurst market has during the past five years been practically remodelled, and is now as good as any market on the West Coast.

Under "Land Sales," £64, due to the additional number of vacant lots disposed of in Bathurst.

Under "Miscellaneous Receipts," £171, due to adjustment of Public Works "Material and Stores," and Sales of condemned property.

The decreases were chiefly:—

Under "Customs," £7,984, which covers practically the entire difference between the revenue for the year 1907 and that under report, and was on account of the large stock of goods in the Colony and the reduced quantity of ground-nuts exported, on which there is a duty of 6s. 8d. per ton.

Under the heads "Port Dues" (£17) and "Protectorate" (£123), due to the smallness of the ground-nut crop during the year. The export of a large crop naturally means more steamers calling at Bathurst and more port dues, and also attracts strange farmers and other to British territory who pay revenue to the Protectorate in the form of hut tax, farm rents, depasturage fees, &c.

Under "Post Office," £61, due to a reduction in the sale of stamps and in the commission on money orders. The sale of money orders during the past year or so has fallen off, due to the increased numbers of bills of exchange issued by the local bank.

4. The amount of revenue received under Customs was:—

Import duty £33,410, export duty £10,654, making up the total £44,064.

5. The following return shows the amount collected under the several Customs headings for the years 1907 and 1908 with their respective increases and decreases:—

Heads of Receipts.				1907.	1908.	Increase.	Decrease.
				£	£	£	£
<i>Ad Valorem</i>	...	...	...	6,567	5,820	—	747
Wine	...	...	...	1,006	1,070	64	—
Spirits	...	...	...	5,046	5,348	302	—
Malt Liquor	...	...	...	149	107	—	42
Tobacco	...	...	...	5,094	3,297	—	1,797
Oils and Turps	...	...	...	691	727	36	—
Sugar	...	...	...	2,408	2,572	164	—
Kola Nuts	...	...	...	12,695	11,312	—	1,383
Rice	...	...	...	3,560	1,960	—	1,600
Guns and Pistols	...	...	...	214	270	56	—
Powder	...	...	...	98	115	17	—
Salt	...	...	...	655	407	—	248
Kerosene	...	...	...	240	397	157	—
Coffee, Raw	...	...	...	6	8	2	—
Total	...	...	...	38,429	33,410	798	5,817
<i>Exports—</i>							
Ground nuts	...	...	...	13,619	10,654	—	2,965
				52,048	44,064	798	8,782

6. The expenditure for the year amounted to £61,097, an increase of £2,490 over the estimated expenditure of £58,607, but it is only fair to record that an unforeseen liability in respect of the extensive repairs to the Government Yacht "Mansah Kilah" which proceeded to Grand Canary to undergo her refit, amounted to no less a sum than £3,658. Again it was necessary to incur the very heavy expenditure of £4,094 during the year on special repairs to the military barracks.

7. The principal increases are accounted for as follows:—

Governor (£273).—Due to leave arrangements of staff and increased travelling found necessary in the Protectorate during the year—there was a saving on the estimate for 1907.

Customs (£128).—Due to purchase of a new buoy and cable complete.

Legal Department (£279).—Due to the amalgamation of the Legal Assistant's Department with that of the Chief Magistrate. Under decreases, however, it will be seen that there was a saving of £652, or an actual reduced expenditure for the year of £372. The appointment of Attorney-General has been abolished, the Crown Law Officer being now styled "Legal Assistant."

Education (£263).—Due to earnings by the denominational schools at the supplementary examination for the lower standards held in June, in accordance with the Educational Rules of the 6th May, 1908, and to the salary of the Inspector of Schools of £160 being placed under the vote for Education. The Inspector of Schools is also Legal Assistant.

Medical (£250).—Due to the increments of the medical officers and to the salaries of the additional staff found necessary.

Government Vessels (£4,170).—Due to the extensive repairs to the Government Yacht.

Agriculture (£413).—Due to a special grant to the Roman Catholic Mission for an Agricultural School, where lads of all denominations are to be trained in agriculture and farming.

Public Works Extraordinary (£3,283).—Due to repairs to Military Barracks.

8. The principal decreases were as under:—

Pensions (£277).—Due to the death of three pensioners during the year.

Protectorate (£967).—Ground-nut seed issued to the people in 1907 paid for during 1908. This is not in reality a liability to the Government, as it is accounted for under revenue receipts.

Frontier Force (£237).—Due to the Force being re-armed with magazine rifles during 1907.

Miscellaneous (£246).—Due to the grant of a special gratuity of £250 to the Anglican Church Body to pay off the balance of debt on the Church building.

Public Works Recurrent (£3,514).—Due to special repairs to the Chief Magistrate's quarters during 1907.

9. The following return shows the revenue and expenditure for the past ten years:—

Year.	Revenue.	Expenditure.
	£	£
1899	46,840	30,405
1900	49,161	29,818
1901	43,726	48,518
1902	51,016	51,536
1903	55,564	67,504
1904	54,179	52,300
1905	51,868	72,297
1906	65,430	56,988
1907	65,892	57,729
1908	57,898	61,097

10. The only additional taxation introduced during the year was under Ordinance No. 1 of 1908, by which the duty on spirits of a standard strength of 50 degrees was raised from four shillings to four shillings and twopence the liquid gallon. In the same enactment the method of calculating the strength of spirits was changed from the English system of proof ascertained by Sykes' hydrometer to the Continental one of degrees of alcohol by Tralles' alcoholometer, the rate of duty being fixed at 1*d.* the degree, 30 degrees paying a minimum of 2*s.* 6*d.*, and every degree over paying an additional 1*d.* per degree.

11. The amount standing to the credit of the Colony on the 31st December, 1908, was £40,310, as compared with £43,486 18*s.* 6*d.* at the close of 1907, a decrease of £3,176. The cost of the repairs to the Government Yacht—unforeseen expenditure—is responsible for this reduction.

The surplus funds are invested in Government securities.

12. The Colony has no public debt.

13. The legal tender and usual currency is British sterling, but a great number of French 5-franc pieces are in circulation, the estimated value of which is £150,000, and these are received at an exchange value of 3*s.* 10½*d.* For trade purposes, however, they realise 4*s.* each. Bank of England notes are not legal tender, but are accepted by the Bank of British West Africa—the only bank in Bathurst. The circulation, however, is very small, amounting probably to only some £250. There is also a little French gold in the Colony.

14. The average rate of exchange for bills drawn on London during the year was one per cent.

15. The amount of coin in circulation in the Colony and Protectorate is estimated at £261,050, made up as follows:—Bank of England notes (£250), British gold (£750), British silver (£110,000), French gold (£50), and French 5-francs (£150,000).

16. During the year specie was imported to the value of £145,290, as compared with £149,368 in 1907, and £102,480 was exported as against £117,828 in the same year. The decrease must be presumed to be on account of the small ground-nut crop.

17. There are only two Boards of a Municipal nature in the Colony, namely the Board of Health and the McCarthy Square Board.

18. The Board of Health consists of the Senior Medical Officer and the Colonial Engineer, who are ex-officio members, with the Senior Medical Officer as Chairman. The Superintendent of Police, a medical officer, and two leading members of the native community are also nominated members, and in addition to the above, the Jolloffs and Mandingoes each have a representative, whose duty it is to advise what are the requirements of these important races; they are also responsible for seeing that the directions of the Board are clearly made known to the people.

19. The Board meets fortnightly and is responsible for the sanitary condition of Bathurst. Its revenue is derived from (1) rates levied on the annual value of house property in the town at the rate of three per cent; (2) from fees collected at the

slaughter-house; and (3) from a grant-in-aid from the Government.

20. The following was the revenue received during the year:—Local rates, £645; slaughter-house, £98; grant-in-aid, £400; sale of stores, £4; total, £1,147.

The expenditure for the same period was:—Salaries, £102; cleaning drains and streets, &c., £471; lighting of streets, £153; carts and horses, £104; miscellaneous, £243; total, £1,073.

21. The officers of the Board of Health consist of a clerk, two inspectors of nuisances, four lamp-lighters, one groom and two cart-men. Twenty permanent labourers were employed during the year: but in the wet season as many as fifty-five were engaged, cutting down long grass, filling up depressions in the roads, and removing receptacles in which mosquitoes might deposit larvæ.

22. During the year the carts of the Board (there are two carts and four horses employed) removed 950 cart-loads of refuse, &c. The inspectors make daily house-to-house visits, and 128 notices were served for abatement of nuisances.

23. The market has an inspector, who is at present the Superintendent of Police, and also a clerk, and without doubt it is one of the best to be found anywhere on the Coast. It is well kept, and is provided with stalls specially marked out for the various kinds of goods from those of European manufacture to native produce. One of the medical officers visits the market daily for the purpose of seeing if the food tendered for sale is in good condition.

24. The slaughter-house is an iron structure built out into the river on piles, and is approached by a pier. Two labourers are employed to wash down and keep the place clean and the work is satisfactorily performed.

25. Suitable latrines are provided in various convenient places in the town, and these are kept clean by a contractor, who is under the control of the Board of Health.

26. The streets of Bathurst are lighted by kerosene oil lamps.

27. The drains of the town are cleaned and inspected daily.

28. McCarthy Square, which covers roughly three and a half acres, is situated in the centre of the town, and was enclosed in 1905 and placed under separate management. It is utilized by the public as a recreation ground and by the Government as a parade ground for the West African Frontier Force; the upkeep of the Square is provided by a grant which in 1908 was £125.

II. TRADE, AGRICULTURE, AND INDUSTRIES.

29. The total value of imports for the year amounted to £390,740, as against £445,359 in 1907, a decrease of £54,619. The imports of specie amounted to £145,290 and the value exported was £102,480.

30. The following table shows the imports classified so as to distinguish commercial imports from Government imports and specie for each of the five years 1904-1908.

COLONY OF THE GAMBIA.
Return of Imports, 1904-1908.

Year.	Free Imports.		Specific.		Ad valorem.		Total.		Specie.	Grand Total
	Com- mercial.	Govern- ment.	Com- mercial.	Govern- ment.	Com- mercial.	Govern- ment.	Com- mercial.	Govern- ment.		
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
1904 ..	6,254	520	80,473	190	106,807	3,186	193,534	3,896	108,719	308,149
1905 ..	3,112	237	75,488	265	99,865	2,757	178,465	3,260	123,456	305,181
1906 ..	5,037	1,256	109,527	230	149,389	15,050	263,953	16,536	167,168	447,657
1907 ..	3,933	2,158	140,799	462	144,209	4,430	288,941	7,050	149,368	445,359
1908 ..	869	510	104,260	409	133,226	6,186	238,345	7,105	145,290	390,740

31. The decrease in the imports is due principally to the falling off in the value of cotton goods imported during the year and the large reduction in the quantity of rice brought into the Colony. The value of the cotton goods amounted to £68,871, as against £82,023 in 1907, and the value of rice imported in 1908 was £34,125 less than in 1907. The only explanation which can be offered in respect of the appreciable reduction in these imports is, that the crop of ground-nuts during the 1907-8 season was very small, and that consequently a reduced number of strange farmers, &c., came into the Protectorate. The ground-nut crop in the Gambia—its staple product—means everything. It must also be recorded that the 1908 crop of native-grown corn was a very good one, and as it is produced entirely for local consumption as much rice was not required by the people as would have been the case had there been less corn.

32. Of the cotton goods imported £57,262 in value came from Great Britain and £11,609 from other countries. The valuation of rice is fairly evenly divided.

33. The following return shows the principal articles of import for the years 1907 and 1908:—

Articles.	Quantity		Value.		Increase.	Decrease.
	1907.	1908.	1907.	1908.		
	Pkgs.	Pkgs.	£	£	£	£
Cotton goods...	3,449	3,526	82,023	68,871	--	13,152
	lbs.	lbs.				
Tobacco ...	294,664	185,260	8,249	5,937	—	2,312
	lbs.	lbs.				
Kola nuts ...	1,015,474	905,045	39,942	39,794	—	148
	Galls.	Galls.				
Spirits ...	25,175	27,334	4,872	5,247	375	—
	Galls.	Galls.				
Wine ...	18,514	20,065	2,156	2,002	—	154
	cwts.	cwts.				
Sugar ...	5,181	5,490	4,655	4,838	183	—
	tons.	tons.				
Salt ...	2,622	1,627	2,211	1,378	—	833
	Brls.	Brls.				
Gunpowder ...	236	239	502	648	146	—
	cwts.	cwts.				
Rice ...	141,882	78,395	71,889	37,764	—	34,125

38. The import of spirits during the year 1905 as will be seen was less than that in 1904 by 1,146 gallons, the decrease in a measure being due, it is thought, to the increased duty of 12½ per cent. which was imposed.

39. In 1906, however, there was an abnormal increase in the quantity of spirits imported. The only explanation which can be afforded is that trade was exceedingly brisk and that there was a great number of strangers in the Protectorate. The revenue during 1906 was the second largest ever recorded in the history of the Colony and a great quantity of trade gin was imported.

40. The increased importation of rum was due to a British schooner arriving from the West Indies with a "speculative" cargo, which was bought cheaply by the merchants.

41. In the year 1907, although the total revenue was large the duty derived from spirits fell off by no less a sum than £4,436, being 13 per cent. of the total revenue. The quantity imported was less by nearly 20,000 gallons than in 1906, and this is accounted for by the fact that during that year the mercantile houses overstocked themselves.

42. During the year under report the trade has somewhat recovered itself, the duties paid having increased by £524, but the fact must not be lost sight of that the duty payable has again been increased by twopence per gallon as pointed out under the heading "taxation."

43. The Gambia as a whole is very abstemious. It is a rare thing in the Protectorate to see a drunken man, and when the liquor trade is analysed it becomes an admitted fact that the consumption of alcohol in this country is very small, being very little more than one pint per head per annum.

44. The total value of exports for the year was £374,138, as against £408,476 in 1907.

45. The following return shows the principal articles of export with their values:—

Exports.

Articles.	Quantity.		Value.		Increase.	Decrease.
	1907.	1908.	1907.	1908.		
	Tons.	Tons.	£	£	£	£
Ground-nuts ...	40,858	31,964	256,685	245,084	—	11,601
	lbs.	lbs.				
Rubber ...	61,405	18,568	5,686	1,163	—	4,523
	Tons.	Tons.				
Palm kernels...	342	391	3,657	3,488	—	169
	lbs.	lbs.				
Wax ...	53,408	73,469	2,325	3,036	711	—
	No.	No.				
Hides ...	30,647	31,680	9,615	6,633	—	2,982

46. The decrease on ground-nuts was due to a short crop, but prices during the year ruled better than in 1907.

The decrease in rubber was due to a less quantity being brought into the Colony from the Casamance. The French Government have recently made stringent rules prohibiting the taking of rubber across the frontier, and there is very little grown in the Gambia.

47. Of the total exports exclusive of specie for the year, 16½ per cent. went to Great Britain, 73½ per cent. went to France, 2 per cent. went to Germany, 3 per cent. went to Holland, and 5 per cent. went to other countries.

48. The destination of the ground-nuts was as follows:—

	Tons.	Value.
Great Britain	773	£8,238
Denmark	1,104	6,622
Germany	1,115	8,364
France	26,601	204,888
Holland	1,755	11,729
Portugal	609	5,176
Other Countries	7	67
	31,964	£245,084

Only the picked nuts go to Great Britain.

MANUFACTURERS AND FISHERIES.

49. There are no mines in the Colony; but in several places in the Protectorate iron ore is found in large quantities, and it might be worth while for an expert to examine these deposits in a private capacity. Investigations properly undertaken might disclose other mineral wealth.

50. A small quantity of cotton is grown, but only for local consumption, and it is made into native cloths, known as pagns. The weaving is very primitive, native looms of an ingenious kind being used and the cloth woven in long strips. In quality this cloth compares favourably with imported Manchester cotton cloths. The strips of native cloth average about 27 yards in length and are about 9 inches in width.

51. There is a good deal of boat building and repairing carried out. Most of the cutters used in the ground-nut trade have been built in the Colony, and there are a number of expert shipwrights in Bathurst.

52. Pottery is made in the Upper River Province. A considerable amount of excellent leather is produced from goats' skins. It is, however, not exported but utilized by the people in making bags, slippers, sandals, scabbards, saddles, and horse trappings, and the skilful manner in which coloured grasses, silk, cotton, &c., are laced through the decorative portion of the leather work is most ingenious. Each town or village usually has a "Koranka" man, or leather worker.

53. There is an abundance of fish in the lower reaches of the Gambia River, and large quantities are dried and taken each season to the Protectorate. •

54. At Oyster Creek, from the Bridge, when the tide is coming in, literally myriads of fine fish can be seen, and it might be supposed that an angler's paradise existed there; but sport is not good. The water apparently is full of natural food, and the fish, except in a lazy way, will not look at artificial bait. Nearly all the fish brought into Bathurst are caught in nets. Quantities of oysters are obtained in the Creek, and are cooked by the people for food, the shells being made into native lime.

AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRIES, &c.

55. The ground-nut is the staple article of cultivation, the people devoting their whole attention to this product growing, in comparison, but small quantities of rice and corn for their own consumption. Cotton has been tried in the Gambia and does well, but the population of this country is not large enough to cope with side issues, so to speak. Ground-nuts pay the producer on an average £4 to £5 per acre, and beyond the sowing of the seed and an occasional weeding give the farmer very little trouble, and he knows that there will be no difficulty in at once disposing of his crop, and he therefore prefers cultivating them to any other economic product known to him.

56. The Government in July issued over 500 tons of seed nuts to the people for planting, advanced by the five principal firms, and the export during 1909 will, it is thought, be the largest ever known; but to this I must add that nothing can be more uncertain than the ground-nut crop which means so much in this country. Prices in Senegal ruled slightly better in 1907 than in the Gambia, the consequence being that a less number of strange farmers crossed the frontier to seek their fortunes in British territory. The seed-nuts are planted as a rule just after the first rains about the end of June, and towards the end of October the farmers begin to pull the nuts.

57. Although the cereal crop was fairly good during the year the shortage in the ground-nut crop more than equalized matters as far as food products were concerned, and the consequence was that from certain districts appeals were made for issues of rice by the Government on credit. Money was short in the Protectorate, and therefore as far as possible deserving cases met with relief.

58. The following are the principal cereals grown in the Colony:

African Millet or Koos is cultivated on a large scale by the natives and forms their staple food; there are various kinds of koos.

The small koos is known as "Suna" and "Sanior," and a large koos as "Basse"; there is also another species known as "Kinto," which is really a Guinea corn, and "Finde" which is the seed derived from a special grass and makes an excellent

dish when steamed. All the varieties except "Finde" have to be pounded in mortars to a flour and are then prepared as food in various ways.

Maize.—Indian corn grows well, but is only cultivated in small quantities. The Government for the past year or two have been distributing maize seed to encourage the people to grow it.

Cassava or "Manioc" is largely grown. It is a shrub and the large tuberous roots when cooked form an important article of the peoples' food.

59. There is in Bathurst a fair supply of vegetables such as garden eggs, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, ochras, cassada, peppers, native spinaches, &c., and as most of the Europeans have a garden of sorts it is possible to procure lettuces, cabbages, carrots, turnips, and beans from December to May.

60. As far as fruit is concerned, pawpaws, limes, oranges, bananas, and mangoes are obtainable.

61. A great number of medicinal roots and herbs are to be found in the Gambia. The following are a few which are commonly in use:—

Gegis.—It is soaked and drunk as a cure for internal maladies.

Foot.—It is pounded into a powder and applied to reduce any swelling—the smell of this root is detested by snakes.

Sengeng.—Used as a blood purifier, the people maintain it has the same effects as quinine. It is boiled and taken internally.

Hallo or *Hie*, the bark of the mahogany tree—it is soaked in hot water and used for cleaning sores, &c.

Bonæfallah when boiled and used internally is considered by the people a preventive against yellow fever.

Arjuma Sato used in female ailments—it is boiled and taken internally.

Kobolikobolo used for internal pains, has to be boiled and the liquid drunk.

Kemo is used for chest troubles.

Sankimo is boiled and taken internally for abdominal pains.

Wallo is boiled and steamed and used when hot to clean the mouth as a preventive against toothache.

Bancoono is boiled and taken internally as a cure for venereal disease.

Barra Sowo is boiled and taken internally. It is supposed to have a counteracting effect to the bite of the tsetse fly.

Marchaddo is boiled and taken as a blood purifier.

Santarra is boiled and taken as a nerve tonic.

Garden or bush tea can be obtained in large quantities. It is treated exactly like ordinary tea and is taken by the people medicinally to produce perspiration and reduce temperature in fever.

Specimens of the above roots are to be seen at the Gambia Section of the Imperial Institute.

62. Samples of mangrove bark have been examined and found to contain about 25 per cent. of tannin. It produces a dye which is greatly used by the people. Large quantities are obtainable.

63. During the year an agricultural school and farm subsidized by the Government and managed by the Roman Catholic Mission, although strictly undenominational, has been started at Abuko, some few miles from Bathurst, and it is hoped that when the farm is in proper working order, daily consignments of produce will be sent in to the market.

64. The Government at considerable expense has imported some fine Ayrshire bulls with the hope of improving the breed of cattle in this country, but so far the experiment cannot be said to promise well.

65. The timber of the Gambia is small and with very few exceptions cannot be considered worth exporting. Very little is used annually, only what is required for repairing cutters and boats being felled.

There are a great number of Rhun palm trees in the country. The timber of this tree is of a fibrous nature and is utilised for rough works, such as piles for bridges and wharves.

66. Very fair fibres can be obtained, and it is thought that the preparation of Piassava or African bass by any enterprising firm or individual, with a little capital, would be found remunerative.

67. The value of land in the important parts of Bathurst has greatly increased of late years, and it is impossible to accurately estimate the worth of it if in the main thoroughfare. In the adjoining streets for land, up to datum as fixed by the Colonial Engineer, £200 per acre would probably be a fair price.

68. In the back streets plots fetch £12, and in the outlying portion of the town without any filling up they are worth from £4 to £8.

69. Land in the Protectorate can be obtained from the Chief of a district for purposes of farming with the sanction of the Governor, but sites for trading factories are granted by the Government at an annual rental of 1s. per 100 square yards, with a minimum payment of £3 per annum.

SHIPPING.

70. The total tonnage for the year was 418,441 tons, made up as follows:—

	Tons.
Steam vessels	413,683
Sailing vessels	4,758

71. The following gives in detail the total tonnage and nationality of the shipping for the years 1907 and 1908.

Nationality of Vessels.	1907.			1908.		
	Steamers.	Sailing Vessels.	Total.	Steamers.	Sailing Vessels.	Total.
	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.
British ...	304,261	242	304,503	300,827	460	301,287
French ...	61,956	1,903	63,859	45,882	1,908	47,790
German ...	40,422	—	40,422	25,870	—	25,870
Russian ...	9,038	—	9,038	4,392	—	4,392
American ...	—	1,442	1,442	—	1,130	1,130
Norwegian ...	18,722	—	18,722	2,690	—	2,690
Portuguese ...	740	830	1,570	—	1,036	1,036
Danish ...	9,204	—	9,204	19,322	—	19,322
Swedish ...	—	—	—	1,688	224	1,912
Greek ...	5,024	—	5,024	13,012	—	13,012
Dutch ...	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total ...	449,367	4,417	453,784	413,683	4,758	418,441

III.—LEGISLATION.

72. Fifteen Ordinances were passed during the year. The more important were:—

No. 1 “An Ordinance to amend the Customs Tariff Ordinance, 1905.”

Under this enactment the old system of calculating the strength of spirits from a fixed point known as proof was done away with, the Continental method of assessing the amount of alcohol by the degree being substituted for it. The standard of strength is fixed at 50 degrees, but in the case of spirits other than brandy and whisky an allowance of 1*d.* per degree is made for every degree of less strength than standard strength, such allowance ceasing when the strength is reduced to 30 degrees. In a similar manner, upon all spirits of greater strength than 50 degrees an extra penny per degree is collected.

No. 3. “An Ordinance to empower the Chief Magistrate to make Rules of Court for the Supreme Court of the Colony of the Gambia.”

For regulating the sittings of the Court, the pleading, practice, and procedure of the Court and the admission and enrolment of barristers, advocates, solicitors, and notaries, &c.

No. 15. “An Ordinance to make further provision with regard to the conveyance of postal matter by sea.”

The object of this enactment is to compel the carriage of postal matter by contract vessels at a fixed remuneration.

IV.—EDUCATION.

73. There is no Government school in the Colony, education being denominational. There are, however, eight primary schools in the Colony and Protectorate:—five in Bathurst, one at Kommbo, and one at McCarthy Island. Seven of them were established by, and are under the management of, the Anglican, Wesleyan, and Roman Catholic denominations. The eighth school known as the Mohammedan school originated with the Government, who pay the teachers. It is administered by a Board of Management of which the Governor is chairman, the eight members being leading Mohammedans.

74. In addition to the above there is a Technical School, with 15 pupils. It is under the management of the Wesleyan Mission and an annual grant of £300 from the Government is given in respect of it.

75. 504 children were presented at the annual examination, and of this number 312 passed the standards.

76. In addition to the annual examination a supplementary examination for the sub-standards and standards I., II., III. is now held in June in each year, and in 1908 312 children were presented at it, of whom 199 passed.

77. The Technical school was first opened in 1903. Suitable boys are taken at it under indenture for five years and receive first rate technical and general instruction under a European instructor. The following trades are specially taught: carpentry and joinery, brickmaking, iron work. Contract work is carried out at reasonable prices. At the end of a boy's apprenticeship he receives a certificate of proficiency and tools to the value of £5. Several good workmen have already passed through the school and are now employed by the Government.

78. The income of the several schools in Bathurst was as under:—

School.	Fees.	Amount collected by owners.	Government Grant.	Total.
	£	£	£	£
Anglican	33	160	275	468
Wesleyan	68	243	221	532
Roman Catholic ...	32	382	350	764
Mohammedan... ..	11	35	120	166
Total	144	820	966	1,930

79. The grants to the Anglican and Roman Catholic schools include the Government grant of £150 per annum for a European superintendent for each denomination. The Wesleyans have not as yet been able to take advantage of this grant.

80. The expenditure of the schools for the year was:—

School.	Build-ings.	Repairs.	School materials.	Salaries.	Other expenses.	Total.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Anglican... ..	—	9	58	393	8	468
Wesleyan ...	30	3	20	488	3	544
Roman Catholic	5	52	65	636	6	764
Mohammedan ...	—	—	—	136	—	136
Total ...	35	64	143	1,653	17	1,912

81. The Mohammedan school was established in 1903 and has 110 children on its register, 14 less than last year. The average attendance was 70. Out of 59 children who were presented for examination only 17 passed. This is probably due to the want of a competent teacher, but great difficulty is experienced in getting suitable teachers for this school. English and arithmetic are taught for three days of the week and Arabic on the other days.

When the school was first started the Protectorate Chiefs were asked to send their sons to Bathurst to be educated at it. At the commencement some difficulty was experienced in getting them to recognize the benefits which the future generation would derive from improved education, but latterly there has been no trouble on this score and the Chiefs are now ready and willing to fall in with the views of the Government. The boys from the Protectorate are placed in charge of a well-known local Mohammedan and are well cared for. The Government pays 20s. a month for each boy.

The children are doing very well, and most of them, although only at school a short time, can read and write, and as they are being carefully trained and looked after, they ought eventually to be of material assistance to the people of the districts from which they come.

The school is well equipped in furniture and appliances.

82. The only secondary school in the Colony is the High School under the Wesleyan Missionary Society. The number on the register is 23. The school fees amounted to £53 and voluntary contributions towards the expenditure to £68.

83. There was an increase of 16 children on the school registers as compared with the year 1907.

V.—GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS.

84. There is a well-equipped hospital in Bathurst containing 1st, 2nd, and 3rd class wards for men. There is also a hospital for women in a separate building adjoining it.

85. There are three medical officers and four European nursing sisters attached to the hospitals with a native staff, comprising a chief dispenser with four assistants and dressers; also three male native nurses, a female nurse and the other necessary servants.

86. Great improvements have been carried out during the past few years in this institution and our hospital is now as good as any on the West African coast. There is excellent out-patient accommodation and a well equipped operating theatre and laboratory.

87. At McCarthy's Island a dispensary, which is much appreciated by the Protectorate people, has been opened. But a short time ago the greatest difficulty was experienced in getting the natives to go to hospital as they preferred their own medicine and treatment; this has all changed now, however, and they readily attend—so readily that it has been suggested that those out-patients who can afford to do so should pay for treatment.

88. The dispensary at McCarthy's Island has been such a success that the advisability of having a hospital with a resident medical officer at that station is being considered, it being thought that persons in the Protectorate who cannot come to Bathurst would in this way receive more direct attention than it is possible for the Protectorate Medical Officer, who travels through the various districts and naturally cannot remain any length of time at one particular place, to give them. The appointment of a special medical officer for the Protectorate has been most beneficial. During the year under report no less than 1,422 patients were attended by him.

89. Two miles from Bathurst there is an excellent contagious diseases hospital. It is divided into two wards, capable of accommodating, if necessity should arise, four patients each. During the year five cases of small-pox were successfully treated at it.

90. The European nursing sisters are from the Convent of St. Joseph de Cluny in Paris, and are well trained, and their devotion to their duties is unceasing. Their presence in the hospital has done much to increase the popularity of that institution with the people. They are always available for duty and live in a special bungalow in the hospital grounds.

91. The accommodation in the wards is as follows:—first class ward—men, 4 beds; second class ward—men, 10 beds; third class ward—men, 24 beds; and female ward, 12 beds.

92. The total number of patients admitted into the hospital during the year was 593, or 33 more than in 1907.

93. The following table shows the number of patients in the hospital during the year:—

—	Remaining in Hospital on 31st December, 1907.	Admitted during the Year.	Died.	Remaining in Hospital 31st December, 1908.
Europeans	1	23	2	—
Natives	11	435	25	16
Civil Police	1	52	—	1
West African Frontier Force.	3	70	—	1
Syrians	—	13	2	—
Total	16	593	29	18

94. Of the 29 deaths in the hospital, 1 was from remittent fever, 1 from black-water fever, 9 from chest troubles, and 1 from trypanosomiasis. Of the remaining 17 no less than four succumbed to tetanus.

95. The out-patients treated were as follows:—

—	New cases.	Old cases.	Total.
Males	4,141	6,790	10,931
Females	2,575	1,328	3,903
Total	6,716	8,118	14,834

In 1907 the number of out-patients treated was only 11,893.

96. There are some 132 Europeans in the Colony and of this number two died from climatic causes. One case was in the Protectorate, that of a Roman Catholic Father who had been in West Africa a great many years—the other was a mercantile clerk who had only been resident in the Colony a few months.

97. Vaccination, as in past years, was vigorously carried out. In Bathurst there were 1,188 cases, of which 1,164 were successful, and in the Protectorate the Commissioners and the Protectorate Medical Officer dealt with some four thousand cases. There was very little small-pox reported from the Protectorate during the year. The people are beginning to appreciate vaccination and are grasping the fact that it is preferable to their old system of inoculation from which at least half of those operated on contracted virulent small-pox and died.

98. There is a Government savings bank, under the management of the Treasurer. At the close of the year there were 417 accounts as against 369 in 1907. The amount remaining on deposit was £3,917. During the year £7,799 was dealt with. The amount withdrawn by depositors was £3,882, and the interest payable was £103.

VI.—JUDICIAL STATISTICS.

99. The duties and powers of the police force are confined to the Colony and they can only be sent into the Protectorate under special authority from the Governor. There is, however, an exception, the police station at McCarthy's Island, where a sergeant and three constables are stationed.

100. The authorized strength of the force for the year was one European superintendent, one European assistant superintendent, and 70 non-commissioned officers and men.

101. The force is equipped with a Merryweather "India Office" pattern manual fire-engine, capable of pumping 136 gallons a minute. There were only seven small fires during the year, the damage caused by them being reported as amounting to £73 in value. This is remarkable in a town like Bathurst where there are a great many native huts thatched with grass, in which only cheap oil lamps and candles are used by the occupants.

102. There is only one prison in the Colony, and that is an old building not altogether as satisfactory as it might be. It answers all requirements however as to accommodation, and is kept scrupulously clean; but owing to one or two cases of beri-beri which have occurred there, it is thought that it ought to be removed altogether from its present site. The cause of the outbreaks of beri-beri has not been definitely decided as yet. The diet scale has been amended, the quantity of rice given to prisoners being reduced to a minimum; and it is hoped that this will bring about an improvement in their health.

103. The interior of the prison is very well kept, and there is a good infirmary.

104. In the men's portion there are fifteen large and well ventilated cells, with four associated wards; while on the women's side there are two associated wards and one separate cell.

105. The daily average number of prisoners was 23·89 as compared with 19·42 in 1907. The increase is accounted for by a greater number of prisoners from the Protectorate during the year, and to a number of short sentence prisoners being committed from the West African Frontier Force.

106. There was only one death in the prison in 1908—dysentery being the cause.

107. Gangs are employed outside on Government works, such as breaking stones, cleaning compounds, &c., and their earnings in 1908 were computed at £171, whilst the expenditure amounted to £812.

108. There was no corporal punishment inflicted during the year.

109. The total number of cases brought before the police court was 204, as against 268 in 1907. The majority, however, of the cases were of a trivial nature resulting in summary convictions. There were only 12 cases committed for trial, and in five of these a *nolle prosequi* was entered. A murder was committed by a

Spaniard who has since been certified as insane, and there was one case of manslaughter.

110. In the Protectorate 551 cases were dealt with summarily by the native courts and the Commissioners—the majority of the charges being special offences under the Protectorate Ordinance.

111. There were 15 cases committed for trial at the Supreme Court, Bathurst, six of which resulted in a *nolle prosequi* being entered.

112. From the Kommo and Fogni Province there was one charge of murder, but the prisoner died before he could be brought to trial. There were also two cases of robbery with violence against one man, who was convicted and sentenced to four years' imprisonment.

113. From the North Bank Province there was one case of manslaughter, in which a conviction was obtained and a sentence of seven years' imprisonment imposed.

114. The absence of serious crime in both the Colony and the Protectorate is remarkable and most satisfactory. The Chiefs and Headmen who form the native tribunals carry out their duties very well and give little or no trouble, and each year shows improvement.

VII.—VITAL STATISTICS.

115. The last census was taken in 1901 and the population was then returned at 8,807 for Bathurst. At this date it can be assumed that, with the additional settlers who have come to St. Mary's Island during the past seven years, that number is below the mark. The population of the Protectorate is roughly 152,000, making a total of nearly 161,000 inhabitants, and it is believed this estimate is a fair one.

116. The number of births registered in Bathurst was 297; this represents a birth rate of 33·7 per 1,000 as against 29·1 in 1907. The deaths registered were 306, and represents a death rate of 34·7 calculated on the census of 1901. It must, however, be remembered that the population of the town is a floating one, and that between planting seasons, *i.e.*, January to May—a large number of labourers and traders come into Bathurst, and in this way the population for the time being is considerably increased.

117. There were 19 marriages solemnized in Bathurst during the year.

118. No deaths occurred among the European Government officials, and the sick rate was not high.

119. There are no less than 40 Friendly Societies registered in Bathurst.

120. The general health of the Colony is excellent. Special attention is given by the Commissioners to the cleanliness of the towns and villages in the Protectorate, and prizes for the cleanest villages in each Province are granted by the Government to encourage the people. The condition of the villages is a great factor towards the health of the inhabitants, and it can be safely stated that the advice given to the Chiefs and Headmen by the Commissioners and the Protectorate Medical Officer when travelling through the districts is having a salutary effect. Small-pox is not nearly so rife as it used to be, and this it may be assumed is due to the numbers who have been vaccinated during the past five years. It is a punishable offence not to report at once an outbreak of small-pox.

121. The town of Bathurst is undoubtedly one of the cleanest on the West Coast of Africa; and as regards sanitary matters it is well looked after by the Board of Health.

122. During the year a series of lectures on hygiene and sanitation was given at the hospital to the school managers and teachers. The various forms of disease common to the country, due to the use of impure water or to living amongst dirty surroundings and under insanitary conditions, were specially dealt with. The intention is that the school children should later on be instructed by their teachers in these matters and that the subject of sanitation should be added to the curriculum of the Government aided schools.

123. The water supply for the Europeans and better class natives is obtained from galvanized iron tanks which fill during the rainy season; but the people who cannot afford these tanks obtain their water from the wells of the town. This is not as satisfactory as it might be, as the well water in Bathurst is none too good towards the latter part of the dry season. The Government has, however, done what it can to improve matters, the expense connected with the provision of an adequate supply of good water being the great obstacle to it. The wells are inspected weekly and the pumps attached to them kept in good working order. New wells are from time to time being sunk in suitable places, as advised by the Board of Health, and the Government are furnishing these wells with Janet's water elevators.

124. The climate of the Gambia during the dry season, from the end of November to the middle of May, is very pleasant and healthy. But during the wet season—June to October—the conditions are much the same as elsewhere on the West Coast of Africa, though the change from excessive dryness to the damp atmosphere so prevalent in the Gulf of Guinea probably makes them more felt.

125. The lowest reading of the thermometer in the shade during 1908 was at Bathurst, 59 degrees in December, the highest recorded temperature being 98 in April, but at McCarthy's Island the shade maximum was 112.

126. The rainfall during the year was 43.54 inches, 9 inches more than 1907. The average rainfall may be taken to be 50 inches. Below will be found the meteorological return for the year:—

METEOROLOGICAL RETURN FOR 1908.

(BATHURST.)

Months.	Temperatures.					Rainfall.	Winds.	Remarks
	Minimum on Grass.	Shade Maximum.	Shade Minimum.	Range.	Mean.	Amount in Inches.	General Direction.	
January	55.0	86.6	63.3	23.3	73.2	—	E	
February	58.6	92.0	61.3	30.7	73.6	—	N	
March	59.0	93.6	64.6	29.6	74.4	—	N	
April	59.6	98.0	66.3	31.7	76.9	—	N	
May	53.0	87.6	68.0	19.6	75.9	—	N	
June	49.3	89.6	71.3	18.3	80.1	1.58	Variable	
July	62.6	88.0	71.0	17.0	79.8	9.75	do.	
August	56.3	86.0	61.0	25.0	78.5	24.67	do.	
September	59.3	87.3	72.6	14.7	79.7	5.35	do.	
October	67.6	89.0	71.6	17.4	80.7	2.14	do.	
November	56.0	89.6	68.6	21.0	76.4	—	E	
December	52.0	89.6	59.3	30.3	75.4	.05	E	
Total	688.3	1086.9	798.9	278.6	924.6	43.54	—	
Monthly Average	57.3	90.5	66.5	23.2	77.0	—	—	

VIII.—MAIL, POSTAL, TELEGRAPH, AND TELEPHONE SERVICES.

127. Communication between the Colony and Europe is effected by the steamers of the African Steamship Co. (Messrs. Elder Dempster & Co.), which run fortnightly between Liverpool and Bathurst, and those of the Woermann Line from Hamburg which communicate with the Colony once each month; these latter steamers, however, do not call on the homeward passage but proceed direct to Europe from Sierra Leone. There is a French line—the Messageries Maritimes—which sails to and from Bordeaux and Dakar fortnightly, and Dakar being only 90 miles from Bathurst passengers often join these steamers there, and get to Europe in eight days. Again there are the steamers of the Compagnie Belge Maritime du Congo, which run between Antwerp and Matadi, calling at Dakar once every three weeks and taking and landing passengers at Southampton.

128. Internal communication is satisfactory, most of the important firms having steamers or launches which make frequent trips during the trading season up the river; these vessels are ready to accept any passengers or freight which may offer. The cost of a passage to McCarthy's Island, 158 miles from Bathurst, is £1 5s. first class and 12s. deck.

129. The Government yacht "Mansah Kilah" also runs when required, and on ordinary trips takes passengers and freight at the same rates as the other vessels.

POST OFFICE.

130. The rules of the Postal Union have been adopted by the Colony and its Protectorate.

The following are the rates of postage:—

For each letter posted in the Colony for delivery therein or the Protectorate, 1*d.* per 2 oz. in weight.

For each letter addressed to any place in the United Kingdom or British Colonies, which have accepted the penny postage, 1*d.* per oz. or fraction thereof.

For each letter addressed to a foreign country 2½*d.* for the first oz. or fraction thereof.

Parcel Post. If posted at places within the Colony and Protectorate for delivery therein:

For every pound or fraction thereof 3*d.*

If addressed to the United Kingdom or British Colonies in West Africa:

Not over 3 lbs. in weight 1*s.*

Over 3 lbs. but not over 7 lbs. 2*s.*

Over 7 lbs. but not over 11 lbs. 3*s.*

131. There is no direct parcel post scheme at present with foreign countries. All parcels are forwarded through the medium of the General Post Office, London, a small additional charge being made for onward transmission.

132. The revenue for the Post Office is derived principally from the sale of stamps, commission on money and postal orders, and the rent of the private boxes, &c., and in 1908 amounted to £684.

133. The expenditure for the same period was £757 as against £770 in 1907, of which £232 was expended on transit charges outside the Colony.

134. The number of letters and parcels dealt with was 112,056, or 7,455 more than during the preceding year. The value of money and postal orders issued and paid during the year amounted to £4,133.

TELEGRAPHS.

135. Bathurst is in communication with Europe by telegraph cable, the African Direct Telegraph Company having a station on the island. This Company was established in 1886, and the subsidy of £500 per annum granted it for 20 years ceased in September, 1906.

The following are some of the charges for cablegrams:—Between Bathurst and

	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>	
Great Britain and Ireland ...	3	6	per word
Ascension	2	0	„
French Guinea	1	8	„
Sierra Leone	1	0	„
Gold Coast	2	2	„
Dahomey	2	5	„
Southern Nigeria	2	10	„

136. In view of the subsidy originally paid, which has now lapsed, Government telegrams are forwarded at half the above rates.

TELEPHONES.

137. There is a Government telephone system in Bathurst, all the principal departments and the Bank of British West Africa being connected with the exchange; as also are the West African Frontier Force Barracks and Lines. There is also a special line to Cape Saint Mary, seven and a half miles from Bathurst, which was completed in 1907.

GENERAL REMARKS.

138. The Colony and Protectorate of the Gambia, the most northerly of the British West African dependencies, is situated as nearly as possible in the north latitude $13^{\circ} 24'$ and $16^{\circ} 36'$ west longitude, and comprises both banks of the River Gambia from the north inland due east to a small village on the north bank some three miles above Koina, where the French sphere of influence is reached. It contains some 5,000 square miles.

139. The Gambia is a great river of Western Africa, falling into the Atlantic Ocean by a large estuary measuring some 27 miles across; but narrowing opposite the town of Bathurst 18 miles distant, to some $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles. Next to the Congo it is probably the safest river to enter on the West African Coast, and among all African rivers it is remarkable for a bar which can be crossed at any time of the tide. At the bar there is never less than 26 feet of water, and, as there is a wide channel for the whole distance, ocean going steamers drawing not more than 13 feet can proceed without trouble right up to McCarthy's Island, 174 miles distant. The charts available are fairly accurate.

140. The town of Bathurst is situated on St. Mary's Island and is the seat of Government, and dates from the year 1814. The Island is a sand-bank about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles long by a mile and a quarter broad, separated from the main land by a channel called Oyster Creek. The town of Bathurst is an exceptionally clean one, and this fact was specially commented upon by the Commission sent out a short while ago by the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine.

141. The leading mercantile firms possess fine old buildings for their factories, and now that most of the Government buildings have been restored, bungalows built, and McCarthy Square enclosed and laid out, Bathurst, as an African town, certainly impresses visitors favourably.

142. During the last few years an excellent wharf has been erected at the Customs, where ocean-going steamers come alongside.

143. The Colony now practically only consists of the Island of St. Mary. By Section 4 of Ordinance No. 7 passed in 1902, British Kommo, the Ceded Mile, and McCarthy's Island were placed under the Protectorate system of government. McCarthy's Island is 156 miles distant from Bathurst. During the past few years a great deal of important work has been performed in the Protectorate, which is now in a most tranquil state, no doubt mainly due to the close touch which is kept with native affairs by means of the many tours made through it by the Governor and Travelling Commissioners.

144. A survey of the boundaries dividing the Gambia on the north bank of the river from Senegal, and on the south bank from the Casamance was completed by the Anglo-French Boundary Commission in 1905. The Protectorate extends on both banks of the river for upwards of 300 miles from its mouth.

145. The Island of St. Mary comprises about 2,500 acres, but a large portion is covered by mangrove swamp. The town of Bathurst during the past decade has been greatly improved and new stone buildings are being erected, and the area of the town is gradually extending.

PEOPLE OF THE GAMBIA.

146. The inhabitants are mostly of the negro race, the chief tribes being the Jollofs, Mandingos, Fullahs, and Jolahs. The country of the Jollofs is on the north bank or Senegal side of the river, and they form a large portion of the community in the town of Bathurst. As a race they are very proud and claim for themselves a very ancient descent.

147. The Mandingos are the most numerous people on this portion of the African coast, and derive their name from Manding, a town some 700 miles inland and towards the boundary of the Colony of Sierra Leone. They are mostly Mohammedans.

148. The Jolahs come from Fogni, between the southern limit of Kommo and on the north bank of the Casamance River. Their country runs in a north-easterly direction towards the south bank of the Gambia River as far as the mouth of the Vintang Creek, some 26 miles from Bathurst. They are pagans and a wild uncivilised tribe.

149. The Fullahs are the "gipsies" of the Gambia, and are good farmers and herdsmen. Their features are more of the European type and their skins fairer than those of the average native of the Gambia. The capital of the Foulah country is Timbo in Futa Jallon, and is situated in north latitude $10^{\circ} 38'$ and west longitude $11^{\circ} 10'$.

PUBLIC WORKS.

150. Mr. A. T. Coode, of the firm of Messrs. Coode, Son, and Matthews, consulting engineers to the Government for certain constructional works, visited the Gambia in November, and in addition to inspecting the Government works which had been

carried out during the past few years specially reported on the proposed slipway for the Colony; the completion of the filling in of a swamp known as Half Die, at the south-eastern end of St. Mary's Island, which work was stopped after £5,483 had been expended on it (it is right to say that the Colony has derived some advantages from this expenditure and that it would be decidedly beneficial to the health of the community if the whole swamp could be filled in; but for financial reasons this is at present impossible); the repairs to the Government wharf which were necessitated by its having been injured by a steamer; the condition and re-construction of certain parts of the bridge over Oyster Creek connecting St. Mary's Island, Bathurst, with the mainland; and the dredging works in operation at Kai Hai and those proposed at the Bruko rocks.

151. The works at Kai Hai which were resumed in 1907, and are for the purpose of deepening the river channel at that place, have steadily progressed during the year. The channel has been properly surveyed, and to a certain extent dredged and marked out, and the dredging operations are still being carried out.

152. It is unfortunate that only for some seven months of the year is it possible to proceed with the work; this is due to the heavy floods that are found in the river from June to October, which render dredging at that time impossible. The consequence is a fresh start has to be made each dry season, and delay naturally takes place in getting the works in full swing again. However, I am glad to be able to report that 4,500 tons of rock and mud were removed from the bed of the channel and deposited on the bank during the year. I may mention that a special crane and grab has this year been procured to facilitate the discharge of the lighters, and it is thought that in 1910 the work will proceed much more rapidly.

153. It is hoped that when the work is completed ocean-going steamers drawing 15 feet to 16 feet will be able to pass through the channel.

154. The cost of the work, including the dredger, a special launch, lighters, and other necessary plant, is estimated at some £18,000. The actual expenditure at the end of 1908 amounted to £14,219.

155. On the completion of the scheme the Government, in agreement with the mercantile firms, will levy an additional rate of 1s. per ton on all ground nuts exported from McCarthy's Island and above that place.

156. About one and a half miles up stream from the east end of McCarthy's Island the navigable channel of the Gambia River is confined by a line of rocks, known as the Bruko Rocks, which stretch three-fourths of the way across the river from the north bank. The existing channel is only about 70 yards wide with a minimum depth at low water of ordinary spring tides, of about 11 feet 6 inches, and it is suggested that if these rocks could be removed at a reasonable expenditure, the river might become navigable for ocean-going steamers beyond the Island of McCarthy, at present the furthest port up river for the loading

of such steamers for direct export. Blasting experiments have in a small way been carried out, but as it was found that there would be little if any appreciable difference in the depth of the existing channel without entirely removing the rocks, &c. by dredging, the work has been left in abeyance pending the completion of the Kai Hai dredging operations.

WEST AFRICAN FRONTIER FORCE BARRACKS.

157. During the year 1908 the repairs to the officers' quarters, stables, and other out-buildings have been completed at a cost of £4,942.

The Gambia Company of the West African Frontier Force possess barracks equal, if not superior, to any on the West African Coast. They were originally built for Imperial troops which were stationed in the Gambia many years ago, but the old buildings had got into a very ruinous condition, and it became necessary to abandon them altogether or expend a very large sum of money in their repair, the latter course being followed by the Government.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES HOSPITAL.

158. Owing to the close proximity of the West African Frontier Force lines to the old contagious hospital, it was considered, after a fire which took place there, inadvisable to rebuild the institution on the same site; in consequence a new site was selected about two miles from Bathurst, in an open position, and at the cost of £499 an excellent building for the purpose for which it is intended has been erected there.

DRAINS.

159. In the important thoroughfares of Clarkson, Blucher, Picton, and Anglesea Streets there are large open drains running down the centre of the roadway which were built many years ago for the purpose of carrying away from the Island the water which accumulates during the rainy season. These drains in their open state were found dangerous, and a native in an intoxicated condition having fallen into one of them and lost his life, it was considered necessary to place rails alongside them. This work has now been satisfactorily carried out at a cost of some £400.

GAMBIA EXHIBITS AT THE FRANCO-BRITISH EXHIBITION.

160. In February, 1908, it was unanimously decided that the Gambia should take part in the great Exhibition held last year in London, and a special committee was appointed to obtain the necessary exhibits which were to be sent to it. Great interest was taken in the matter, not only by members of the committee but by the community generally, who were given an opportunity of inspecting all the specimens before they were despatched to England.

161. The exhibits were:—

Vegetable products.—Rice, millets, maize, palm kernels, cassava, numerous specimens of herbs and roots, cocoa-nuts, indigo, rubber, gum arabic, fibres, calabash gourds, and seeds.

Animal products.—Bees-wax, hides, ivory, &c.

Examples of native work.—Gold and silver ornaments, pottery, buildings, furniture, baskets, cane fencing, leather work, woven cloths, canoes, agricultural implements and other utensils, musical instruments, and numerous curios.

162. The total expenditure incurred was £636, and in view of the advertisement gained by the Colony and the impetus it is to be hoped that it will give to trade, it may be considered to have been well incurred. The Commissioner reported that vast numbers of people had an opportunity of inspecting the Gambia exhibits and from the various questions they asked, and the keen manner in which they perused the catalogues, it was evident that a great interest was taken in them. He added that numbers of the general public had been made aware by the Exhibition of the existence of this small Colony, and that the Gambia is now something more than a mere name on a map to them.

163. The following awards were received:—

FRANCO-BRITISH EXHIBITION.

GAMBIA GOVERNMENT AWARDS.

Class 39.

Vegetable Food Products.

Ground-nuts, millet, rice, maize. Silver Medal.

Class 41.

Non-Edible Agricultural Products.

Indigo, rubber, gum arabic, and fibres. Grand Prix.

Class 42.

Useful Insects and their Products.

Wax. Silver Medal.

Class 50.

Products of the Cultivation of Forests.

Mahogany and other woods. Honourable Mention.

Class 87.

Applied Chemistry.

Native herbs. Gold Medal.

Other Awards.

Native leatherwork. Silver Medal.

Pottery. Silver Medal.

Native agricultural implements. Silver Medal.

164. During the year collections of blood-sucking flies and parasites were made by Dr. Hood, Senior Medical Officer, and forwarded by him to the British Museum and to Professor Nuttall of Cambridge. The specimens transmitted are being identified.

165. Very good partridge (the francolin) shooting can be obtained in the Gambia. An occasional antelope may be added to the bag, but big game shooting is out of the question except in

the upper reaches of the river and in French territory. All game birds are protected from 1st July to the 31st December; antelope from the 1st July to the 31st March. There is no licence required for partridge shooting, but for antelope, bustards, &c., £1 per annum is charged.

SOCIAL CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.

166. The rates of wages are high in the Gambia as compared with elsewhere on the Coast; labour just before the planting season is none too plentiful, but there is no opening for European labour. During the rainy season, July-November, the leading mercantile agents and almost all their clerks leave the Colony, and trade during that period is practically at a standstill. In other words, as soon as the ground-nut season ends, beyond a little local trade there is nothing doing until the next crop is pulled.

167. The inhabitants can be divided into two classes, a middle class and the labouring class; the former comprises professional men, shop-keepers, clerks, and artisans, and most of them are well-to-do.

The wants of the labouring class are few, and they can live fairly comfortably on £1 a month. Native foodstuff is cheap and very little clothing is required by them in this country.

GENERAL CONDITION OF THE COLONY.

168. The progress of the Colony during the past five years has been most satisfactory.

The Colony's financial position is sound, and with the season of 1908-1909 the good one it promises to be, the largest revenue on record will be collected. The development of the Protectorate has steadily advanced and although it cannot be said that there is much opportunity for increasing trade, the volume of it has decidedly become larger during the last few years. The country is in a tranquil state and the people appear contented and prosperous, the troubles which existed only a few years back having, it is hoped, gone for all time.

F. BISSET ARCHER,
Acting Colonial Secretary.

WORK CONDUCTED AT THE IMPERIAL INSTITUTE DURING THE
YEAR 1908 FOR THE COLONY OF THE GAMBIA.

SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL DEPARTMENT.

Reports from the Imperial Institute have been made to the Government of the Gambia on the following subjects, on the basis of investigations conducted in the Scientific and Technical Department, followed, when necessary, by technical trials by manufacturers and commercial experts. Recommendations have also been made as to the further action which is required in the Colony in order to develop the production of those materials for which there would be satisfactory commercial demand.

Timbers.

A specimen of "rosewood" was found to resemble the true rosewoods in all physical characters except colour. The timber would not pass as rosewood on the English market, and should not be offered as such, but it would make a good furniture wood, especially if darker pieces are obtainable.

A timber described as "mahogany" resembled a very inferior baywood. It is not likely that timber represented by this specimen would be of sufficient value for export, but as it is easy to cut up and no doubt possesses many of the good qualities of mahogany it should be useful locally.

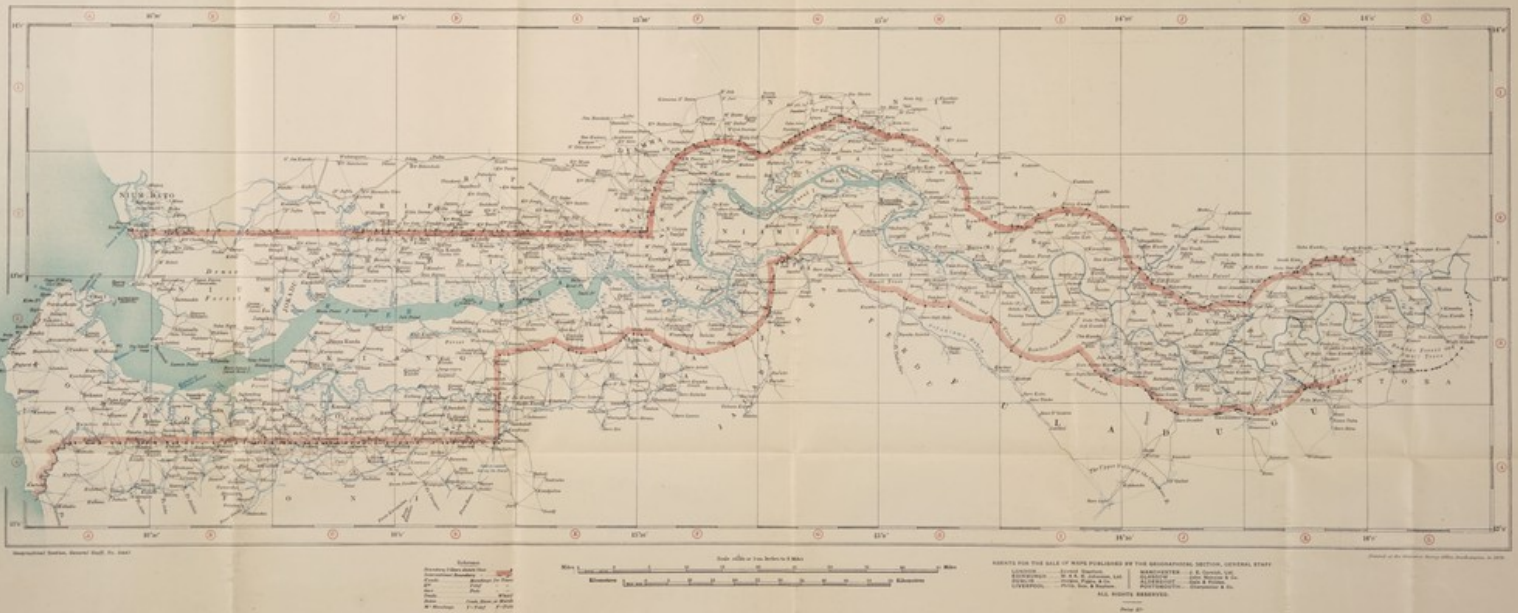
Rubber.

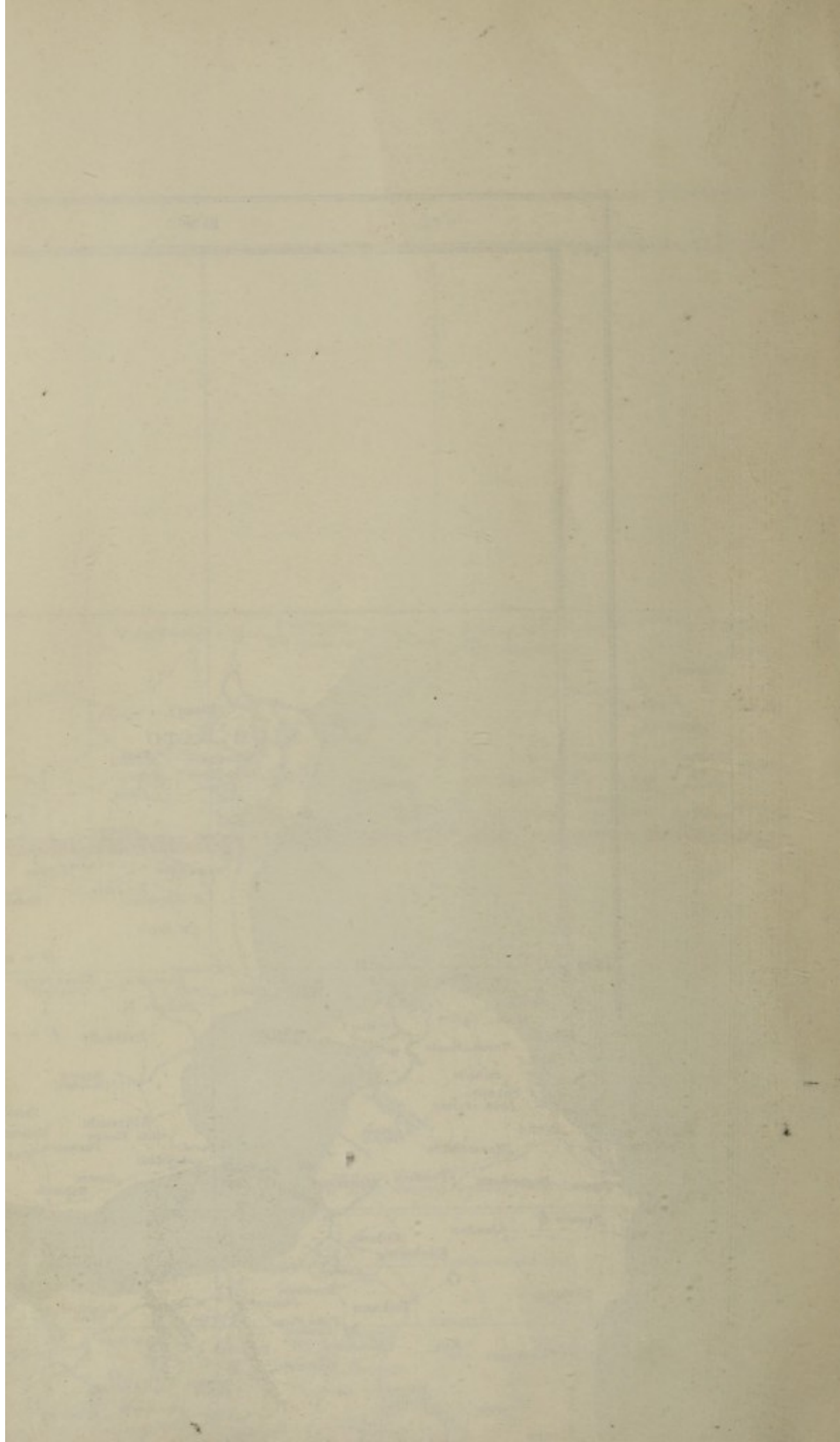
The investigation into the uses and value of the rubber of *Ficus Vogelii* was continued, and a small consignment was received for technical trial. The results of tests by manufacturers showed that the material could be utilised commercially, notwithstanding the high percentage of resin (30 to 35 per cent.) which it contained. The washed rubber was valued at from 1s. 7d. to 1s. 11d. per lb., with fine hard Para rubber at 2s. 9d. per lb. It was suggested that a trial consignment of the rubber should be forwarded for sale.

Exhibition Galleries.

The Staff of the Colonial Collections of the Imperial Institute rendered considerable assistance in arranging and labelling the Gambia products which were shown at the Franco-British Exhibition in London. At the close of the Exhibition a number of these exhibits were transferred to the Imperial Institute for addition to the Gambia Court, and this work, necessitating the re-arrangement of the Court, is in progress.

G A M B I A





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 :—

ANNUAL.

No.	Colony, &c.	Year.
574	Nyasaland	1907-1908
575	Bahamas	"
576	Gambia	1907
577	St. Vincent	1907-1908
578	Turks and Caicos Islands	1907
579	St. Lucia	"
580	Fiji	"
581	Mauritius	"
582	Straits Settlements	"
583	Southern Nigeria	"
584	Imperial Institute	1906-1907
585	Barbados	1907-1908
586	Somaliland Protectorate	"
587	Trinidad and Tobago	"
588	Sierra Leone	1907
589	British Guiana	1907-1908
590	Grenada	1907
591	Leeward Islands	1907-1908
592	East Africa Protectorate	"
593	Bechuanaland Protectorate	"
594	Northern Nigeria	"
595	Basutoland	"
596	Swaziland	"
597	St. Helena	1908
598	Gibraltar	1907-1908
599	Falkland Islands	1908
600	Uganda	1907-1908
601	Imperial Institute	1908
602	Northern Territories of the Gold Coast	"
603	Ashanti	"
604	Ceylon	"
605	Weihaiwei	"
606	Seychelles	"
607	Jamaica	1907-1908
608	Colonial Survey Committee	1908-1909

MISCELLANEOUS.

No.	Colony, &c.	Subject.
51	Southern Nigeria	Forest Administration.
52	South Africa	Native Education.
53	East Africa Protectorate	Veterinary Bacteriological Work, 1907-8.
54	Newfoundland	Governor's visit to the Micmac Indians.
55	Cape Colony	Rietfontein Area.
56	Turks Islands	Salt Industry.
57	Uganda	Governor's Tour.
58	British Colonies	Fibres.
59	Northern Nigeria	Mineral Survey, 1906-7.

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ANNUAL.

No.	Colony, &c.	Year.
574	Nyasaland	1907-1908
575	Natal	1907
576	Northern Rhodesia	1907-1908
577	St. Vincent	1907
578	Tonga and Cook Islands	1907
579	St. Lucia	1907
580	Tiwi	1907
581	Manitoba	1907
582	British Columbia	1907
583	British Columbia	1907-1908
584	Imperial Institute	1907-1908
585	Imperial Institute	1907-1908
586	Imperial Institute	1907-1908
587	Trinidad and Tobago	1907
588	British Columbia	1907-1908
589	British Columbia	1907
590	British Columbia	1907-1908
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MISCELLANEOUS.

No.	Colony, &c.	Subject.
61	Northern Rhodesia	Forest Administration
62	Northern Rhodesia	Native Administration
63	Northern Rhodesia	Veterinary
64	Northern Rhodesia	Work 1907-8
65	Northern Rhodesia	Governor's visit to the interior
66	Northern Rhodesia	Indian
67	Northern Rhodesia	Historical Atlas
68	Northern Rhodesia	East India
69	Northern Rhodesia	Governor's Tour
70	Northern Rhodesia	Finance
71	Northern Rhodesia	Mineral Survey 1907-8