

WINDWARD

travelling epidemics are scarcely known to it, yet, generally speaking, it is ever sapping the health, and is always ready to seize hold on anything pecuniary either in habits or constitution.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY CONNOR.

The Right Hon. Lord John Russell,  
 &c. &c. &c.

ST. HELENA.

ST. HELENA.

No. 28.

No. 28.

COPY of a DESPATCH from Acting Governor Colonel VIGORS to the  
 SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES.

(No. 7.)

St. Helena, March 29, 1855.  
 (Received June 12, 1855.)

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to transmit the Blue Book for the year 1854.

2. The revenue for the year amounts to the sum of 16,749*l.* 0*s.* 6½*d.*, of which 603*l.* 18*s.* 4*d.* was received on account of the widows' and orphans' fund, leaving a net colonial revenue of 16,145*l.* 2*s.* 2*d.* As compared with the year 1853, there would appear to be a falling-off amounting to 1,517*l.* 14*s.* 8*d.*, which must be attributed to the unusually large amount of imports in the former year.

Revenue 1854.	
1854	- £16,145 2 2
1853	- 17,662 16 10
	<u>1,517 14 8</u>

3. The revenue for 1854 may however be said to have equalled the expectations which were entertained when the estimates for the year were prepared, there being only the slight difference of 99*l.* 17*s.* 9*d.* between the estimated and actual receipts.

Revenue, 1854.	
Estimated	£16,245 0 0
Actual	- 16,145 2 2
	<u>99 17 9</u>

4. The expenditure amounts to 19,083*l.* 0*s.* 11½*d.*, showing an increase of little more than 3,000*l.* over both the estimates for 1854 and the comparative expenditure of 1853. The items which compose the excess are chiefly a remittance of 2,000*l.* to Mr. Barnard, an addition of 566*l.* to the estimated expenses of erecting the new gaol, a refund of 338*l.* to the commissariat chest for water charged against the African establishment, and about 200*l.* additional expense of completing the militia corps and drilling recruits on the commencement of the present war.

Expenditure.	
1854	- £19,083 0 11
1853	- 15,974 17 2
	<u>3,108 8 9</u>
Expenditure, 1854.	
Estimated	£15,751 15 0
Actual	19,083 0 11
	<u>3,331 8 11</u>

5. After paying this excess from the balance reserved for the purpose in the commissariat chest, there still remains the sum of 1,631*l.* 13*s.* 8*d.* on the 31st December 1854 to the credit of the colony.

6. It is but due to Colonel Browne, the late Governor, to remark, that during his government, by a careful reduction of the expenses of the establishment on the one hand, and by the alteration in the customs tariff, abolishing the ad valorem duties, substituting a scale of drawback in lieu, and also reducing the tax upon licences to sell wines, spirits, &c., and increasing the duties upon their importation, the financial condition of the colony has been much improved; and although at first sight it would appear that the accounts of the year show a deficit of 3,000*l.*, it nevertheless will be found on examination that the revenue exceeds the ordinary expenses of the government, the excess of expenditure being for special services, and improvements, for the accomplishing of which a sufficient balance had been allowed to accumulate in the treasury.

7. I regret that the failure of crops, particularly of potatoes, referred to by Colonel Browne in his report on the previous year, has again been severely felt. The successful efforts of the lessee of Longwood to grow wheat has led to a reasonable hope that it may, under existing circumstances be profitably substituted for other crops in those lands which are suitable for the purpose, and the attention of the farmers generally has been turned to this subject.

8. The construction of the new gaol was not completed until the close of the year. The information and returns connected with gaols and prisoners relate therefore exclusively to the old prison at James Town, which continued in use until the latter part of December 1854.

9. In compliance with a circular despatch from Sir George Grey, requesting that a general report of the state of repair of the government house should be inserted in the Blue Book, I have caused the civil engineer to prepare a detailed and full report, accompanied by a plan and estimate of the amount required to complete its repairs.

10. An inventory and report on the state of the furniture is likewise submitted in my despatch No. 9. of this date.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) H. N. VIGORS,  
Colonel, and Acting Governor.

Right Hon. the Secretary of State  
for the Colonies.

Enclosure in No. 28.

SIR, Civil Engineer's Office, St. Helena, February 12, 1855.

IN compliance with the request contained in your letter of the 10th ultimo, I have the honour to forward a report of the state of Plantation House, together with an estimate for putting the same in complete repair, framed after a careful examination of the premises.

In consequence of it being stated in your letter that this information was required for England, I have deemed it advisable to accompany this report with the annexed plans Nos. 1 and 2, the first showing the accommodation in the dwelling house, and the second the extent and boundary of the grounds of 166 acres.

The estimate of repair amounts to 661*l.* 9*s.* 11*d.*, and an estimate framed in similar detail by me in August 1851 amounted to 498*l.* 1*s.* 8*d.*; one of the principal causes of increase arises from the amount of a new item that I have brought forward, viz., renovating the exterior of the dwelling house, an item not perhaps immediately necessary, but one that ought not to be long deferred.

From a comparison of these estimates it confirms me in the opinion that 200*l.* per annum is not sufficient to cover more than the current repair continually required in such extensive premises, and I would respectfully submit whether a periodical additional grant should be allowed, to effect such items of repair as do not fairly come under this class.

I would, in regard to the present estimate, specify the following items under this latter head; viz.

A new roof on the library.

Do. do. laundry.

Renovating the front of the main building:

A new roof on closets marked 12 on plan.

A new improved system of tubular drainage, although not now estimated, would, I think, be attended with most beneficial results to the property.

I have also to report that, further in compliance with your letter, I accompanied Capt. T. B. Kuiper in examining the state of the furniture in Plantation House, and the result of an inspection of the same is shown in a column of remarks attached to the inventory.

I framed an estimate of what appeared to me desirable to be laid out in renewing some of the covering worn out, and in effecting several items of repair that would much improve the state generally of this furniture, and the same amounts to 75*l.*

R. C. Pennell, Esq.,  
Colonial Secretary.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) GEO. W. MELLIS,  
Civil Engineer.