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No. 323.

ST. HELENA.

REPORT FOR 1900.

(For Report for 1899, *see* No. 309.)

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



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(For Report for 1899, see No. 309.)

GOVERNOR STERNDALE to MR. CHAMBERLAIN.

The Castle,

St. Helena,

3rd April, 1901.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to transmit herewith the Blue Book of this Colony for the year 1900, together with my report on the same.

The year has been an exceptional one in the history of the Island since the days of Napoleon.

The presence of a large number of prisoners of war, of troops sufficient to guard them, and of the "Niobe," a first-class cruiser, succeeded by the "Thetis," caused a large consumption of dutiable imports, which resulted in the Customs Revenue reaching the sum of £10,426.

The total Revenue is the highest since 1871, and the actual expenditure, when we deduct certain sums to be repaid by the War Office and Admiralty, will be less than in the preceding three years.

The imports nearly doubled, having risen from £91,699 in 1899 to £168,282.

The demand for labour continues, but the scarcity has been relieved by the employment of well conducted prisoners of war, who are anxious to get work. By the aid of forty of these men I was enabled to carry out within a short time, and at reduced expense, two very important works, the reclamation of a portion of the foreshore running into the wharf on which to erect a new crane, and the blasting and construction of a road round the West Rocks to a point jutting out into the sea, where in future the scavenger carts will shoot their contents into the westerly

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current instead of into the almost stagnant waters of an inner bay. Both these works were carried out under the supervision of Captain D. B. Thomson, of the 28th Bombay Pioneers, who happened to be here on leave, and who devoted the whole of his time gratuitously for some months to the work. Under him and in immediate charge of the prisoners, were Captain Waldeck and Baron Fagerskiold, both prisoners of war.

The masonry and foundations of the crane were finished before Captain Thomson was compelled to return to duty, but Baron Fagerskiold (a young Swedish engineer who had been employed on a Transvaal railway) carried on the work of mounting the crane, which is now being used.

The West Rocks Road is also finished and in use. It is not only of unquestionable utility from a sanitary point of view, but is a great boon to the residents of Jamestown as a pleasant evening promenade, which was greatly needed.

I have alluded in the Report to the visitation of influenza in May and June, the severest on record. We are now taking stringent measures to prevent the introduction of plague from the Cape, which if once admitted into so confined a place as this, crowded as it is at present, would be a serious calamity. The sanitary condition of Jamestown is occupying our attention, and I hope the projected drainage scheme may form a feature in the current year's report.

I have, &c.,

R. A. STERNDALE,

Governor.

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FINANCIAL.

GENERAL REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE.

Comparative Statement of Revenue for the Years 1899, 1900.

	1899.	1900.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Customs	6,548 5 7	10,426 8 3
Licenses, taxes, auction dues	830 11 1	884 10 6
Fines, fees of court and reimbursements	1,270 11 3	842 1 10
Post office	1,126 12 5	1,470 16 1
Rents of Government property ...	838 1 8	869 0 4
Interest	651 10 2	661 9 4
Miscellaneous receipts	327 13 9	237 9 6
Total	11,593 5 11	15,391 15 10

Our financial position has still further improved during the year under report, being £3,798 9s. 11d. in excess of 1899. The chief increase has been under the head of "Customs," which exceeded the previous year by £3,878. The Post Office also benefited by the large number of prisoners of war and the increased garrison.

ST. HELENA, *Comparative Statement of Expenditure for the Years 1899, 1900.*
1900.

	1899.	1900.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Port and marine department	469 4 2	473 17 7
Public debt	—	500 0 0
Pensions	1,521 17 10	1,323 7 0
The Governor	765 15 10	969 11 1
Colonial Secretary	535 18 9	596 4 8
Customs	733 19 1	643 0 4
Legal	321 18 11	331 18 0
Savings bank	431 5 3	463 16 3
Police	580 8 9	598 15 11
Gaol	98 12 3	143 4 1
Medical	1,050 17 4	1,218 3 7
Education	484 17 7	522 1 1
Post office	398 15 2	327 6 11
Miscellaneous services	350 18 9	555 2 11
Colonial engineer	166 0 0	184 2 6
Public works, recurrent	1,867 16 0	1,949 18 3
Public works, extraordinary	1,455 0 8	1,708 2 2
St. Helena sharpshooters	188 12 2	95 0 0
Total	11,421 18 6	12,603 12 4

The expenditure was heavier than in 1899 by £1,182, but when recoveries are made from the Imperial Government of sums spent on account of works entailed by the war, the actual expenditure for the Colony will be less than in the previous year.

The increased payments under the head of "Medical" are due to a serious epidemic of influenza and to the great rise in the price of provisions.

Total Revenue and Expenditure for the last Five Years.

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1900.

Year.	Revenue.	Expenditure.
	£	£
1896	9,160	8,872
1897	8,803	13,004
1898	9,152	12,349
1899	11,593	11,421
1900	15,391	12,603

It will be noticed that from 1898 there has been a steady increase in Revenue which is due chiefly to the Customs; this increase was caused by the advent of the Boer prisoners and the augmented garrison, and is the highest recorded since 1871, when it reached £15,557.

Assets and Liabilities.

The results of the year are very favourable. In my last year's Report I stated that the Liabilities exceeded the Assets by £2,634, owing to £4,068 being over-paid by the Crown Agents on account of the heavy expenditure of the past two years. Now the assets exceed the liabilities by £2,625, and the over draft on the Crown Agents has been liquidated.

Another instalment of £500 has been made towards paying off the Parliamentary Grant of £5,158 made in 1871-2, reducing the debt to £4,158.

Currency.

The estimated amount of coin in circulation during the year under report was £25,000.

The amount of specie imported was £15,000. Exports of specie came to £3,785.

The Government Savings Bank deposits totalled £21,996.

The deposits during the year amounted to £7,181; the withdrawals to £4,027.

Remittances to England by bills on the Crown Agents were £34,882.

ST. HELENA, 1900. Subjoined is a comparative statement of Revenue and Expenditure of Poor Relief Board for the last five years:—

Year.	Revenue.	Expenditure.
	£	£
1896	851	863
1897	826	820
1898	863	850
1899	862	889
1900	857	871

Public Market.

Year.	Revenue.	Expenditure.
	£	£
1896	83	82
1897	112	110
1898	107	109
1899	191	172
1900	238	202

The Market funds continued to improve, showing a profit of £36 against £19 in 1899, and that was due to fees on slaughter of cattle for the garrison and the prisoners of war.

TRADE, AGRICULTURE, AND INDUSTRIES.

Imports and Exports.

Year.	Imports.	Exports.
	£	£
1896	30,950	4,739
1897	34,365	4,993
1898	62,985	4,391
1899	91,699	4,592
1900	168,282	4,215

Imports nearly doubled again in the year under report, the figures include £15,000 in specie, 800 oxen were imported by the Imperial Government for the use of the troops and prisoners, and 4,220 cases of preserved meats. Other noticeable items are oilman's stores, paraffin oil, wines and spirits, beer and tobacco, besides large consignments of stores (26,916 packages) for the Imperial Government.

The exports are as usual of very trifling value, viz., only £430 after deducting specie to the extent of £3,785, much less than the preceding year when they reached £998. Potatoes form the bulk of the exports from the Island, and during the year the local demand was so great and such high prices ruled, that it was probably more profitable to sell in the home market than to export.

MINES, MANUFACTORIES AND FISHERIES.

There is nothing to report in the way of Mining. Two of the prisoners of war, one being an architect, wrote to me reporting on a high class building stone, regarding which further enquiries will be made.

The lace industry is progressing, and a considerable impetus has been given to wood carving by the prisoners of war, some of whom excel in this art, though Miss Holmes' school bids fair to rival, if not excel, the best of them.

The Industrial Exhibition alluded to in my last Report, came off on the 10th of November. It was a modest yet interesting Exhibition, and as the expenses were not heavy, it was financially a success, allowing the Committee, after devoting £10 to two charitable institutions, to place in the Savings Bank a balance of about £11 as a nest egg towards the next exhibition.

The Islanders did not seem, somehow, to understand the full object and scope of the undertaking, many of those whose undoubted talents could have materially assisted the movement for some reason held back, and many of the poorer classes who had been working for it were, owing to the dearness of provisions and the necessities arising from the influenza epidemic, obliged to sell what they had made.

In some classes the excellence of a single exhibit made it a matter of regret to me that there was not some more competition when it was well known that there were others who were well able to compete.

This was noticeable in preserves, crystallized fruits, and garden produce.

In addition to the Exhibition prizes I had given special prizes myself for works in clay, specimens of fibre, preserves, crystallized fruits, and cured fish. In clay, the only exhibits were by myself.

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No one came forward in fibre, although I expected several exhibitors.

In preserved fruits and jams only one out of several expected exhibitors put in an appearance, and from the excellence of her productions she well deserved a prize, especially for crystallized fruit.

There was only one exhibitor in cured fish, and he was painfully in evidence in the department where he exhibited. However, he was given a prize, *pour encourager les autres*. In wood inlaying, in which one man excels, there were no exhibits.

This was to a certain extent disappointing, but we propose to have another Exhibition, perhaps next year, when we anticipate better results.

In garden produce, though the competitors were few in number, the exhibits were remarkably fine, showing well what the Island is capable of. There was a most creditable show of pillow lace done by Mrs. Jackson's pupils, which found a ready sale, and a beautiful and original design by Mrs. Jackson herself, composed of arum lilies and leaves with the words "St. Helena" in exquisitely fine lace, was greatly admired.

The wood carving by Miss Holmes and her pupils was the next most admired section; but the unique feature of the Exhibition was the large room devoted to the work of the prisoners of war. As an object lesson to the St. Helenians it was most valuable, showing how perseverance and energy could triumph over almost insurmountable difficulties, with the rudest implements, nails, pocket knives, self-made little planes and saws (which were also exhibited), the tables and walls were covered with most artistic work in wood and bone and metal. A large model of a gold stamping mill, complete in all its details, excited much attention and admiration. There was a great show of carved walking sticks, carved boxes, napkin rings made of beef bones, penholders and picture frames, metal work in the shape of commemoration medallions, and one most lovely little spray of a rose with leaves in silver made out of a half-crown piece, very delicate and artistic. The maker was a jeweller by trade, and a skilful one, but his tools were of the rudest description manufactured by himself.

Fisheries.

I have nothing to add to what I said last year about the fisheries. They are still unsatisfactory. A great demand and inadequate supply owing to lack of fishermen. It is a question I have still at heart.

AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRIES AND BOTANICAL STATIONS.

In the Botanical Gardens at Maldivia, and also at Plantation, the vine grafts imported from the Cape are doing well, but have not as yet started flowering.

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A selection of English fruit trees, apples, pears, cherries, and plums have been planted out and are doing very well. Cherries are new to the Island, and there are but few good kinds of the other fruits.

Insect pests are as bad as ever; the peach fly has been most active, and I have seen no good peaches this year.

The want of insectivorous birds is greatly felt. The Indian Myna which I mentioned in my last report as having been lately introduced, has multiplied greatly, and flocks of them are frequently seen. They are a great comfort to the cattle, freeing them from ticks.

FORESTRY.

The question of forestry has been brought painfully before me this year by the cutting down of many trees to supply fuel for the Boer prisoners of war and the Troops. The contract price of wood has gone up from 6*d.* a donkey load of 100 lbs. to 1*s.* 6*d.* and 1*s.* 9*d.* which has led to the ruthless destruction of trees on private lands. One well wooded hillside is now bare, and unless the Imperial Government imports fuel for the Camps I fear much for the future of the Island.

I am endeavouring to introduce some new trees, as the fir tree or pine does not find favour in the sight of the people here; it is liable to be devoured by the white ant, and is not considered durable.

I am indebted to Earl Bathurst for a sack of horse chestnuts and another of beechmast from his estates in Gloucestershire, but unfortunately the steamer company carried them on and delivered them six weeks afterwards, on the return voyage, much deteriorated, and they have failed to germinate, but some laburnum seed in the same consignment came up freely. Lady Bathurst very kindly sent me three crimson oaks which are thriving as wall oaks seem to do here; and the following ornamental trees and flowering shrubs were imported by me and are all doing well:—Copper beach, crimson thorn, white and purple lilacs, which have flowered. *Syringa grandiflora*, also flowered, *Cydonia (Pyrus) japonica*, white and crimson, both flowered, and the wisteria *sinensis*, growing freely.

For future distribution to landowners the following seeds have been sown:—

Eighteen new kinds of eucalyptus (we have two species in the island), maple, poplar (black and tall species), plane, robinia, windringtonia, ash, birch, walnut.

The eucalypti are the trees I look forward to in the reparation of the ravages of the fuel contractors; they are quick growing, afford excellent fuel, even when green, and valuable timber if allowed to attain large proportions.

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SHIPPING.

207 vessels called; 336 were sighted, and 291 communicated with the station.

The following is the tonnage of vessels entered and cleared:—

British steam	...	...	...	155,542
„ sailing	...	...	...	4,944
Foreign „	...	...	...	1,546

Total tonnage of all vessels boarded:—

English	...	...	...	437,554
Foreign	...	...	...	47,214

LEGISLATION.

The following Ordinances were passed during the year under report, viz.:—

No 1, of 25th June 1900, “An Ordinance to prevent the landing of unauthorized persons.”

No. 2, of 13th August 1900, “An Ordinance to provide for the remission of duty on consignments of presents for the Boer Prisoners of War at St. Helena.”

No. 3, of 27th September 1900, “An Ordinance to provide for the repealing of Section 3 of Ordinance No. 1, of 1900, and the Proclamation by the Governor of the 9th May 1900.

No. 4, of 28th September 1900, “An Ordinance to provide for the institution of Martial Law in certain places in the island of St. Helena, issued for the internment of Prisoners of War.

No. 5, of 31st December, “An Ordinance to authorize the supplementary expenditure for the year 1899.”

The following Proclamations issued:—

12th February 1900.—Proclamation regulating the Game season for 1900.

19th March 1900.—Proclamation imposing quarantine on vessels from Sydney on account of Bubonic Plague at that Port.

7th June 1900.—Proclamation extending the Army Act to St. Helena.

20th August 1900.—Proclamation prohibiting the export of Arms, Ammunition and War material to China.

15th December 1900.—Proclamation removing restrictions imposed on vessels arriving from Sydney.

EDUCATION.

There are eleven schools, the same as in the preceding year, viz., four Government Schools, five charitable, one military, and one Baptist Sunday school. The number of scholars, however,

I regret to observe, decreased from 793 to 742. It was owing to the great demand for labour and the comparatively high wages given to mere children. ST. HELENA, 1900.

The proposed Educational Ordinance providing for compulsory attendance has not, as yet, received sanction, but in the present year I anticipate better results arising from the great interest taken by the Bishop in educational matters.

PUBLIC GARDENS AND MUSEUM.

Not much has been done during the year under report either in the Public Gardens or with the Museum. As a temporary measure I was obliged to camp the forty prisoners of war employed on the wharf in the gardens, in a corner away from parts used by the public, and I allowed them the use of the museum at night as a reading room. The men have been extremely well behaved and no damage has been done. The museum has gained during the year several specimens of minerals and fossil remains found during the blasting of the rocks for the West Rocks Road, and works in wood, metal, and bone from the prisoners camp at Deadwood.

JUDICIAL STATISTICS.

The figures are somewhat heavier than in the year 1899 in summary cases, but in serious crime there was only one case—of a boy convicted of arson.

That there should have been more petty crime was to be expected, as the population of the Island has been greatly increased, and a very turbulent element was introduced with the prisoners of war in the shape of Cape-boy mule drivers,—a class perpetually in trouble for fighting and reckless driving. I am glad to say the majority of them, and the worst, have been sent back to the Cape, their places being taken by St. Helenians.

The comparative figures are as follows:—

	1899.	1900.
Number of cases reported to police	134	246
Number of persons apprehended	121	196
Number of summary convictions	103	162
1. For offences against the person	20	32
2. For offences against property other than praedial larceny	4	10
3. For other offences	79	120

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VITAL STATISTICS.

The population of the Island was estimated to be, on the 31st December 1900, inclusive of troops, 5,316, added to which we had 2,454 prisoners of war.

The births were 116, 23·2 per thousand; the deaths were 165, or 33·3 per thousand, which, however, include troops, prisoners, and sailors, amounting to 23. The death rate was abnormally high; the previous year was only 17·3 per thousand, and the average is about 15 per thousand. The increased mortality was due to an exceptionally severe epidemic of influenza during the months of May and June. In one month the annual average was exceeded. Business was at a stand-still, the work of unloading cargo was stopped for want of labourers, the hospital was over-crowded, and the Lady Superintendent and her two Nurses stuck heroically to their posts although worn out with over-work. The Colonial Surgeon was laid up with the disease and incapacitated for weeks, but Major Mosse, R.A.M.C., the Senior Medical Officer, with Doctors Arnold and Roe of the Army Medical Staff, came to the rescue and did much to alleviate the suffering, but in the outlying parts of the Island the distress was great. In one house there was only a child of nine years of age who escaped, and had to attend to the others who were prostrated. For several days I could not get anyone to harness my horses, all the men living in the grounds of Government House, including my own servants, were down with the complaint, and the constant tolling of the adjoining church bell (there were eight funerals one day) had a most depressing effect on the invalids. Fortunately I and my family escaped, and were able to do something in the way of visiting cottages with medicine and soup, and we established a soup kitchen, which allowed of daily doles of nourishing broth. But in many cases pneumonia supervened and caused much mortality, as it was not possible for some of the poorer classes, who were beyond prompt medical aid, to get the necessary care; for instance, three strong men of one family in our neighbourhood were kept alive only by small sips of brandy and milk; in the house of one of them the wife and baby were both lying dead when our housekeeper went down with a fresh bottle of milk.

The poor here are, as a rule, very kind to each other in times of sickness, but nearly all were suffering at the same time. The wife of the head gardener at Plantation, Mrs. Constantine, a woman of not very strong health herself, was, however, of the greatest assistance, as she superintended the soup kitchen, a work of some labour, and assisted by her husband attended to the distribution.

Even after the epidemic was over the effects were felt for a long time by the sufferers, and this told severely on the labour market.

Fortunately the prisoners of war and the troops guarding them escaped, although the Island people in the neighbourhood of Longwood suffered.

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POSTAL AND TELEPHONE.

The Post Office had a great deal of work thrown on it by advent of the prisoners of war and additional troops in April of last year, and the revenue rose from £1,126 12s. 5d. in 1899 to £1,470 16s. 1d. in 1900.

Money Orders issued in the Colony during the year amounted to £8,255 3s. 2d.

The payments were £2,904 0s. 6d.

The telephone line was extended and opened at West Point as a precautionary measure. It is purely an outlook station.

All the telephone lines are under the Royal Engineers, the Colony giving an annual subsidy of £45, and Lloyds £30.

The Eastern Telegraph Company line was in full working order during the year, and it was a great boon to us to be able to get news of the progress of the war, and of inestimable value to the Government.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

The year under report has been an eventful one in the history of St. Helena, which from its discovery in 1502 has been destined to be a State prison. In 1511 the Portuguese banished a nobleman named Fernando Lopez to this Island. Later on the East India Company sent a Rajah to be interned here but he died on the voyage; then came the memorable exile of Napoleon, which brought St. Helena in prominent notice, and recently when the question arose what should be done with the Boer prisoners of war, St. Helena naturally suggested itself as the safest and most suitable place.

On April 10th 1900, the Transport "Milwaukee," escorted by H.M.S. "Niobe," Captain A. L. Winsloe, arrived with Cronjé, Schiel, Wolmarans and other leaders and a large number of prisoners; during the year successive transports came in with batches of Boers, till the number we have now amounts to 4,600. More would have been sent but for the difficulty of providing water in suitable spots. We have two camps, Deadwood Plain and Broad Bottom. Deadwood Plain is a high plateau adjacent to Longwood, treeless, and wind swept, but with a porous soil which dries up quickly after heavy rain.

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Its healthiness had been tested in 1899 by encamping the West Indian troops there, and it has been well proved since by the rapid way in which disappeared the enteric fever which the prisoners brought with them, their general good health since, and their escape from influenza during the epidemic which prostrated nearly the whole of the Islanders.

If a larger supply of water could have been delivered on this plain the whole of the prisoners might have been located there, but we had hard work to increase the old supply to meet the needs of 3,000 men, including troops; the original sources were springs under Diana's Peak, and there was a good deal of waste, this was remedied by making concrete basins and tanks at each spring, and adding to the system other small springs that had been left out, and by renewing the old pipes, and so the volume of water was doubled.

The two camps are about five miles apart. Broad Bottom lies more in a hollow and is in fact a broad shallow valley about 1,600 feet above the sea. The soil is more clayey than Deadwood, and the climate more humid, but the water supply is good, and the prisoners enjoy good health. The property is hired from the Honorable G. N. Moss, who has allowed the football teams of the camp the use of some high flat land for the game.

The prisoners have a large amount of liberty, a certain number being let out under passes every day. They have been hitherto very well behaved, and I have had no complaints from the people of the Island regarding any misconduct; a number of them have been allowed to take service with farmers and others who have made themselves responsible for their safety. The Colonial Government employed, under the orders of Captain D. B. Thomson, 28th Bombay Pioneers, about forty men, with Captain Waldeck and Baron Fagerskiold (both prisoners of war) in the construction of the West Rocks Road and the extension of the Wharf. They have been encamped in the Public Gardens in Jamestown, and their conduct has been most satisfactory. A number are also employed by the Imperial Government.

The prisoners are indeed most anxious to obtain work; the pay is not so much an object as the relief from the monotony of the camp. We have relieved this as much as possible by encouraging work of all kinds, chiefly carving in wood and making walking sticks, for which purpose I have supplied them with many hundreds of sticks from the extensive thickets of privet growing in the Government House grounds. I have also given them the thinning out of fir plantations and poles of the *Furcroea Aloe* for the construction of recreation rooms and school houses.

The Commissariat arrangements are admirable, the quality of the beef issued to the camps is first rate; some of the oxen imported have excited the admiration of the farmers of the Island.

I have in my possession photographs of two prime beasts, one of which came from Lord Rosebery's estates in Scotland, and which weighed 1,250 lbs. after being slaughtered and dressed.

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The gross lies which have been circulated in the Continental papers about our treatment of the prisoners have aroused considerable indignation here, even amongst the prisoners themselves.

The Boer Hospital in Jamestown is fitted up in a perfect manner, and the patients when convalescent are loth to leave.

The fair and honest among the prisoners, whilst upholding their opinion that they were right to fight and would fight again in the same cause, acknowledge that they are well treated, and there are a few who have expressed a wish to settle in the Island after the war.

As regards the benefits derived by the Colony from the presence of the Boers and troops, the increase in the Revenue is the chief one, the Customs being especially benefited by large importations by the Island merchants.

The Imperial Government do not pay either duty or wharfage so that no direct advantage has accrued from the prisoners or troops.

To house property there has been some benefit, for owners have availed themselves of cheap Boer labour to carry out repairs which were, in most cases, much needed.

The owners of country produce have also benefited by the great demand for, and consequent high prices of, vegetables, poultry, eggs, milk, and butter; also for the hire of transport animals, viz., horses and donkeys; the price of the latter has risen from about £2 a piece to about £5.

On the other hand the Island has suffered from deforestation, owing to contracts for fuel being placed locally, which is a serious matter; and the roads are cut to pieces by the heavy traffic of mule waggons, which might have been avoided had pack-mules been used, as recommended by me at the outset.

The few pack-mules we have work very well. It has, however, been a hard time for the horses and donkeys of the Island employed by the contractors for transport service.

The forces in the Colony were commanded by Colonel J. B. Leefe, R.M.A., from the arrival of the prisoners on the 10th April till the 7th of December, when he was invalided home, and the command devolved upon Lieutenant-Colonel T. J. P. Evans, R.M.L.I. The 4th Battalion Gloucestershire Regiment is under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Earl Bathurst.

Our Colonial forces are limited to a Company of Volunteer Sharpshooters, raised by myself in 1898. The corps is popular

ST. HELENA, with the Islanders, and there would be no difficulty in increasing
1900. the number were it necessary. The men are all efficient.

In order to increase the *esprit de corps* and to induce resort to healthy amusements, we have started an Institute for the Company, with billiard and bagatelle tables, newspapers and magazines, which, I think, will be very popular and beneficial.

R. A. STERNDALÉ.