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Annual Report on the Social and Economic
Progress of the People of

ST. HELENA, 1935

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**ANNUAL REPORT ON THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC
PROGRESS OF THE PEOPLE OF ST. HELENA
FOR 1935**

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I.—GEOGRAPHY, CLIMATE, AND HISTORY.

The Island of St. Helena, about $10\frac{1}{2}$ miles long and $6\frac{1}{2}$ broad, lies in the South Atlantic Ocean in latitude $15^{\circ} 55'$ South and longitude $5^{\circ} 42'$ West. It was discovered by João da Nova, probably in May, 1502, on his return voyage to Lisbon from India. Until 1588, when Cavendish visited it, the situation of the Island was kept a secret, and it then served as a place of refuge and refreshment for the vessels of all nations until 1659 when it was annexed by the East India Company. With the exception of a few months when it was captured in 1672 by the Dutch and recaptured in 1673 by Sir Richard Munden, it remained in possession of the Company until the 22nd of April, 1834, when it was brought under the direct government of the Crown by the Government of India Act of 1833.

The History of the Island under the Crown.

Although the Crown assumed the direct government of St. Helena on the 22nd of April, 1834, it did not occupy the Island until the 24th of February, 1836, when Major-General Middlemore took possession of it in the name of His Majesty King William IV.

With the inauguration of government by the Crown, St. Helena was to enter upon its greatest period of prosperity. The first efforts of the Crown were directed to making the civil administration pay for itself, whilst the garrison remained a charge upon the Imperial Exchequer. The great changes that took place in St. Helena during the first ten years of the Crown's administration are but little realized to-day. As a result of the development of the Eastern trade, the Island became a port of call on one of the world's greatest trade routes, and the harbour was filled with more ships than ever before in its history. Never again, as the figures appended show, did the harbour of St. Helena bring such prosperity to its people:—

Ships calling at St. Helena.

| | | | | |
|------|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| 1805 | ... | ... | ... | 163 |
| 1823 | ... | ... | ... | 193 |
| 1834 | ... | ... | ... | 475 |
| 1840 | ... | ... | ... | 779 |
| 1845 | ... | ... | ... | 1,458 |
| 1850 | ... | ... | ... | 937 |
| 1855 | ... | ... | ... | 1,044 |
| 1860 | ... | ... | ... | 1,044 |
| 1865 | ... | ... | ... | 850 |
| 1870 | ... | ... | ... | 807 |
| 1875 | ... | ... | ... | 605 |
| 1880 | ... | ... | ... | 564 |
| 1890 | ... | ... | ... | 211 |
| 1935 | ... | ... | ... | 44 |

It is probably also true to say that with the exception of the Napoleonic period, never has so much money been spent in the Island as between the years 1836-50. The military expenditure was in the neighbourhood of £40,000, and in 1840 a further expansion of local trade occurred with the introduction of the Liberated African Establishment at Rupert's, formed for the purpose of receiving freed slaves from the West Coast of Africa. Throughout this period the cost of the civil administration amounted to about £25,000 to which the Imperial Government made a grant-in-aid in the following amounts:—

Grants-in-aid, St. Helena.

| | £ |
|------|--------|
| 1836 | 35,000 |
| 1837 | 30,000 |
| 1838 | 18,000 |
| 1839 | 9,000 |
| 1842 | 4,000 |
| 1845 | 2,510 |
| 1848 | 5,216 |

These grants terminated in 1850 by which date the Island had become self-supporting, and with two exceptions, they were not renewed, as a permanent feature of the administration, until after the opening of the Suez Canal.

In 1869 the Naval Squadron was withdrawn; the remains of the African Establishment abolished; and the garrison reduced by over 300 men. The effect was immediate. Imports fell from £122,000 to £84,000, Customs revenue from £15,000 to £10,000, and St. Helena became bankrupt. When the Canal was opened the trade routes were diverted; but it was not until 20 years later, as the table above shows, that the Suez Canal finally killed the commerce of the Island.

Since the year 1880, the Island must be regarded as having attempted to live on an inadequate pension. In the course of this period the population was nearly halved as a result of very substantial emigration, and without this relief it is difficult to see how the Island could have survived. Up to the year 1905, 200 ships a year and a small garrison kept the people alive. In the next four years the ships were to be reduced to an average of 50, and the garrison removed. In 1907, a Parliamentary grant was made for the introduction of the flax industry which has been the main support of the population for upwards of 25 years. A rapidly increasing population and the absence of employment for the majority, now presents the local Government with the same problems that perplexed its predecessors in 1870.

ASCENSION.

A short history and description of the Island of Ascension by the Resident Magistrate is included at the end of this Report.

A note on the climate of St. Helena and Ascension will be found in the Report for 1929—Colonial Report, No. 1,475. The same Report also contains a note on the history of the Islands under the East India Company.

II.—GOVERNMENT.

By an Act of William IV, dated the 28th of August, 1833, the Island of St. Helena, as from the 22nd of April, 1834, was transferred from the East India Company and became vested in the Crown.

Provision for the authority and appointment of Governor, for the establishment of a Council to assist the Governor and for the making and promulgation of laws, was made by a Royal Order in Council dated the 12th of October, 1835. This Order was revoked by an Order dated the 27th of July, 1863, and fresh provision was made.

The Executive Council as it exists at present was established by "The St. Helena Order in Council, 1929", revoking previous Orders. By Instructions issued on the 5th of June, 1929, it is provided that the Council shall consist of the Senior Military Officer in Command of regular troops in the Island and of the person holding the substantive appointment of Government Secretary of the Island, as *ex officio* Members, and of such other persons as may from time to time be appointed. Provision was also included for the appointment of Extraordinary Members on special occasions.

At the present time there are three unofficial Members of Council.

Subject to the reservation of power for legislation by Parliament and by the Privy Council, the Order of 1863 provides for the making of laws by the Governor. It is also laid down, under the "Interpretation and General Law Ordinance, 1895", that "a copy of the draft of every Ordinance shall be affixed to a board in front of the Court House for the inspection of the Public for one month before the passing thereof; provided always that in any case in which the Governor-in-Council thinks it urgently necessary to dispense with such public notification . . . he may do so."

ASCENSION.

By Letters Patent dated the 12th of September, 1922, Ascension became a Dependency of St. Helena, and it was provided that the Governor and Executive Council of St. Helena should have the same powers in relation to Ascension as they possess in relation to St. Helena. The local Manager of Cable and Wireless Limited is appointed as Resident Magistrate and is a Member of the Executive Council of St. Helena.

III.—POPULATION.

At the time of its discovery in 1502, St. Helena was uninhabited. From 1502 until 1659 it was used by the ships of all nations as a place where travellers and seamen might recuperate, and where fresh water and supplies might be obtained. In 1659 the East India Company sent John Dutton with a few soldiers and followers to annex the Island and form a settlement. These persons constituted the original European settlement of the Island, which from time to time was added to by more settlers and soldiers from England. Slaves from Africa and Asia, and in particular from Madagascar, were introduced, and in 1810 there was a large importation of Chinese workmen. In 1840 there was a considerable influx of liberated African slaves, and a few years later the St. Helena Regiment was permanently stationed in the Island. The men of this regiment were given certain facilities in regard to land, and many of the men formed associations with the islanders.

The Island population to-day is, therefore, largely of mixed origin. The language of the Island has always been English; but the exceptional English environment is not generally realized by those unacquainted with its people. All St. Helenians receive a primary education and their homes, social life and outlook follows entirely the English tradition.

The population as revealed by the vital statistics shows a rapid and a substantial increase. In previous decades a great measure of relief was obtained from emigration to South Africa; but this source of employment is no longer available as the Island people are unable to compete with the cheaper and more powerful coloured labour. Their physique is slight, and, by nature and habit, they are deft and polite, and admirably suited to light trades and employment and domestic service.

The population as ascertained by the census taken in the year 1931 is classified as under:—

| | <i>Males.</i> | <i>Females.</i> | <i>Total.</i> |
|--------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Islanders | 1,825 | 2,026 | 3,851 |
| Other British Residents | 77 | 65 | 142 |
| Other Nationals | 2 | — | 2 |
| | <u>1,904</u> | <u>2,091</u> | <u>3,995</u> |

The distribution of the population is shown in the following table:—

| <i>District.</i> | <i>Males.</i> | <i>Females.</i> | <i>Total.</i> |
|--|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Jamestown, including the Briars and Rupert's Valley | 706 | 823 | 1,529 |
| Half Tree Hollow and Ladder Hill (including Garrison) | 227 | 263 | 490 |
| St. Paul's | 157 | 173 | 330 |
| High Point, Farm Lodge, Rosemary and Cleughs Plain | 140 | 155 | 295 |
| Blue Hill | 140 | 124 | 264 |
| Sandy Bay... .. | 143 | 146 | 289 |
| Longwood and Hutt's Gate | 391 | 407 | 798 |
| | <u>1,904</u> | <u>2,091</u> | <u>3,995</u> |

The estimated population on 31st December, 1935, was 4,318.

Births and Deaths, 1932-1935.

| | <i>1932.</i> | <i>1933.</i> | <i>1934.</i> | <i>1935.</i> |
|--|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Births | 152 | 116 | 101 | 150 |
| Deaths | 58 | 68 | 47 | 45 |
| Infant mortality per 1,000 births | 131.5 | 172.4 | 138.6 | 80.00 |
| Still-births (not included in above) | ... | ... | ... | 7 |
| Illegitimate births (included in above) | ... | ... | ... | 33 |
| Deaths of infants under 1 year old | ... | ... | ... | 12 |

The population of Ascension as ascertained by the census taken in the year 1931 is classified as under :—

| | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----------|
| St. Helenians | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 152 |
| Other British Residents | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 36 |
| | | | | | | <hr/> 188 |

The population on 31st December, 1935, was :—

| | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----------|
| St. Helenians | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 110 |
| Other British Residents | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 47 |
| | | | | | | <hr/> 157 |

IV.—HEALTH.

The medical establishment of the Island during the year consisted of :—

Senior Medical Officer
 Medical Officer
 Dental Surgeon
 Sister-in-Charge, Civil Hospital
 Three Probationers.

The general health of the Island has been fairly good. Investigations into the aetiology of St. Helenian beriberi have been pursued during the year, and 31 new cases have been observed. A detailed report on the diseases that occur in St. Helena is now being prepared.

There was a considerable number of cases of animal tetanus during the year, and two human cases occurred in Island boys. The first case was admitted with well developed tetanus and died; the second developed tetanus while in Hospital and was saved owing to the timely use of massive doses of antitoxin. Antitetanic serum is now given as a routine in all cases of injury where there is the least risk of the wound being infected with soil.

There was also an outbreak of chicken-pox, and cases were seen amongst the school children during May, June and July. This outbreak can scarcely be said to have assumed epidemic proportions and none of the patients was seriously ill. It is interesting to note that one case of *herpes zoster* in a European male was noted in June, while chicken-pox was still prevalent.

The school children were all medically inspected during the year, and routine dental inspections continued.

The Civil Hospital in Jamestown has 14 beds. During the year, 6,004 out-patients were seen at the hospital, and there were 179 in-patients. There is but little surgery in St. Helena, the bulk of

the surgical work done consisting of minor operations and dental extractions. Two major operations were performed during the year.

The two dressing stations in the country at Sandy Bay and Hutt's Gate have been visited weekly throughout the year.

Vaccination of all children is carried out under the Vaccination Ordinance of 1854, and smallpox has never established a footing in the Island.

The Poor House, which is under the management of a Poor Relief Board, was visited weekly by the Senior Medical Officer. The health of the 18 inmates has been good. The Lunatic Asylum which is run in conjunction with the Poor House contains seven inmates. It also has been visited weekly by the Senior Medical Officer. The health of the inmates during the year has been good.

All ships calling at the Island are boarded by the Port Medical Officer who gives pratique unless the ship is infected. One infected ship called on 1st September, 1935, and a case of malignant diphtheria died on board this vessel, while she was at anchor in Jamestown roadstead.

V.—HOUSING.

The general housing of the people is now the subject of the most anxious consideration. There is an urgent need for cottages in the country districts and tenements in Jamestown.

The narrow valley in which Jamestown is situated permits of little expansion of the town area, and the inhabitants are reluctant to leave it for localities at higher altitudes. There is much slum property, and lack of funds make it impossible to construct tenements on the few sites available. In the country districts there are few with resources sufficient to build themselves cottages, and in any case there is a shortage of suitable land on which these could be erected. The construction of cottages, with between one or two acres of good agricultural land would help materially in relieving much of the present poverty and distress, but the only land available is little better than scrub and rock.

The only legislation dealing with overcrowding is a provision in the Public Health Ordinance, 1869, which gives certain powers to the Board of Health. The Board, not unnaturally, is reluctant to exercise its powers in the improvement of houses when the occupiers have no means and there is nowhere else for them to live.

The difficulties encountered in the construction of houses and, indeed, in all building operations are not generally understood. There is an abundance of building material, road metal, and surfacing material, for the proof of which the casual observer has only to see the extensive fortifications and mile after mile of stone wall; but whilst there is lime, there is nothing to burn it with, and there

are no bricks. Limestone was first burnt in the Island in about 1708, but so fast was the consumption of wood, that native ebony and redwood forests were destroyed, and the process could only continue by the importation of coal from England. Building stone requires to be cut and faced, and the cost of skilled labour together with high transport charges, makes the cost of all construction abnormally expensive. The use of bricks, therefore, would be a great economic boon to the people. The clay of the Island, however, has no quartz sand in its composition, and the lack of this binding material makes the bricks crack during burning. Should it be possible to overcome this handicap, the problem of fuel still awaits solution. Bricks and tiles have, however, been burnt in the past, and in many cottages to-day there can be seen tiles painted by Dr. James Arnott, Medical Superintendent, between 1821 and 1834, and burnt under his supervision.

VI.—PRODUCTION.

Although St. Helena has a cultivable area of 8,600 acres, and is a fertile island in which almost every crop can be made to grow, it is remarkable that there should be little agricultural production other than that of New Zealand hemp (*Phormium tenax*).

The production of potatoes, vegetables, and a very small quantity of fruit, for internal consumption and the supply of passing mail steamers, are the only other important agricultural pursuits in the Island.

The principal reasons for this lack of development of the Island resources lie in the difficulties in finding markets for the existing Island crops, and in finding new products for which an export market is available.

The one productive plant, *Phormium tenax*, which is grown in any quantity in grown principally in those areas which are unsuitable for other crops.

In the past two years much experimental work has been done in the development of agricultural and horticultural products. Development of an export trade in potatoes to the Christmas market in London shows some promise, and there is now reason for supposing that a continuation of these experiments on a wider basis and more extensive scale would be amply justified. The experimental distillation of geranium oil has been the subject of research in the Imperial Institute, and again there is some ground for supposing that the subject might repay more detailed investigation.

Perhaps the most attractive experiment now proceeding is the export of lily bulbs (*Lilium longiflorum*). It is fortunate that these bulbs flower in England at a season when no others are available. A small consignment sent to Kew Gardens made "a magnificent display" at the Royal Horticultural Society's Autumn Show. The lily is common throughout the Island, and a large consignment has

been sent to England for disposal. The development of a lily bulb trade is, perhaps, the most important experiment that has taken place in the Island in recent years.

Fibre Production.—The fibre market (as a result of the European situation) improved during the course of the year. The production of hemp is the only industry in the Island and five mills have been in operation throughout the year.

Particulars of the production, export, and value of fibre and tow are appended:—

| 1935. | | <i>Produced.</i> | <i>Exported.</i> | <i>Average price per</i> |
|--------|--------|------------------|------------------|--------------------------|
| | | <i>Tons.</i> | <i>Tons.</i> | <i>ton. London.</i> |
| | | | | £ s. d. |
| Fibre | | 578 | 857 | 13 15 0 |
| Tow... | | 220 | 319 | 9 10 0 |

Horticulture.—The development of trade with passing steamers shows marked improvement, and the opportunities which exist for extending this trade are now apparent.

Particulars of the value of produce supplied are appended:—

| | | | | £ |
|------|--------|-----|-----|-----|
| 1932 | | ... | ... | 339 |
| 1933 | | ... | ... | 318 |
| 1934 | | ... | ... | 368 |
| 1935 | | ... | ... | 427 |

It is estimated that, if the demand can be met, the value for 1936 should reach £1,000.

ASCENSION.

At Green Mountain Cable and Wireless Limited possess a farm for the maintenance of imported animals, and gardens for the cultivation of vegetables. At the end of the year the stock consisted of 26 cattle, 450 sheep, and some pigs.

VII.—COMMERCE.

The following were the imports and exports for the year compared with 1934:—

| | <i>Imports.</i> | <i>Exports.</i> |
|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | £ | £ |
| 1934 | 33,476 | 8,949 |
| 1935 | 29,824 | 13,967 |
| Increase or decrease | — 3,652 | + 4,018 |

Imports.

There was a decrease in the value of imports principally under wholly or mainly manufactured articles, the principal decreases being in the importation of motor cars, motor lorries and hardware. A moderate decrease occurred in imports of raw materials and articles mainly unmanufactured.

The following table shows the value of the principal articles imported during the years 1934 and 1935 together with the decreases or increases :—

| | 1934. | 1935. | Decrease — Increase + |
|--------------------------------|--------|--------|--------------------------|
| | £ | £ | £ |
| Provisions | 14,308 | 14,276 | — 32 |
| Drapery | 3,264 | 3,352 | + 88 |
| Motor cars and lorries | 1,697 | 259 | — 1,438 |
| Petrol and oil | 1,769 | 2,069 | + 300 |
| Hardware | 2,814 | 2,090 | — 724 |
| Beer, wines and spirits | 1,229 | 1,390 | + 161 |
| Tobacco and cigarettes | 963 | 932 | — 31 |

The undermentioned quantities are also recorded :—

| | 1934. | 1935. | Decrease — Increase + |
|----------------------------------|-------|-------|--------------------------|
| Beer, wines and spirits ... gal. | 4,919 | 6,538 | + 1,669 |
| Tobacco and cigarettes ... lb. | 5,745 | 5,180 | — 565 |

The countries of origin were as follows :—

| | 1934. | 1935. |
|---------------------------------|--------|--------|
| | £ | £ |
| United Kingdom | 22,129 | 18,964 |
| South Africa | 6,345 | 2,303 |
| Rest of Empire | — | 4,062 |
| United States of America | 2,497 | 2,147 |
| Other Foreign Countries | 2,505 | 2,348 |

Importations from South Africa consisted mainly of grain and meal, drink, tobacco and coal.

Importations from the United States of America consisted mainly of petrol and oil valued at £1,716.

Importations from the Argentine consisted mainly of foodstuffs valued at £636.

Importations from other foreign countries consisted mainly of foodstuffs, drink and hardware.

Exports.

The increase in the value of exports is accounted for by an increase in the market value of fibre during the year. The payment of subsidy to millers was continued up to the end of October, 1935, as a measure of unemployment relief.

Exports of these products were as follows :—

| | 1934. | | 1935. | |
|-----------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | Tons. | £ | Tons. | £ |
| Fibre | 568 | 5,759 | 857 | 9,732 |
| Tow | 447 | 2,457 | 319 | 2,005 |
| Rope and twine | 25 | 498 | 11 | 237 |

The distribution of the total exports of the Colony was as follows :—

| | 1934. | 1935. |
|-----------------------|-------|--------|
| | £ | £ |
| United Kingdom | 8,446 | 12,195 |
| South Africa | 503 | 1,602 |
| Argentine | — | 170 |

VIII.—WAGES AND COST OF LIVING.

Wages for skilled and semi-skilled workmen vary from 2s. to 3s. 6d. per day.

The Government wage for adult unskilled labour is 2s. per day amounting to 12s. for a week of 45 hours, the half-day on Saturday counting as a full day.

In the flax mills the average daily rate for men is slightly under 1s. 9d. for a nine-hour day. The wages paid to women are slightly under 1s. per day.

In the rope works the average wage for men is 12s. per week, and for women 5s.

The number of persons employed in the flax mills is 247 and in the rope works 16.

In domestic service the monthly wage with board and lodging for housemaids varies from 10s. to £2, for cooks from 30s. to £2, and for male servants from 30s. to £4 15s.

The cost of living varies greatly. Meat, including fowls, is obtainable at 1s. per lb.; fish is very cheap, but the supply is extremely limited and scarce in the country districts. Eggs vary according to season from 1s. 6d. to 2s. per dozen, fresh butter is 3s. per lb., and imported butter 1s. 8d. per lb.; fresh milk is 5d. per imperial pint, and the price of fresh vegetables varies with the supply which is very limited at certain seasons. Rice which forms the staple article of diet of St. Helenians is 2d. per lb. and potatoes vary throughout the year from 8d. to 2s. per gallon of 7 lb. On account of lack of communications and of the freight rates the cost of imported groceries is higher than in the United Kingdom.

From time to time accommodation is available for visitors, and St. Helena has attractions as a place of residence for those who seek a congenial climate and quietude. It is estimated that two people could live comfortably and in full enjoyment of all the Island has to offer on £500 to £550 a year. With a more limited range of activity two people could live on considerably less.

IX.—EDUCATION AND WELFARE INSTITUTIONS.

The educational system in St. Helena consists of eight primary schools, a continuation class for pupil teachers and others, and private tuition.

Of the primary schools three are under Government direction, two in Jamestown for boys and girls respectively and one in the country. Three are administered by the Trustees of the Hussey Charity. Of the two remaining schools, one belongs to the St. Helena Benevolent Society, a Society founded in 1814 for the care and education of the Island poor, the other at Blue Hill was founded over 30 years ago by the late Bishop Holbech for the children of a remote part of the Island.

All the five non-Government schools receive Government assistance which it was found necessary in the year under review to increase, Hussey Charity from £100 to £120, Sandy Bay from £15 to £40, Blue Hill from £30 to £45. These increases became necessary as none of the schools concerned, even with the utmost economy, was paying its way and education was suffering for the lack of sufficient material.

Many useful improvements were carried out in the course of the year by the Public Works Department at the Hutt's Gate (Hussey Charity) school. These consisted of a new class room and reconditioning the remainder of the building. The work will be completed by the addition of a verandah. This school (as well as those at Sandy Bay and Half Tree Hollow) suffers from a serious lack of furniture as school equipment and furnishing has not kept pace during the past 30 years with the increased attendance.

The work of all the schools is under constant inspection and supervision by the Superintendent of Education who also takes Pupil Teachers for a four year course in secondary school work.

Welfare Institutions.—There are no public welfare institutions in the Island. The absence is in some measure compensated for by the local Friendly Societies of which a note will be found in the Annual Report for 1921—Colonial Report, No. 1568. The particulars of the Societies are appended below:—

ST. HELENA FRIENDLY SOCIETIES.

Men.

| <i>Name.</i> | <i>Membership.</i> | <i>Invested Funds.</i> |
|--|--------------------|------------------------|
| | | £ |
| Ancient Order of Foresters | 352 | 1,493 |
| Mechanics' Society | 418 | 864 |
| Working Men's Christian Association | 320 | 466 |
| Poor Society | 425 | 4,033 |

Women.

| | | |
|---|-----|-----|
| Church Provident Society for Women | 493 | 978 |
|---|-----|-----|

These Societies offer medical and sick benefits and the subscription varies from 3d. to 1s. per week. The fees are a heavy drain on the meagre wages earned generally in the Island, and the fact is of importance in a general study of local economic conditions.

X.—COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPORT.

There is regular communication once a month with England and South Africa by the Union-Castle Intermediate steamers. In addition, an American steamer of the American-South African Line called on four occasions. The vessels which called during the year were as follows:—

| | | | | | |
|--------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| British vessels | ... | ... | ... | ... | 30 |
| British warships | ... | ... | ... | ... | 4 |
| American vessel—4 visits | ... | ... | ... | ... | 4 |
| Other foreign vessels | ... | ... | ... | ... | 6 |
| | | | | | — |
| | | | | | 44 |
| | | | | | — |

Sixty miles of roads are maintained by the Public Works Department, and although grades are steep and in some places narrow, the roads of the Island compare very favourably with those in other countries.

Seventy-three motor-cars and lorries are registered and licensed.

There is no wireless station in St. Helena, but there is a cable station with communication to all parts of the world.

The Empire Short-wave Broadcasting Service is received well in the Island.

There is regular postal communication each month between the Colony and England and South Africa. Mails are also made up as other occasions present themselves.

XI.—BANKING, CURRENCY, AND WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.

The Government Savings Bank is the only banking institution in the Colony.

The aggregate balances of depositors' accounts during the last five years were as follows:—

| <i>Year.</i> | <i>Balance of Deposits at 31st December.</i> |
|--------------|--|
| | £ |
| 1931 | 18,770 |
| 1932 | 20,620 |
| 1933 | 20,958 |
| 1934 | 21,200 |
| 1935 | 22,527 |

The total number of depositors on 31st December, 1935, was 229 as compared with 211 on the same date in 1934.

The invested portion of the Savings Bank deposits at the end of the year is represented by Stock of the mean market value of £22,366.

By the St. Helena Coinage Order, 1925, all coins which under the Coinage Acts of 1870 and 1891 are legal tender in the United Kingdom, and all silver coins which under the Coinage Act, 1922, are legal tender in the Union of South Africa, are legal tender in the Island of St. Helena.

By the Weights and Measures Ordinance, 1905, the weights and measures for the time being lawfully in use in the United Kingdom and no others are to be used in St. Helena.

XII.—PUBLIC WORKS.

Great improvements have been observed in the administration of the Public Works Department, which has now been reorganized under the charge of a Clerk of Works. The Department has also been actively concerned in various road works undertaken as a measure of relief; and also maintains the drainage, water, and telephone system.

XIII.—JUSTICE, POLICE, AND PRISONS.

Subject to all local Ordinances and Orders in force, the laws of the Colony are so much of the law of England for the time being as is suitable and appropriate as far as local circumstances permit.

The Supreme Court of St. Helena, which is a Court of Record, was established by Order in Council of 13th February, 1839. Subsequent Orders extended its jurisdiction to Matrimonial and Divorce Causes. By Order in Council of the 5th of April, 1852, the Governor, in the absence of the Chief Justice, may act as Chief Justice or appoint some other person to act. The Acting Chief Justice may be assisted at his discretion by Assessors who must be Members of the Executive Council or Justices of the Peace.

There were two civil cases before the Supreme Court during the year.

Summary jurisdiction is exercised by the Magistrate and Justices of the Peace. There were 127 cases reported to the Police. In 79 cases action was taken in the Court resulting in 31 convictions.

The Small Debts Court, which has jurisdiction up to sums not exceeding £25, is established by Ordinance No. 2 of 1905. Four cases were brought before the Court during the year as compared with five in 1934.

Gaol.—During the year 17 persons were committed to prison as compared with 15 in 1934, the daily average being 0.6 as compared with 0.6 in 1934.

Police.—There have been no criminal cases of importance.

XIV.—LEGISLATION.

Seven Ordinances were passed during the year, of which the most important were the Road Traffic Ordinance repealing the Motor Car Ordinance, 1928, and the French Government Lands Vesting

(Amendment) Ordinance. The Road Traffic Ordinance (No. 1 of 1935) makes provision for the regulation and licensing of traffic on roads and of motor vehicles and otherwise with respect to roads and vehicles thereon; provision is also made for third parties against risks arising out of the use of motor vehicles.

XV.—PUBLIC FINANCE AND TAXATION.

Revenue and Expenditure.

The revenue collected during the year amounted to £21,089, being £879 in excess of the estimate but a decrease of £3,385 as compared with the revenue of the previous year.

The increase of revenue over the estimate was mainly attributable to the large sales of the Silver Jubilee issue of postage stamps to dealers outside the Colony, and the decrease of revenue, namely £3,385 as compared with that of the previous year was due to non-issue of grant-in-aid during the year 1935.

The following table shows the revenue and expenditure of the Colony for the past five years :—

| Year. | Revenue. | Grants by | Grants-in- | Total | Expenditure. |
|----------|----------|-------------|------------|----------|--------------|
| | | Colonial | aid by His | | |
| | | Development | Majesty's | Revenue. | |
| | £ | Fund. | Treasury. | £ | £ |
| 1931 ... | 11,940 | 6,340 | 7,000 | 25,820 | 27,109 |
| 1932 ... | 13,817 | 560 | 13,500 | 27,877 | 18,906 |
| 1933 ... | 13,548 | — | 5,000 | 18,548 | 18,617 |
| 1934 ... | 21,974 | — | 2,500 | 24,474 | 23,792 |
| 1935 ... | 21,089 | — | — | 21,089 | 20,487 |

The revenue for the year 1935 as compared with the preceding year is summarized hereunder :—

| | 1934. | 1935. |
|---|----------------|---------------|
| | £ | £ |
| Customs | 5,138 | 5,081 |
| Port and Marine | 1,503 | 1,511 |
| Licences, Taxes, etc. | 617 | 670 |
| Fees of Court or Office and Reimbursements | 671 | 756 |
| Post Office... .. | 6,221 | 5,814 |
| Revenue from Government Properties | 1,140 | 1,130 |
| Interest | 619 | 583 |
| Miscellaneous | 573 | 57 |
| Ascension | 5,492 | 5,487 |
| Grant-in-aid | 2,500 | — |
| | <u>£24,474</u> | <u>21,089</u> |

The expenditure for the year as compared with the preceding year is as under :—

| | 1934. | 1935. |
|--|----------------|----------------|
| | £ | £ |
| Pensions and Gratuities | 1,060 | 1,213 |
| Governor | 1,145 | 1,129 |
| Secretariat | 1,011 | 1,113 |
| Treasury, Customs, Port and Marine | 817 | 863 |
| Post Office | 1,756 | 967 |
| Public Health | 2,538 | 2,637 |
| Education | 998 | 980 |
| Agriculture and Forestry | 924 | 1,183 |
| Police and Gaol | 694 | 690 |
| Public Works Department and Recurrent | 3,167 | 3,125 |
| Miscellaneous | 2,358 | 1,288 |
| Ascension | 2,645 | 2,266 |
| Public Works Extraordinary | 1,095 | 803 |
| Unemployment Relief (mainly Flax Subsidy)... | 3,584 | 2,230 |
| | <u>£23,792</u> | <u>£20,487</u> |

The statement of the assets and liabilities of St. Helena as at 31st December, 1935, shows : assets £28,782 (of which £3,171 was cash), liabilities £24,869.

Public Debt.

During the years 1930-1 the sum of £475 was loaned from the Colonial Development Fund for the improvement of the telephone system. This sum was loaned free of interest for one year, and thereafter at $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. and is repayable by annuities of 5 per cent., the principal outstanding at 31st December, 1935, being £438 19s. 7d.

XVI.—MISCELLANEOUS.

Lands.

A note on the land tenures of the Island will be found in the Annual Report for 1934.

The distribution of land is as follows :—

| | <i>Number of Holdings.</i> |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Under 10 acres | 414 |
| Over 10 and under 50 | 57 |
| Over 50 and under 100 | 9 |
| Over 100 and under 500 | 7 |
| Over 500 and under 1,000 | 2 |
| Over 1,000 | Nil |

The only legislation dealing with land is " The Conveyancing and Registration Ordinance, 1893 ", which simplifies conveyancing and provides for registration.

The area of the Island is approximately 30,000 acres of which 8,600 acres are regarded as cultivable.

General.

The Governor of the Colony, Sir Spencer Davis, Kt., C.M.G., proceeded on leave to England 22nd December when the temporary administration of the Government was assumed by Mr. G. C. Kitching, O.B.E., Government Secretary.

ASCENSION ISLAND.

Lying between the parallels of 7° 53' and 8° 0' South and between the meridians of 14° 18' and 14° 26' West, is the small and not extensively known island of Ascension, entirely volcanic except for some small patches of beach.

Its length does not exceed 7½ miles from east to west, nor its breadth 6¼ miles from north to south. In circumference it is 22 miles, with an area of 34 square miles.

Passing vessels are rarely sighted from its heights, though occasionally a sailing ship or steamer may pass near by for the purpose of verifying its longitude.

A Portuguese Admiral, João da Nova, first discovered the Island, and this on the 20th of May—Ascension Day—1501. Two years later a compatriot of his, Alfonse d'Albuquerque, visited Ascension and gave the place its name.

Ascension had no Napoleon to bring it fame, and yet it was due to the Royal Prisoner that Britain added it to her Possessions, for it was far too close to St. Helena to permit any other nation to occupy it, or use it as a base for efforts at rescue.

A Naval detachment was landed in 1815, and the Navy occupied it until Napoleon's death in 1821. At this period the British West African Squadron was having a busy time contending with pirates and slavers, which operations resulted in many sick and wounded. The climate of Ascension with its dry atmosphere had already proved beneficial to health, and upon the recommendation of Sir George Collier, Commander-in-Chief on the Station at that time—a Marine garrison was established on the Island, which would henceforth serve for the recruitment of the health of the crews of the squadron engaged in these operations.

Ascension was administered by the Board of Admiralty, and labour was obtained by the importation of Krooboys from the West Coast of Africa. Great discomforts and enormous difficulties were encountered by the early pioneers, but improvements were gradually effected until to-day the Island may be said to be admirably established, and an extremely pleasant spot in which to reside.

It remained under the Admiralty until 27th October, 1922, after which it became a Dependency of St. Helena. It is now administered by a Resident Magistrate, who is responsible to the Governor of St. Helena.

Cable communication was brought to the Island in 1899, and a staff of the Eastern Telegraph Company (now the Cable and Wireless, Limited), was stationed at Ascension. The Cable employees have been there ever since, but the Navy and the Marines have disappeared from the Island, which is now transformed from a war to a commercial implement.

From the sea Ascension might appear to be a desolate and forbidding spot, a sterile wilderness of volcanic peaks, its brown dusty-looking volcanoes seeming to guard the one green mountain rising up like an oasis in the centre. The black and grey lava beds running down to the sea, sometimes to end in precipitous rocks, whitened here and there by seabirds, and at others in a low black flow with jagged excrescences where the lava has piled itself up into hummocks, are no whit more attractive than the volcanoes which caused them.

A more kindly impression is formed when Clarence Bay is gained, the translucent blue of the water contrasting with the shiny whiteness of the beaches. Above it on a plateau may be seen the settlement of Georgetown—familiarly known as Garrison, with the church and club building predominating, and the red and grey tiled bungalows spread along the coast. Cross Hill rises to a height of 868 feet behind the settlement, a hill of "beautiful ugliness"; a hill of coppery gold which seems to stand like a sentinel guarding Georgetown. On its slope may be seen "Governor's Lodge", formerly "Captain's Cottage", where the Governor of St. Helena resides when he visits the Island.

To the left of Cross Hill winds the road to Green Mountain, where is situated the farm settlement and rest-houses for the residents. The Peak rises to a height of 2,817 feet, and at the summit is a picturesque dew-pond, surrounded by graceful bamboos, and in the centre of which grow a group of blue water-lilies.

The journey to the farm settlement can be accomplished by car in half-an-hour, the road cut in the side of the mountain having a gradient of one in eight with 24 hairpin bends. The traveller gradually emerges from volcanic aridity into verdured country comparable to that of England, until at the settlement he finds himself surrounded by luxuriant trees, flowers and shrubs, with green lawns and vegetable gardens.

Cattle and sheep are here maintained for the needs of the community, and vegetables and fruit are grown for the table.

Water is dependent on the rainfall, there being no natural water on the Island. Concrete catchments collect the rain-water and from tanks it is piped to huge reservoirs at Georgetown.

The only inhabitants are the staff and servants of Cable and Wireless Limited, some with their wives and children. Over one hundred St. Helenians are given employment at Ascension, and a finer working body of men it would be hard to find. Their

versatility is remarkable and they are easily trained as factory mechanics, masons, carpenters and in various trades, so that with the passage of years the Island possesses a staff of expert workmen. Judicial duties are negligible, so well-conducted are the men.

There is no illness on the Island, even sunstroke is unknown and the climate is wonderful, the temperature barely varying ten degrees during the year. The south-east trade wind blows moderately all the year round. At the Mountain, blankets and fires are necessary at times.

As to sports—cricket, football, golf and tennis form the chief amusements. A cinema operates once a fortnight (talkies are about to be introduced) and besides the English Club, there is also one for the St. Helenians. Fishing from shore and dinghy is indulged in. Large fish such as albacore, dolphin, wahoo and yellow-tail are obtained not far from the beach, while cavally and cod abound everywhere.

The Union-Castle intermediate steamers call once a month, outward and homeward, and naval vessels visit the Island several times during the year. Apart from these, few vessels are ever seen, which in great part contributes to the peace and quietness which reigns in Ascension Island.

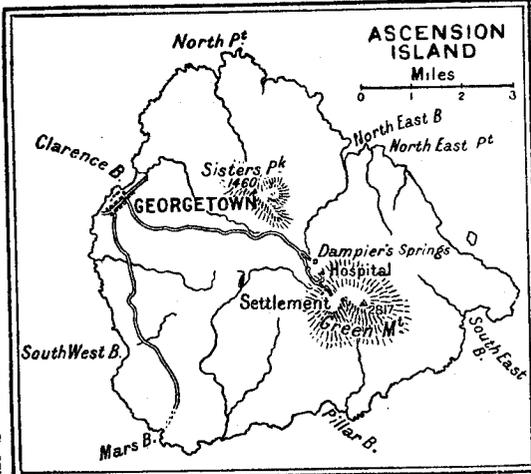
APPENDIX.

BOOKS ON ST. HELENA OF GENERAL INTEREST.

| <i>Title.</i> | <i>Publishers or Agents.</i> | <i>Price.</i> |
|--|--|---------------|
| "A History of the Island of St. Helena", 1808, by T. H. Brooke. 2nd Edition, 1824. | Publishers to East India Company. | — |
| "St. Helena", by J. C. Mellis, 1875. | L. Reeve & Co., London. | £2 2s. |
| "St. Helena—the Historic Island", 1903, by E. L. Jackson. | Ward, Lock & Co., Ltd., London. | — |
| *"Napoleon in Exile", 1915, by Norwood Young (Two Volumes). | Stanley Paul & Co., London. | £1 12s. |
| "St. Helena Who's Who", 1919, by Arnold Chaplin. | A. L. Humphreys, London. | — |
| "On board a Union Steamer", 1882, by Capt. S. P. Oliver. | W. H. Allen & Company, Ltd., London. | 8s. |
| "Campbell's Political Survey of Great Britain", 1774. | London. | — |
| "A Tour through St. Helena", by Capt. John Barnes, R.N., 1817. | J. M. Richardson, London. | — |
| "Six Months on Ascension", by Mrs. Gill, 1878. | John Murray, London. | Out of print. |
| "Tracts relative to the Island of St. Helena", by Beatson, London, 1816. | G. and W. Nicol, and J. Booth, London. | — |
| "Extracts from Records of St. Helena", by H. R. Janisch, C.M.G., 2nd Edition, 1908. | "Guardian" Printing Office, Jamestown. | — |
| "History of St. Helena", English Historical Review, by Sir William Foster, July, 1919. | | |
| "Report on the Agricultural Resources of St. Helena", by D. Morris. Reprinted 1906. (Cd. 3248, Colonial Report Misc. No. 38.) | His Majesty's Stationery Office. | 3½d. |
| "Geological Notes on St. Helena, by various writers, with remarks on the Economic Geology of that Island, and Geological Map", by Sir Albert Kitson, C.M.G., C.B.E., April, 1931. (Colonial No. 66.) | His Majesty's Stationery Office. | 1s. 3d. |
| "Report on the Fisheries of St. Helena", by J. T. Cunningham, M.A., F.Z.S., 1910. (Cd. 4998, Colonial Report Misc. No. 69.) | His Majesty's Stationery Office. | 1½d. |
| "Report on the Marine Molluscan Fauna of the Island of St. Helena", by Edgar A. Smith, 1890. Proceedings of Zoological Society of London, 1890, Part II, pp. 247–317. | | |
| "The Marine Fisheries and Invertebrates of St. Helena", by J. T. Cunningham, 1911. | | |
| "The Manatee of St. Helena", by T. H. Mortensen, Copenhagen, 1933. | | |
| "St. Helene", by Octave Aubry. | Flammarion, Paris. | 25 francs. |

* This work contains a bibliography of 172 publications referring to the captivity of the Emperor Napoleon in St. Helena.

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ST HELENA I.

