
COLONIAL REPORTS—ANNUAL.

No. 289.

NIGER COAST PROTECTORATE.

REPORT FOR 1898-9.

(For Report for 1897-8, *see* [C. 9124.])

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.
February 1900.



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COMMISSIONER AND CONSUL-GENERAL SIR R. MOOR to
MR. CHAMBERLAIN.

H.M. Consulate General,
Old Calabar,
1st October, 1899.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith the Annual Report for the year 1898-9, which has been prepared in the usual form and in conformity with the information supplied in the Blue Book, which has already been forwarded.

There is nothing to add to the information given in the Report, but I should wish to state that during the year all Officers of the Protectorate, both European and Native, have been diligent and zealous in the discharge of their duties, and that the staff in all directions may be considered able and efficient.

I am, &c.,

R. MOOR,

Commissioner and Consul-General.

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ANNUAL REPORT ON THE NIGER COAST
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REVENUE.

The sources of revenue in the Protectorate are as follows :—

- I. Customs Duties on Imports only specific.
- II. Postal Revenue.
- III. Fees and Fines of Court derivable from—
 - (a) Consular Courts.
 - (b) Native Courts.
- IV. Licences, &c.
- V. Miscellaneous.

The total revenue for the year under review from all sources amounted to £169,567 18s. 11d., of which £160,669 13s. 1d. was derived from Customs Duties. In addition to the revenue there was a balance from the previous year 1897-98 of £13,159 18s. 3½d., making in all £182,727 17s. 2½d. as the total of balance and receipts. The revenue for 1898-99 shows a considerable increase on that of the previous year 1897-98, amounting to £16,386 10s. 10½d. The revenue was also in excess of that estimated by £15,567 18s. 11d., and this increase and excess are almost entirely due to an abnormal importation of dutiable goods which took place in March, the last month of the year, owing to an apprehension on the part of the mercantile community that a revision of tariff was imminent with a view to an increase of duties. The revenue collected during the month in question amounted to over £23,000, which must be regarded as about £10,000 over the normal. From various causes it is very difficult to arrive at an accurate estimate of the revenue, which on the existing tariff has varied from £112,440 in 1896-97 to £169,567 18s. 11d. as obtained in 1898-99, but taking an average of the last three years the revenue should approximate to £145,000. This cannot, however, be taken as definitely accurate, for the revenue of 1896-97 was probably something like £30,000 under the normal owing to an enormous importation of dutiable goods, previous to a rise in the tariff, which had taken place in the preceding year 1895. Taking everything into consideration, I am of opinion that there is a sufficiently stable trade in the Protectorate to produce on the existing tariff a revenue of from £155,000 to £160,000 per annum. Judging from past experience

in cases where an opportunity is given for the importation of large quantities of dutiable goods prior to a rise in the tariff, as was the case in 1895, it may be averaged to take at least three years before trade becomes again sufficiently stable to allow of a reasonably accurate estimate of revenue to be arrived at.

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EXPENDITURE.

The expenditure for the year amounted to £146,751 17s. 1½d. as against balance and receipts of £182,727 17s. 2½d., thus showing an excess of balance and receipts over expenditure of £35,976 0s. 1d.

ASSETS AND LIABILITIES.

The statement of assets and liabilities on the 31st March 1899 shows an excess of the former amounting to £58,469 2s. 8d., made up as follows:—

Assets.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
I. Cash balances in local chests and with Crown Agents.	19,198	12	10			
II. Cash on deposit ...	22,111	10	1			
III. Remittance in transit and uncollected.	18,024	12	4			
IV. Advances due to the Protectorate.	3,297	10	5			
V. "Ivy" Depreciation Fund.	3,158	5	4			
Total Assets	65,790	11	0

Liabilities.

	£	s.	d.			
I. Deposit ...	7,232	5	5			
II. Drafts drawn and unpaid	89	2	11			
Deduct Total Liabilities	7,321	8	4
Excess of Assets over Liabilities	£58,469	2	8

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DEPARTMENTAL EXPENDITURE.

In the following statement which shows the balance, revenue and expenditure, it will be observed that the expenditure under Political and Administrative amounts to £18,246 2s. 5d. This shows a considerable increase as against the expenditure under the same head in the previous year, which amounted to £15,912 16s. 10d. It is due to the extra staff necessary for the administration of Benin City Territories, and also to an increase in the staff in other directions necessitated by the large area under Government control.

The amount expended on the Niger Coast Protectorate Force amounts to £21,372 11s. 2d., the expenditure in the previous year having been £16,738 12s. 10d. This increase is due to an augmentation in the establishment of the force which from 450 men was increased to 550, the enlarged area of territory which has been brought under control requiring this increase.

The expenditure in the Marine Department amounts to £22,097 6s. 4½d., that in the previous year having been £18,490 14s. The increase is heavy, but is accounted for by the purchase of two new launches during the year, and the necessity for placing the Marine Department on a thoroughly sound footing and providing effective workshops for carrying out repairs to the yacht, launches, lighters, boats, &c. Almost the entire transport of the Protectorate is carried out by this department, the territories being, fortunately for matters of transport, intersected in all directions by rivers and creeks, for the navigation and controlling of which it is necessary to have a considerable number of launches. A Government yacht is necessary for the purpose of sea transport, and she can not only call at the maritime stations of the Protectorate, but owing to her capacity and construction is able to carry out the entire transport to many stations from 15 to 40 miles inland. To place this department on a thoroughly efficient footing the annual expenditure will require to be further increased by between two and three thousand pounds per annum for the next few years, to provide the necessary craft, workshop material, &c., for the establishment, after which the expenses of actually carrying on may possibly be reduced.

The Medical Department shows an expenditure of £10,129 11s. 3d. as against an expenditure in the previous year of £7,112 17s. 1d. The increase here is also large, and is due to increased staff necessitated by extra stations and expense incurred in improved sanitary arrangements for both Europeans and natives, which, from the medical report for the year, may be considered to have already had good results as regards health.

The miscellaneous expenditure amounts to £9,346 9s. 10d. as against the expenditure in the previous year of £15,451 3s. 10d.

The decrease here is very considerable: not that there has been an actual decreased expenditure but that the classification has been better arranged in the Treasury Department.

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In the Public Works Department the expenditure under Surveyor-General was £3,437 3s. as against £3,010 0s. 7d. in the previous year. The increase is entirely owing to the additions to the staff which have been imperative to carry out the necessary work. Under Public Works Recurrent the amount shown is £5,565 0s. 5d. as against the previous year's £3,382 5s. 11d. The explanation of this is that the premises in the Protectorate from year to year increase, and the cost of current repairs is consequently annually augmented. Further, the houses originally erected in the Protectorate, which are all of them wood and iron, require more repairs every year, the class of house not being a durable one in this climate, though its first cost is cheaper and it can be more quickly erected than solid buildings. At the same time I should never again be in favour of erecting any buildings of this class unless for purely temporary purposes, when they can be run up quickly and cheaply. The Public Works Extraordinary shows an expenditure of £14,406 12s. 4½d. against that of the previous year of £5,627 9s. 11d. This is consequent on the large increase necessitated for extra buildings, &c., as the control of Government is extended over the country and the requisites of sound administration are provided.

STATEMENT of the BALANCE, REVENUE and EXPENDITURE, for the YEAR 1898-99.

No.	Heads of Revenue.	Amount.	No.	Heads of Expenditure.	Amount.
		£ s. d.			£ s. d.
	Balance on 1st April 1898	13,159 18 3½	1	Pensions	1,630 0 0
			2	Commissioner and Consul-General	3,984 18 10
			3	Secretary's Department	41 18 11
1	Customs Duties	160,669 13 1	4	Political and Administrative	18,246 2 5
2	Licences, &c.	656 16 8	5	Judicial	834 10 6
3	Fees, &c.	3,719 5 9	6	Treasury	2,400 7 4
4	Postal Revenue	1,688 12 0	7	Customs	6,478 12 10
5	Miscellaneous	2,833 11 5	8	Post Office	3,053 13 6
		169,567 18 11	9	Printing	1,231 11 11
			10	Audit	785 6 2
			11	Niger Coast Protectorate Force	21,372 11 2
			12	Marine	22,097 6 4½
			13	Prisons	6,038 4 11
			14	Botanical	1,255 4 11
			15	Medical	10,129 11 3
			16	Sanitary	1,140 1 3
			17	Transport	6,161 8 5½
			18	Aborigines	7,115 0 9
			19	Miscellaneous	9,346 9 10
			20	Public Works Department :—	
				(a) Surveyor-General	3,437 3 0
				(b) Public Works Recurrent	5,565 0 5
				(c) Public Works Extraordinary	14,406 12 4½
				Total Expenditure	146,751 17 1½
				Balance by above account	35,976 0 1
	Total including Balance	182,727 17 2½			182,727 17 2½

LEGISLATION—LAWS AND PROCLAMATIONS, &C.

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During the year there has been no legislation either in the form of law or proclamation, the energy of the Legal Department having been given more particularly to proper organization of the Consular and Native Courts throughout the territories, in order to render the administration of justice generally more effective.

There are in the territories eight Consular Courts administering justice under the Africa Order in Council and the Ordinances and Queen's Regulations therewith incorporated, and during the year 486 criminal cases have been dealt with in these Courts, resulting in 349 convictions. The corresponding figures for the previous year 1897-98 are 655 cases dealt with, resulting in 545 convictions. The difference in these figures tends to show that there is satisfactory improvement among the people who are subject to the jurisdiction of these Courts, which does not include the actual natives of the Protectorate. These, however, when consenting parties, can be dealt with in the Consular Courts, but are in most instances dealt with in the Native Courts. Offences against property accounted for 179 convictions as against 259 for the last year, and further improvement in this direction may be noted in the fact that no cases of prædial larceny have been reported. With two or three exceptions the offences against property were simple larceny and were of such nature as to merit short sentences of imprisonment. The convictions for offences against the person showed a noticeable decrease in the year under report, the total being 85 as against 131 for the previous year. The convictions for other offences, few of which were of a serious nature, amounted to 85 as against 153 for the previous year. It is a noticeable fact that although most of these Courts have been in existence for several years the number of previous convictions is remarkably low.

On the civil side the work of the Courts shows 338 cases, nearly all of them being claims for debt; and there would appear to be a considerable improvement in this direction also, for in last year's report returns from five Courts only were given and the number of suits amounted to 355. It is found that the Courts are effective on the civil side, and that the judgments are carried out with very little difficulty. In only four instances has it been found necessary to commit a judgment debtor to prison for fraud or for neglect to obey the order of the Court—a very low figure considering the number of claims for the year and the system of trade practised in the territories.

Throughout the territories there are 23 Native Councils and minor Courts for the administration of justice, of which the organization has been revised during the year under report by the Judicial Officer, and they have been placed on a sounder footing for the carrying out of the work entrusted to them. A very large number of cases, both criminal and civil, are dealt with in these Courts, which under the direction of the Judicial Officer are

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immediately supervised by the district officers. A proper system of record and book keeping has been arranged, from which it is hoped that in future years a fairly accurate return of the work done may be obtained. There can be no doubt that these Courts are of immense value, not only in rendering very material assistance to the administration in the control of the territories, but in providing the means of instructing the chiefs of the people in the proper methods of government and the administration of justice. Not only are they engaged in direct judicial work, but the Native Councils as distinct from the native minor Courts are allowed and encouraged to make necessary native laws affecting the tribes which they represent and over which they have control. All these Councils and Courts have practically the control of their own funds under the supervision, of course, of European officers; and the expenditure of these funds for the general advantage of the country and people provides an object lesson in civilized administration. By this means Court houses are erected for the administering of justice and good roads made from village to village, and other works of general public utility carried out. It is anticipated that the value of the work done by these Courts will greatly increase in future years, and if proper attention be paid to their organization and control they will relieve the European officials of a large amount of labour, and indeed carry out work of administration and control which otherwise in all probability could not be coped with.

POPULATION AND VITAL STATISTICS.

European Population.

The European population in the territories throughout the year averaged 227 persons, being 204 male and 23 female, an increase of 21 on that shown last year. The number of cases treated by the medical officers of the Protectorate amounted to 1,078, resulting in 14 deaths and 43 patients being invalided. This gives a death rate of 61·6 per thousand and an invaliding rate of 189·4 per thousand. It is interesting and perhaps instructive to compare the figures for the last three years :—

Date.	Number of Europeans.	Number of Deaths.	Rate per 1,000.	Number Invalided.	Rate per 1,000.
1896-97 ...	214	21	98·13	35	163·5
1897-98 ...	206	15	72	58	281
1898-99 ...	227	14	61·6	43	189·4

In drawing conclusions from the above figures it should be noted that there was a heavy increase in the death rate in the first year (1896-97), amounting to 9·8 per thousand over that of the previous year. Eliminating this increase from the death rate of that year, it will be observed that the rate is a steadily decreasing one; and regarding the figures with reference to invaliding it will be seen that there is a decided general tendency to increase. It may be concluded from the figures that judicious invaliding at the right moment certainly tends to decrease the death rate, and gives satisfactory results in that such invaliding and sending the patients to Europe to recruit has resulted in recovery in nearly every case. The decrease in the death rate may be attributed to a great extent to the improvement of the conditions under which the Europeans now live, the greater attention given to general sanitation, and (probably) to the general improvement in the methods of treatment of tropical diseases, judging by the statistical returns. Among the stations of the Protectorate, Sapele still maintains its unenviable eminence as being the most unhealthy. With a European population averaging 14, there have been 119 cases of sickness, which would allow each European at the station to have been in the hands of the medical officers between eight and nine times during the year. There have been five deaths and eight cases of invaliding, which totalled would appear effectually to dispose of all but one of the average European population within a year. The death rate shows 214·2 per thousand, which it is satisfactory to note is a decrease on that of last year which was 226 per thousand. This gives ground for slight satisfaction, and I anticipate that in next year's report much better results will be shown, as improvements have been made which it is hoped will appreciably affect the general health at the station.

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Natives.

The total number of cases treated among the natives during the year amounted to 11,868, resulting in 51 deaths, 21 cases of invaliding, and a death rate of 4·2 per thousand among those treated. The death rate compares favourably with that of the two preceding years, which were respectively 7·2 and 6·2 per thousand; but this would be accounted for to a considerable extent by the fact that in both these years there was a severe epidemic of small-pox in the Protectorate, and that in the year now under review there has been little or no small-pox. The number of cases treated during the last three years has averaged about the same: over 11 and under 12 per thousand. The figures may, I think, be taken as giving satisfactory results from the work done.

The official returns show that there have been during the year 3,840 cases of successful vaccination of natives, but it would appear that this does not at all represent the number of vaccinations that have taken place, successfully and otherwise, as

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thousands of arm to arm inoculations are performed by the natives themselves of which no record can be obtained. The figures on actual official record do not appear satisfactory when the great importance of taking steps for the prevention of small-pox in this country is considered. This disease is a most terrible scourge throughout the territories; and when epidemics occur inland the natives die by thousands, all general intercourse among the tribes is stopped, civilizing influences make a retrograde movement, and trade suffers very considerably. In these circumstances it is of the utmost importance that a systematic attempt should be made to carry out vaccination, even should it necessitate the engagement of extra medical officers specially detailed for the work.

I see that in last year's report (which was made by Major Gallwey) the importance of most searching medical examination of candidates for service in this climate is pointed out. Giving a personal opinion on this subject, I have observed that the men who stand this climate best are those of the fair type and having sound teeth; given, of course, fair physique and that they be over 22 years of age. This may perhaps appear to be encroaching on the domain of the medical men, but I merely note it as a fact, the result of careful observation and personal experience.

EDUCATION.

The question of education in the territories has during the past year been in abeyance owing to many circumstances, the principal being the changes which will be necessitated in the local administrations when the administration of the territories now under the Royal Niger Company is directly taken over by Her Majesty's Government.

The grants to Mission Schools during the year amounted to £1,047 1s. 5d., the principal of which was paid to the Presbyterian Mission Training Institute at Old Calabar, where there are natives from all quarters of the Protectorate undergoing education. There is a special grant made, amounting to £200, exclusively for industrial training at this Institute, and the other portion of the grant is made specifically for the pupils placed there by the Government for education, numbering 27, the entire number at the Institute being 479. The full amount of grant to the Mission during the year amounted roughly to £600.

The Baptist Mission School at Kwo Ibo received during the year, for the purpose of industrial education, a grant amounting to about £120.

The Niger Delta Pastorate connected with the Church Missionary Society received educational and industrial grants amounting to about £200, and the Church Missionary Society's School at Brass received, for the purpose of industrial training only, a grant amounting to about £120.

The grants made annually have hitherto been more particularly for assistance in starting the schools and placing them on a sound footing. There has, of course, been to a certain extent supervision of the expenditure of these grants, but it is important that in future years there should be more direct supervision by an Inspector of Schools under an Educational Board, in order that the grants may be in future apportioned in accordance with results.

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CURRENCY, BANKING, WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.

It is noticed that to some extent, but in portions only of the territories, cash currency is making headway, more particularly in those portions where there is no existing currency; but it has also made slight headway in districts where brass rods, copper wire, and manilla currency are in use between the natives for transactions among themselves.

With regard to banking there will not, I think, be an opening in these territories for many years, unless action is taken with regard to the currency question; but were such action taken there can be little doubt that within the course of one or two years there would be such an opening for the establishment of branch banks with a fair chance of the business being remunerative, and it is needless to point out that such establishment would give a great impetus to business and meet the requirements of trade in many directions which are now hampered by the want of banking facilities.

The advisability of introducing an uniform standard of weights and measures has been under consideration, but action in the matter has been delayed owing to the anticipated changes in the Administrations, as it is advisable that the laws on the subject should be the same throughout the entire territories, including the Colony of Lagos and the Royal Niger Company's territories and those of this Protectorate.

IMPORTS AND EXPORTS, *including* SHIPPING.

The statistical tables detailed below accompanying this Report give the particulars with reference to the imports and exports for the year 1898-99, viz :—

Table A.—Return of dutiable imports.*

Table B.—Return of free imports.*

Table C.—Return of exports.*

Table D.—Comparative statement of imports, exports,
and duties collected.

* Not printed.

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Table E.—Return showing the value of imports from,
and exports to, the United Kingdom and
other countries.

Table F.—Return of shipping for each district.

Table G.—General shipping return.

Referring to Table A, it will be observed that the value of dutiable imports amounted to £185,301 19s. 1d., which is an excess in value of similar imports for the previous year of £24,601 19s. 9d. The free imports as shown on Table B amounted in value to £547,337 19s. 4d., being an increase of £68,389 1s. 1d. as compared with the previous year. The most important items in which there was an increase were bags and sacks, beads, beef and pork, building materials, cotton goods, provisions, rice, silk goods, wearing apparel, and woollen goods. The most noticeable increase was in cotton goods, the increase in value amounting to £41,885 1s. 2d., and in silk goods there was an increase of £7,446 3s. 6d., in wearing apparel £6,462 18s., and in woollen goods very nearly £2,000.

Taking Tables A and B, it will be seen that the total imports, dutiable and free, amounted to £732,639 18s. 5d. as against that shown in the previous year amounting to £639,698 12s. 7d., which gives an increase in the year under review of £92,941 5s. 10d.

Dealing further with the question of imports and referring to Table E, it will be seen that the total value of imports from the United Kingdom was £583,067 4s. 5d., or 79·6 per cent. of the entire imports, being practically the same percentage as in the previous year. This shows an increase on the figures of last year of £78,264 12s. 10d.

The imports from foreign countries amounted to in the case of Germany, £51,330 16s. 8d., as against £49,206 14s. 4d. in the previous year, and in the case of Holland £77,240 14s. 7d., as against £60,986 6s. 5d. in the previous year. Imports from other countries valued £20,837 14s. 8d., as against £24,655 2s. 9d. in the previous year, thus showing a decrease of £3,817 8s. 1d.

Dealing with exports, it will be seen from Table C that the total value in this year 1898-99 amounted to £774,647 19s. 9d., as against £750,223 8s. 11d. in the previous year, thus showing an increase of £24,424 10s. 10d. Of this, the total of native products was £771,066 3s. 9d., or £25,123 14s. 11d. in excess of that for the previous year, among which may be noted the following :—palm kernels £305,791 8s., as against the previous year £295,544 17s. 5d., and rubber £60,607 17s. 9d., as against the previous year £32,959 17s. 2d.; but on the other hand there is a considerable decrease in the value of palm oil, the value of which amounts to £397,869 10s. 10d., as against £410,133 11s. 5d. in the previous year.

The value of exports to the United Kingdom amounted to £500,367 15s. 8d., as against £497,589 1s. 9d. in the previous year. This gives a proportion of 64·6 per cent. of the entire exports exported to the United Kingdom as compared with the proportion of 66·3 per cent. in the previous year, showing a slight falling off in proportion.

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The total value of trade imports and exports amounted to £1,507,287 18s. 2d., as against that of the previous year £1,389,922 1s. 6d., thus showing an increase of £117,365 16s. 8d.

The Customs revenue for the year amounted to £160,752 15s. 7d., as against that of the previous year £145,541 16s. 11d., being an increase of £15,210 18s. 8d.

The shipping returns show in Tables F and G 379 ships entered and 375 cleared, as against the figures 342 and 340 respectively in the previous year.

The volume of trade, as before stated, amounted in value to £1,507,287 odd, out of which £1,457,340 or 96·6 per cent. was carried in British vessels, leaving a balance of only £49,947 conveyed in foreign vessels.

In my Annual Report for the year 1896-97, I stated, "It will take about two years from the year of this Report for trade in spirits to reach a normal state in the interior markets," and I am of opinion that only in the year under report has that trade arrived at its normal state. This remark might have been applied generally to dutiable goods, as in the latter end of 1895 there was a revision of the tariff affecting the principal dutiable imports; but "spirits" were mentioned, as of the few specific articles on which duty is charged, they give the largest return. In the year under review the revenue derived from wine, beer, and spirits generally amounted to £132,853 18s. 6d. It may be interesting to examine critically the figures of dutiable and free imports for the last seven years, taking into consideration the duties chargeable on spirits at the time; though I fear, the periods between the changes of duty are too short to admit of absolutely reliable conclusions being drawn. Taking the four years 1892 to 1896, the average annual import of dutiable articles approximated in value to £260,000, and during this period the duty on spirits was 1s. per gallon. During the period from 1896 to 1899, three years, when the duty on spirits had been raised to 2s. per gallon, the value of the dutiable goods imported approximated to £160,000. It may be taken for granted that this falling off in the value of dutiable goods imported was principally a falling off in the import of spirits, if not entirely so. Taking the free imports for the same periods, it is seen that the figures show approximate values of £525,000 and £516,000 respectively. From this it will be gathered that the imposition of duties or raising of tariff has not appreciably affected the import of free goods, but that the import of dutiable goods has been reduced in value by 38·4 per cent. in consequence of a rise in tariff. These are only

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facts as shown by figures, but little or nothing can be deduced from them, except that raising the tariff tends to decrease the import of dutiable goods. The circumstances of production are somewhat peculiar in these territories, and (as I have already pointed out) it takes some years after a rise in the tariff before the producing markets attain to an equilibrium and normal state of production. There seems but one fact to be gathered from the figures when examined critically in detail, which is that the imposition of extra duties or the raising of the existing tariff, particularly on spirits, cannot be looked to to give an immediate return of much consequence, but that it takes two or three years before any such return can be calculated on with certainty.

As regards the class of goods imported I am still of opinion that there is not sufficient diversity, and also that the representatives of the firms carrying on business in the territories do not take the necessary steps to ascertain the requirements of the actual producers, or the class of goods that would be the most acceptable in the producing markets, and would further be such as to provide stronger inducement to the actual producers to carry on the work of production to its utmost limits. It would be of considerable advantage to trade were the firms to employ travelling agents to work in the actual producing markets with a small supply of samples, not to do actual peddling work, but merely to ascertain the requirements and the classes of goods that are the most suitable for trading purposes. The native middlemen themselves are not at all enterprising in this direction, and will not sufficiently vary the class of goods which they take to the producing markets; consequently, there is little or no variety introduced into the trade. These native middlemen, who are merely carriers as between the producing markets and the European merchants, avoid the risk of taking the more fragile class of goods to the markets, and make no effort whatever to push the trade, merely relying upon the old staple commodities which have been in the interior markets for many years. The Yoruba middlemen traders are far better in this matter, as they have the real instinct of traders and show energy in introducing and pushing all classes of goods into the interior markets. There is practically a revolution in the trade now going on in the Protectorate; the old native middlemen, the chiefs (who were large traders), are no longer enabled to carry on their business by enforced slave labour, and the "boys" of the various houses are looking to receive directly themselves some return for their work; with the natural result that the big houses are breaking up and the "boys" are carrying on in their own interests the bulk of trade. This is not the case in all portions of the territories, but is more particularly so in the eastern and western divisions. In the central division steps have lately been taken to ensure to the "boys," the actual workers, a personal and direct return for their labours, at the same time providing a fair return to the chiefs and heads of houses, so that the systems of

native administration may be carried on. With these changes taking place there is, of course, a great opportunity for foreign native traders to come into the Protectorate and do successful business, and this has been fully represented to the Yorubas of the Colony of Lagos. A system of more direct Government control of the industries of production and trade generally is also being inaugurated.

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As regards the quality of the goods imported, I must again advance the opinion that a stable trade will never be established by the import of rubbish into these territories. The only means of establishing such a trade is by studying the requirements of the natives and introducing a good class of material, both to meet such requirements and for the purpose of opening up business in new classes of goods. There is undoubtedly still room for improvement in the class of goods imported, and it is only lately that in the districts of the western division the warning given in this direction has proved true, and it has been found that the rubbishy goods imported were only forced upon the producers by the middlemen, not really being such articles as they required. This has been discovered as the result of the actual producers bringing their produce direct to the European merchants, and in consequence there will in all probability be considerable loss to some of the firms, in that they will not be able to dispose of some of the goods of inferior quality which they have in hand, except at heavy loss. In urging the merchants to introduce a more diversified class of goods and goods of a better quality, I do not lose sight of the fact that it is the duty of the Government to raise the standard of life among the natives, which can only be done by education and continuous intercourse, and must, of course, result in greatly enlarged demands in the variety of the class of goods imported; but it is unfortunately, for the present, impossible to do as much as would be desirable in this direction, more particularly as regards education, for all the energy and revenue available are required to open up and pacify the country and render life and property secure. I fear, however, that no matter how strenuous the action of the Government and of the commercial community may be, there cannot be any large expansion of trade in districts where there exists the native currency of brass rods, copper wires, and manillas, until it is replaced by a cash currency. The incubus of the native currency in use, of which 30s. is a load for a man, is sufficient of itself to stifle any expansion of trade when one takes into consideration the difficulties of transport in the territories.

GAOLS AND PRISONERS, *including* CRIMINAL STATISTICS.

During the year a new prison has been established at Benin City with accommodation for about 100 prisoners in grouped cells which, with the existing prisons at Old Calabar, Degema and Sapele gives accommodation for about 400 prisoners. In

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addition to this there are lockups at Bonny, Opobo, Warri, and Brass. A substantial brick building was commenced during the year and is still in course of erection at Old Calabar, which is planned on an approved system with all necessary accommodation for a complete prison staff, male and female, and accommodation for about 150 prisoners. It is anticipated that the building will be completed in the course of about eighteen months from the end of the year under review. The completion of the prison at Benin City will in all probability make it possible to do away with the existing temporary prison at Sapele, which in future will only be used as a lockup.

At the commencement of the year there were in the various prisons and lockups 222 prisoners, including convicted prisoners and prisoners awaiting trial. During the year there were received into the prisons 1,226 prisoners, being 900 adult males, 20 adult females, and 226 juvenile offenders. Of this number 763 were convicted of sundry offences and sentenced to various terms of imprisonment. Among those convicted it was found that there were 21 against whom there was one previous conviction, 9 against whom there were two previous convictions, and 3 against whom there were three previous convictions. The duration of the sentences on conviction was as follows:—

In 65 cases for five years or more.

In 173 cases for one year or more, but less than five years.

In 238 cases for more than three months and less than one year.

In 287 cases for three months or less.

Of the total number of prisoners received into the gaols during the year 463 were discharged unconvicted. The daily average in the prisons was 265 prisoners, and the daily average on the sick list amounted to 21. There were 129 cases admitted to hospitals, of which 10 resulted in death, the remainder being discharged cured. The number of prisoners in all prisons on the 31st March, 1899, was 299. The foregoing figures cannot be compared with those given under the head of Legislation, Laws and Proclamations, which are only the returns of cases tried in the Consular Courts, whereas the prison returns include a large number of prisoners sentenced by the native Courts sitting under the presidency of the District Commissioners, where trial has been entirely by native law and custom.

The value of prison labour is estimated at about £1,830, which amount is probably somewhat in excess of its actual value.

It will be seen by reference to the revenue and expenditure returns, that the expenditure on prisons during the year amounted to £6,038 4s. 11d., which includes the entire cost of what is

practically the civil police of the Protectorate, consisting of 7 sergeants, 7 corporals, 7 lance-corporals, and 90 privates, known as "Court Messengers," in addition to the actual prison staff of 1 gaoler, 1 prison clerk, and 1 clerk and storekeeper at headquarters, 3 keepers of prison at the outlying prisons, 1 chief warder and 2 2nd class warders. The European staff of 1 officer in charge of prison discipline and an allowance to substitute is also included.

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The court messengers do all the minor work of the prison department as warders, &c., and also act as the messengers of the consular courts in serving summonses, executing warrants, &c., and some of them are detailed for duty in the various departments as orderly messengers. Considering the court work done, inclusive of an enormous amount of enquiry and "palaver," of which no return can be made, and the number of prisoners dealt with by this staff, the expenditure cannot be considered excessive.

HOSPITALS, *including* MEDICAL AND SANITARY.

The annual returns of the European hospital for the year show that 74 cases were treated, of which 65 were males and nine females, resulting in five deaths of males, six males and one female invalided, 54 males and eight females discharged cured. This gives a death rate of 6.5 per cent. on the cases treated. Two of the deaths were due to hyperpyrexia, one to blackwater fever, one to bilious fever, and one to pneumonia.

The nursing staff consists of three nurses, who at the commencement of the year were taken over by the Government in place of being supplied by the Presbyterian Mission as formerly. This arrangement has given every satisfaction both to the nurses themselves, to the Principal Medical Officer, and to the medical staff having charge of the hospital. The nursing staff have in the present year under review shown the same ability and devotion to duty as formerly.

During the year the St. Margaret native hospital was opened. It is a substantial brick building, constructed on the latest hygienic principles, and consists at present of one wing only and necessary offices. This wing contains a general ward for males with 18 beds, a female ward with three beds, and a private ward with four beds. The wing was only opened in August 1898, and there is no separate record of the native cases treated in this wing since that date, all cases of natives treated during the year having been included in one return; but it has been found that since the opening of the hospital the death rate of natives in the hospital has fallen from 33 per cent. to 14 per cent., which is satisfactory to note. It has been possible, besides the ordinary medical cases, to perform major operations, many of which have been carried out with success, as a proper operating ward is provided. It will

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be necessary for the accommodation of patients to build the other wing of the hospital as soon as possible, and also to construct an observation ward, which is urgently required; and I propose making provision for these buildings in the estimates for 1900-1901.

It is satisfactory to note that the contagious diseases hospitals at Old Calabar and all the out stations have not been used to any great extent during the year, as there has been no serious outbreak of small-pox or other contagious or infectious disease, though at head-quarters in January 1899 an epidemic of chicken-pox broke out on the Government yacht, and was not stamped out until 40 cases had been dealt with. It is possible that the vaccination carried out by the medical officers, and passed on by the natives themselves, may be having some effect in preventing small-pox in the more controlled areas, but there is still a large extent of territory in which it has not yet been possible to carry out such work, and the insanitary and filthy state of the native villages will always encourage this disease to take epidemic form on cases occurring, until vaccination can be carried out throughout the entire territories.

It has been possible to pay more attention to sanitary conditions during the year under review, and the decrease in death rate must be regarded as due to this. There can be little doubt that the strict observance of sanitary rules would result in a better general state of health among the Europeans resident in the territories.

Generally it may be taken that the sanitary condition of the European settlements and premises is fairly satisfactory, and the native towns and villages in their vicinity are also kept in fair condition, but the utmost difficulty is experienced in inducing natives in distant towns and villages in some directions to keep them clean. In other directions one is often surprised at the cleanly and sanitary state in which the towns are kept.

In all the European settlements there are properly enclosed and well kept European cemeteries. In the vicinity of all large towns and villages directly controlled proper native burial grounds are established and fenced in; and in all directions now generally visited the natives are compelled to bury the dead in a proper manner, in place of throwing the bodies into the bush or into the river as was formerly the case.

METEOROLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The only station where such observations are taken is Old Calabar. The returns show that during the year there were 43 days on which the cold dry harmattan winds blew, 51 days when tornadoes occurred, and that the rainfall amounted in the year to

129·24 inches. The mean maximum temperature during the hot season was not exceptionally high, being 91·6 degrees, and the mean minimum temperature during the year was 76·9. The weather generally experienced during the year was not such as to be exceptionally trying either to Europeans or natives.

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POSTAL.

The postal service shows a considerable increase in the receipt and despatch of letters, &c. to and from the Protectorate, the total dealt with during the year being 242,620, being an excess over the number dealt with during last year of 45,279. Letters and parcels despatched show an increase of 23,264, while those received show an increase of 22,919. This is largely due to the introduction of the penny postage and reduced parcel rate.

The money order branch of the Post Office has worked satisfactorily during the year and the returns show that the total number of orders issued was 1,736, of a value of £5,867 2s. 3d., the total commission charged thereon being £75 18s. The total number of orders paid was 317, of a value £787 4s. 8d. This shows a considerable increase over that of last year, when the total number of orders issued was 1,027 of a value of £3,731 8s. 7d., the total commission charged being £47 8s. 9d. while the number of orders paid was 134, of a value of £383 14s. 3d. It is anticipated that there will be considerable increase in this branch of postal work in coming years and its establishment has undoubtedly met a long felt want in giving facility for the despatch of money with safety, there being no banking facilities whatever in the Protectorate. The total revenue derived from the postal department during the year was as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
Sale of postage stamps, &c. ...	1,584	3	7
Unpaid letters, &c... ...	17	12	1
Money order commissions... ...	50	9	7
Sale of postal guide	1	7	0
Total ...	£1,653	12	3

as against £1,458 11s. 3d. in the previous year. The cost of the Post Office as shown in the revenue and expenditure return was £3,053 13s. 6d., so that the revenue derived from the postal department provides a little more than 50 per cent. of the actual cost.

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OPENING UP NEW TERRITORIES AND JOURNEYS
IN THE INTERIOR.

In April 1898 an expedition was sent into the territories on the left bank of the Opobo river starting from Essene, proceeding thence to Azumini, Olumbela, and Akwetta, in which direction the natives were found to be friendly though very wild. From Akwetta the party proceeded to Okrika through territory which had been visited before. Through the whole of this portion of the journey courts for the settlement of all difficulties were held in all the towns passed through, and most of the native business dealt with. On arrival at Okrika it was found that the trade had been stopped, and that difficulties were being caused by Chief Wagu of Omokoroshi, to whom messengers were sent requesting him to attend a meeting to settle the "palavers" of Okrikans and others against him. All overtures failed to induce this chief to attend, and the messengers were only met by threats and defiance, so it was found necessary to undertake operations against him. When the force reached the town of Omokoroshi it was found that stockades and rifle pits had been constructed and the usual native defences made; but (as usual), as soon as the defenders were driven from the rifle pits and stockades, all organization was broken up and they were soon compelled to surrender. The effect of this was to open up all the roads at the back of Okrika into the interior and to enable the officials of the Government to visit the interior tribes, who are now able to bring their produce direct to the carriers or middlemen markets. The people of Omokoroshi and the surrounding neighbourhood are now friendly, and have been allowed to reconstruct their town in a locality close to the old one.

Early in the present year, as the Ekoi country within the sweep of the Cross River required visiting, and owing to difficulties on the German boundary, I found it advisable to send a small party under Mr. District Commissioner Whitehouse to visit all the towns along the German boundary, proceeding to the Cross River, and downward as far as Ododobo, and then returning on the western side of the Ekoi country. The natives throughout the whole of this country are friendly, and no difficulties were experienced.

In February and March last an expedition was organized and despatched to pacify the Qua country lying on and about the Kwo Ibo River, extending on the left bank practically to Cross River and on the right to the Opobo River. The natives of this territory have for many years been found exceedingly unruly and opposed to the Government. They have also on many occasions prevented the Government officials penetrating into their country, where it is well known that many evil practices, such as human sacrifice, murder of twin children, and trial by ordeal, are still carried on. These natives have not only

been excessively turbulent, but aggressive and dangerous to the trading establishment in Kwo Ibo River for many years past. The resources of the Administration did not, however, admit of the difficulties being dealt with earlier, as, although expeditionary and punitive work might have been carried out, the force at the disposal of the Administration would not have admitted of the necessary garrison being supplied after such operations. It was therefore for many years found advisable to temporise, providing merely for the safety of the Europeans in the district, and maintaining such a pacific state as would admit of trade being carried on. The expedition was successfully carried out between the 4th February and the 15th March last, and effective Government control was established throughout the territories. Unfortunately the Quas were found to be actively hostile, and were supported, to some extent, by the Inokuns, with the result that considerable fighting took place and 19 towns were destroyed. The effect of this action was that 175 towns and villages came in and submitted to the Government, about 1,000 guns were surrendered and destroyed, and 2,000 guns were brought in and stamped in accordance with the Arms Ordinance of 1894. It may be taken for granted that Government control is now established between the Kwo Ibo and Opobo Rivers, as far north as the Qua country extends, and also over a considerable portion of the Qua country on the left bank of the Kwo Ibo River towards the Cross River. Detachments of troops have been stationed at Eket, on the Kwo Ibo River, and Azumini on the creek of that name flowing into the Opobo River, to maintain and firmly establish the control.

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There were no further very extended journeys or operations of a serious nature during the year, but the divisional and district officers, together with the officers of the force, have been continually on the move as the season permitted throughout those portions of the territory where administrative control has been established, and steady advance has been made in maintaining the prestige and control of the Government, and perfecting the systems introduced for the combined European and native administration of the territories. The influence of Government has been extended as far as the resources admitted, but such work is necessarily slow, for it has to be carried out with due regard to maintaining the existing trade; and in all advances made administrative and military posts have to be established, which necessitates an increase in the political staff and force.

It is a matter of some interest that after the expedition in the Qua country bordering on the Aro country, in which latter the centre of "Long JuJu" is established, 136 refugees who had proceeded from their country to the west of the Niger about Asseh and Abo, fled to the Government for protection, and have

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since been sent back to their country. The "Long JuJu" is the paramount and final arbiter in all difficulties, and was formerly frequented by all the people in the territories extending from many miles east of the Cross River to about 50 miles west of the Niger and from the coast line to about 6° 30' north. The Aros themselves were the high priests of this Long JuJuism, and employed their powers in the most nefarious manner, as may be judged from the story told by these refugees. It seems that they were but the remnant of a party of about 800 who proceeded some three or four years ago from the territories about the Niger to consult the "Long JuJu" from various causes, some of them being charged with witchcraft, others with "making evil doctor," and others with various crimes by their tribes and families. They were led about the country by a circuitous route for about three months before reaching the seat of "Long JuJu," in a village close to which they were finally made to sit down. Batches of them of about 10 to 30 were occasionally taken away from this village ostensibly to consult "Long JuJu," but from events that have since come to light there can be no doubt that they were victims used for human sacrifices by the Aros themselves, or sold to outlying tribes for that purpose, or as slaves. In this way the party of 800 gradually dwindled down to the miserable residuum of 136, who were the most wretched and emaciated body of people I have ever seen grouped together. They were evidently regarded as unfit to be disposed of as slaves, or even for purposes of sacrifice, and it must be due, I think, to some extent, to their miserable condition that they had the opportunity of escaping. The party appealed to the officer stationed at Eket, from whence they were sent to Bonny and Brass, and thence to the Agent-General of the Royal Niger Company, who returned them to their various towns and villages about Asseh Creek and Abo on the Niger. Since this has been done the refugees have of course been talking freely in their country, and have exposed to all the tribes around the fraud of the "Long JuJu," with the result that the profits of this nefarious form of priestcraft will gradually be curtailed. I may here mention that since the establishment of this Administration the Aros have suffered severely, for the tribes which have gradually been brought under Government control have been broken off from consulting the "Long JuJu," with the result that the enormous profits from the fees charged for such consultations have been seriously curtailed, and that the victims for sacrifice and disposal as slaves are not so easily obtainable now as in the past. The general action as regards the "Long JuJu" in the past, and the present exposure of the fraud by the refugees, has led to a state of unrest among the Aros and to determined opposition to the Government, which render it clear that they are a factor which will shortly have to be dealt with before the territories lying between the Cross River and the Niger can be effectually opened up and controlled.

MISCELLANEOUS.

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Railways are non-existent in the territories, but I am glad to say that during the year a considerable distance in new roads has been constructed by the natives in the various districts, principally inland in the Opobo district and in the Benin territories. There is considerable difficulty in maintaining and making these roads in the first stretch of country towards the interior from the point where the network of waterways, rivers, and creeks ceases, as the soil is mostly sandy clay, and no metal for foundation is available. This stretch of country does not extend more than 20 or 30 miles, but the difficulty of making and maintaining any roadways in it without stone, rock, or gravel of any kind can easily be imagined.

Dealing with some of the departments not specially reported on, I would mention first the Niger Coast Protectorate Force, which at its full strength consists of 16 European officers and 550 men, but has not at any time during the year been up to its full strength. With this force it was possible to do the expeditionary work mentioned under the heading, "Opening up New Territories and Journeys in the Interior," and also to garrison military posts at Benin City, Brass, Azumini, Eket, and Ediba, but this leaves very few men at head-quarters in case of emergency, and it is clearly evident that even to maintain the present control in the territories the force is quite inadequate. The arm provided during the year was the Martini Henry carbine, which has since been changed for the Martini Enfield .303. The other armament consists of four 7-pounder M.L. guns, five Maxims, two rocket tubes, and one trough. A new officers' mess house has been provided during the year, with accommodation for six officers, at head-quarters, which will in all probability be sufficient for such staff as may be stationed at Old Calabar, many officers being required to be at outstations and military posts with detachments, and only the actual staff at head-quarters. The barracks, which provide accommodation for 350 single and 50 married men, are close to the officers' mess and quarters, and have been maintained in good order. All offices, stores, &c. are also adjacent to the new quarters.

The Marine Department, which is a most important one in this Protectorate, and one which from local circumstances it is very difficult to maintain in a thorough state of efficiency, has during the year met all requirements and done its work satisfactorily, although (as in other departments) the work has had to be carried on very often with a shorthanded European staff. The floating craft in the department consist of the steam yacht "Ivy," and eight launches stationed in the various districts, and a large number of gigs, dingheys, and canoes. The marine workshops, which were established on a thorough working basis

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during the year, are at Old Calabar ; and a launch slip for minor repairs in the Central Division has been established at Degema. Excellent work has been done in the marine workshops, and all the launches have undergone a thorough overhaul and have been placed in an efficient condition. The importance and work of this department may be gauged from the fact that there are nine ports in the Protectorate where Customs and Post Office work has to be carried on by water, and about 3,000 miles of inland waterway to control.

The Printing Department, which has developed during the year, is deserving of some mention. All Government printing is efficiently done by it, and the work turned out reflects great credit on the organization and management. The work may be gauged from the fact that during the year 900 books, pamphlets, &c., were printed and bound in the printing office, and 223,599 departmental forms were ruled and printed.

The Public Works Department may now be regarded as established on an efficient basis, and the work has been fairly satisfactorily done during the year. It has been found possible to make good bricks in many parts of the territories, and it is hoped that in future years it will be possible to construct good permanent brick buildings at much less cost than in the past. Only one set of manual brickmaking plant has up to this been in use, but in future the local brickmaking industry will be efficiently developed, so that the great cost of importing bricks from England, not to mention the enormous loss in breakage, will be saved.

R. MOOR,

Commissioner and Consul-General.

TABLE D1.—Return shewing Value of Imports and Exports
and Duties collected.

TABLE E1.—Return shewing the Value of Imports from, and
Exports to United Kingdom, &c., &c.

TABLE F.—Return shewing the Number and Tonnage of
Vessels Entered and Cleared.

TABLE G.—Return of British Shipping at the Ports of the
Niger Coast Protectorate.

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TABLE D 1.—Return shewing Value of Imports and Exports, and April 1, 1898, to March 31, 1899, compared with the corresponding period

District.	Imports.			Exports.								
	1898-99.			1897-98.								
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.			
Old Calabar ...	228,640	17	4	197,416	4	2	218,969	10	6	200,667	2	7
Opobo ...	155,247	19	0	144,884	19	3	188,939	8	4	215,704	12	4
Bonny ...	31,224	12	8	43,866	1	3	31,462	4	5	45,835	1	1
New Calabar ...	93,402	15	6	98,230	8	8	134,340	7	3	124,634	14	6
Brass ...	23,398	4	4	21,703	6	3	21,952	6	3	21,399	16	8
Benin and Sapele	112,413	5	7	66,708	1	2	87,464	17	1	66,936	1	11
Warri ...	88,312	4	0	66,889	11	10	91,519	5	11	74,995	19	10
Total	£ 732,639	18	5	639,698	12	7	774,647	19	9	750,223	8	11

Duties collected, in each District of the Niger Coast Protectorate from of 1897-98 :—

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Duty Collected.		Total Trade.		District.
1898-99.	1897-98.	1898-99.	1897-98.	
£ s. d. 55,233 17 0	£ s. d. 48,931 14 4	£ s. d. 447,610 7 10	£ s. d. 338,083 6 9	Old Calabar.
36,100 17 11	32,006 17 2	344,187 7 4	360,589 11 7	Opobo.
4,327 16 4	7,670 9 8	62,686 17 1	89,751 2 4	Bonny.
21,404 11 1	19,086 15 11	227,743 2 9	222,865 3 2	New Calabar.
7,002 10 4	9,284 0 2	45,350 10 7	43,103 2 11	Brass.
18,721 1 2	14,150 14 1	199,878 2 8	133,644 3 1	Benin and Sapele.
17,962 1 9	14,411 5 7	179,831 9 11	141,885 11 8	Warri.
160,752 15 7	145,541 16 11	1,507,287 18 2	1,389,922 1 6	Total.

TABLE E 1.—Return shewing the Value of Imports from, and Exports to, the undermentioned Countries from April 1, 1898, to March 31, 1899, compared with the corresponding period of 1897-98 :—

Countries.	Imports.		Exports.		Total Trade.	
	1898-99.	1897-98.	1898-99.	1897-98.	1898-99.	1897-98.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
United Kingdom	583,067 4 5	504,802 11 7	500,367 15 8	497,589 1 9	1,083,435 0 1	1,002,391 13 4
France	—	12 16 0	21,487 3 10	12,467 5 0	21,487 3 10	12,480 1 0
Germany	51,330 16 8	49,206 14 4	251,003 8 3	231,490 9 1	302,334 4 11	280,697 3 5
Holland	77,260 14 7	60,986 6 5	—	6,660 15 0	77,260 14 7	67,647 1 5
Niger Territories	143 8 1	35 1 6	56 11 2	33 7 0	199 19 3	68 8 6
Other Countries; [... ..	20,837 14 8	24,655 2 9	1,733 0 10	1,982 11 1	22,570 15 6	26,637 13 10
Total	£ 732,639 18 5	639,698 12 7	774,647 19 9	750,223 8 11	1,507,287 18 2	1,389,922 1 6

TABLE F.—Return shewing the Number and Tonnage of Vessels Entered and Cleared in each District of the Niger Coast Protectorate from April 1, 1898, to March 31, 1899, and the corresponding period of 1897-98 :—

District.	1898-99.				1897-98.			
	Entered.		Cleared.		Entered.		Cleared.	
	Number.	Registered Tonnage.	Number.	Registered Tonnage.	Number.	Registered Tonnage.	Number.	Registered Tonnage.
Old Calabar	63	96,088	61	91,761	61	78,846	60	77,833
Opobo	49	77,427	48	75,412	44	68,525	44	68,525
Bonny	67	99,969	66	97,954	52	77,934	52	77,738
New Calabar	50	66,594	50	66,594	46	59,807	45	58,715
Brass	40	64,286	40	64,286	35	58,859	35	58,859
Benin and Sapele	52	71,380	52	71,380	47	71,333	47	71,333
Warri	58	84,168	58	84,168	57	73,648	57	72,887
Totals for all stations ...	379	553,912	375	551,555	342	488,952	340	485,810

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