

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
SAPELE SANITARY BOARD
FOR THE YEAR 1905

SIR RALPH MOORE when authorising the arrangements laid before him for sanitary work here gave it as his opinion that three years should show whether the scheme to be applied was of value or not. These three years have now been completed, and I am glad to say that the experiment of making a Local Sanitary Board has proved a success, and further to tell you that, as a consequence, a local board is about to be made at the town of Ko Ko, further down this river, where Europeans are now also residing.

The supreme obstacle to systematic and continuous work in tropical West Africa is the rapid changes that sometimes take place in the *personnel* which has to carry out the work, and it is for this reason that a board composed of traders and officials was constituted, because it was seen that a board would not go away, and further, that it would have a continuous knowledge of the policy to be pursued. You will appreciate how great the change amongst individuals sometimes is when I tell you that, during the three years the board has existed, there have been five, I might almost say six, different administrators holding the office of High Commissioner; four different officers have acted as Divisional Commissioner; four others have acted as District Commissioner of Sapele; four others as Assistant District Commissioner, and, moreover, there have been three District Medical Officer here; finally, with the exception of the doctor

who started the whole scheme and has recently returned here, there is not a single member of the present board who was also a member of the board when it started.

The triumph of the board is that, not only has it lived through all these changes and done good work, but also that the local changes, with possibly one exception, were not due to ill-health.

The board acts in four ways: firstly, by actually carrying out sanitary work, removing vegetation, surface water, &c. Secondly, as an object-lesson, inspiring bush-clearing, &c., even where a sanitary board does not exist. Thirdly, by interesting Europeans in sanitation, and as a corollary in quinine-taking as a preventive of malaria. Fourthly, in proving the value of a sanitary board it supports the arrangements for creating one at Ko Ko. During the time the board has been at work it has succeeded in dealing with almost the whole area of the Reservation, and although parts of this area are not finished, yet a considerable portion around the European dwellings has been completed, and the work done will in future require only to be kept up.

The board has tried many ways of employing labour, local boys, boys from the Benin Country and the Efor Country have been tried, also prison labour, and the conclusion that has been come to is that no matter what labour is employed, it is best to give out the work as piece-work, either to individuals or native contractors.

I have here certain figures gathered from the records of the Sapele District Medical Officers, and from them it will be seen that the healthiest time of the year here at Sapele used to be, and still is, the rainy season. This is the period of lowest maximum temperature. The figures expressed graphically show that the curve of the sick-list falls as the maximum temperature falls, and the rain curve rises. The sick-list curve is now altogether so near Zero that it is difficult to appreciate its undulations; but June, which is always one of the heavy rain months this year, had no European inhabitant sick during its entire length.

We are fortunate in having had no death among the *bonâ fide* European inhabitants of Sapele for more than three years; this, though a thing to be thankful for, must not be considered too much, for that death will occur, both at home and abroad, we all know only too well. In the Blue Book for 1904 a relatively large number of deaths is shown under the name of Sapele, but these deaths occurred among people living in out-lying parts of the district, and not among inhabitants of the reservation.

What these vital statistics mean put commercially is this, that for a cost of 9s. per month for each European of Sapele Reservation for the year 1905, his chances of being sick have been reduced from five and four-fifths times each year to one and two-fifths each year.

A new firm has commenced business on part of the land cleared and reclaimed by the board, and I have reason to believe that the rent paid by it will be given to the board to be expended in still further work. There is a lot still to be done; keeping down the vegetation is itself a labour like rolling a big stone up an endless hill.

During the incoming year, however, the question of the disposal of refuse or of the water-supply might with advantage be considered. In any event, I am confidently hoping that future members of the board will be keen to maintain the record, namely, that, in spite of an increasing European population, the amount of sickness decreases, and that they will cause the board to remain in the sound financial condition it has always enjoyed.

FRANZ STAHL,
President.

LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE SAPELE LOCAL SANITARY BOARD
DURING 1905.

Presidents:—

E. Beck, Esq., Agent, African Association, Ltd.
F. Stahl, Esq., Agent, Messrs. Bey & Zimmer.

Members:—

J. Davidson, Esq., Acting District Commissioner.
 R. M. McNeill, Esq., Agent, Messrs. A. Miller Bro.
 & Co.
 W. F. Bartlett, Esq., Agent, Messrs. Pinnock, Ltd.
 R. A. Roberts, Esq., District Commissioner.
 R. W. Bird, Esq., Acting District Commissioner.
 F. C. Garland, Esq., Agent, Messrs. Pinnock, Ltd.
 W. Bromley, Esq., Agent, Messrs. Pinnock Stores, Ltd.

Medical Officers:—

J. F. Stewart, Esq., M.B.M.S.
 G. F. Darker, Esq., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., London,
 D.P.H., Barrister-at-Law, Middle Temple.

*Balance Sheet of the Sapele Local Sanitary Board,
 December 31st, 1906*

Dr.

| | £ | s. | d. | £ | s. | d. |
|---|----|----|----|-----|----|----|
| To balance on hand | 26 | 12 | 3 | | | |
| „ Special Government Grant | 75 | 0 | 0 | | | |
| „ Rates on compounds paid | 67 | 10 | 0 | | | |
| „ Rates due | 22 | 10 | 0 | | | |
| „ Grant—part of fine paid by Messrs. Pin- nock, Ltd., for taking up cleared ground | 25 | 0 | 0 | | | |
| | | | | 216 | 12 | 3 |

Cr.

| | £ | s. | d. | £ | s. | d. |
|--|----|----|----|-----|----|----|
| By Bush | 14 | 18 | 0 | | | |
| „ Swamp clearing and bush | 48 | 15 | 0 | | | |
| „ River front and drain clearing | 35 | 0 | 0 | | | |
| „ Sobo Gang | 1 | 10 | 0 | | | |
| „ Eddy—monthly | 34 | 15 | 0 | | | |
| „ Balance on hand | 81 | 14 | 3 | | | |
| | | | | 216 | 12 | 3 |

Table showing number of European Residents under Medical Treatment

| 1st. Before the Board. | | | | | | 2nd. After the Board. | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|-------------|-----------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| Year. | Jan. | Feb. | Mar. | Apr. | May | June | July | Aug. | Sept. | Oct. | Nov. | Dec. |
| 1st { 1900 1901 1902 | 8 12 11 | 8 9 12 | 6 10 12 | 6 4 8 | 5 5 5 | 3 6 4 | 4 4 4 | 8 10 4 | 9 10 7 | 5 12 5 | 8 9 9 | 9 10 6 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2nd { 1903 1904 1905 | 7 5 3 | 9 3 4 | 8 3 1 | 10 2 4 | 8 3 4 | 12 3 0 | 6 2 3 | 5 2 1 | 6 3 3 | 4 5 1 | 5 3 4 | 3 4 3 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Table showing Average European Population for Years 1900—1905 and Actual Number of Deaths

| | Population. | Deaths. |
|----------------------------|----------------|-------------|
| 1st { 1900 1901 1902 | 14 15 17 | 2 1 2 |
| | | |
| | | |
| 2nd { 1903 1904 1905 | 19 23 25 | 0 0 0 |
| | | |
| | | |

Meteorological Tables

RAIN FALL.

| Year. | January. | February. | March. | April. | May. | June. | July. | August. | Sept. | October. | Nov. | Dec. |
|-------|----------|-----------|--------|--------|-------|-------|-------|---------|-------|----------|------|------|
| 1902 | 0 | 0 | 1'29 | 4'42 | 9'77 | 19'20 | 17'42 | 13'15 | 7'90 | 14'50 | 1'50 | 0 |
| 1903 | 0 | 0 | 6'13 | 9'04 | 8'04 | 18'44 | 29'75 | 9'17 | 13'82 | 8'18 | 3'65 | 0'35 |
| 1904 | 0'12 | 0'31 | 5'39 | 4'6 | 8'24 | 14'28 | 15'7 | 5'11 | 23'82 | 15'11 | 1'01 | 0 |
| 1905 | 1'12 | 1'06 | 6'14 | 6'12 | 12'53 | 19'24 | 25'54 | 8'04 | 16'01 | 11'32 | 8'19 | 0'92 |

SHADE TEMPERATURE. MEAN MAXIMUM, F.

| Year. | January. | February. | March. | April. | May. | June. | July. | August. | Sept. | October. | Nov. | Dec. |
|-------|----------|-----------|--------|--------|------|-------|-------|---------|-------|----------|------|------|
| 1902 | 87'7 | 90'0 | 91'0 | 90'6 | 89'2 | 84'9 | 79'5 | 79'5 | 81'5 | 83'9 | 88'7 | 86'9 |
| 1903 | 87'6 | 89'7 | 91'3 | 89'7 | 87'8 | 83'5 | 80'5 | 81'3 | 82'0 | 86'8 | 90'6 | 87'0 |
| 1904 | 86'2 | 87'7 | 87'9 | 88'2 | 86'5 | 85'0 | 79'6 | 80'0 | 81'4 | 84'4 | 88'7 | 85'8 |
| 1905 | 86'1 | 90'3 | 89'9 | 90'3 | 87'9 | 84'8 | 81'1 | 81'8 | 84'0 | 86'1 | 88'6 | 88'8 |

SHADE TEMPERATURE. MEAN MINIMUM, F.

| Year. | January. | February. | March. | April. | May. | June. | July. | August. | Sept. | October. | Nov. | Dec. |
|-------|----------|-----------|--------|--------|------|-------|-------|---------|-------|----------|------|------|
| 1902 | 72'5 | 70'1 | 71'6 | 72'9 | 71'2 | 73'7 | 73'2 | 72'6 | 73'7 | 74'5 | 75'3 | 71'0 |
| 1903 | 72'0 | 69'2 | 75'0 | 73'9 | 74'1 | 72'6 | 72'7 | 72'4 | 72'0 | 72'8 | 73'5 | 74'6 |
| 1904 | 70'6 | 72'4 | 75'6 | 75'0 | 74'6 | 75'3 | 73'5 | 73'3 | 74'0 | 74'8 | 78'4 | 72'2 |
| 1905 | 72'2 | 70'4 | 72'8 | 73'0 | 72'4 | 71'7 | 71'4 | 71'4 | 72'7 | 71'6 | 72'1 | 70'4 |