

NAURU AND OCEAN ISLANDS PHOSPHATE.

* REPORT OF A. F. ELLIS, C.M.G., NEW ZEALAND COMMISSIONER, BRITISH PHOSPHATE COMMISSION.

PARTICULARS are supplied herewith regarding the thirteenth year of operations at Nauru and Ocean Islands since the industry came under Government ownership. The year ended on 30th June, 1933, and the shipments compare with the two previous years as follows:—

	1930-31.	1931-32.	1932-33.
	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.
Nauru	240,855	289,340	436,100
Ocean	145,122	142,200	224,200
	<u>385,977</u>	<u>431,540</u>	<u>660,300</u>

An increase of 228,760 tons on the previous year will be noted, and the figures constitute a record year's work, the previous highest being 593,340 tons shipped in 1926-27, a difference of 66,960 tons.

Distribution of the output was as follows: Australia, 438,685 tons; New Zealand, 177,915 tons; other countries, 43,700 tons. The proportion of output coming to New Zealand is 26.95 per cent., compared with 33.89 per cent. in 1931-32, and 31.85 per cent. in 1930-31.

Importations of phosphate to New Zealand, compared with the two previous years, are as follows:—

	1930-31.	1931-32.	1932-33.
	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.
Nauru-Ocean	112,873	163,250	184,388
Outside	22,935	20,437	13,963
	<u>135,808</u>	<u>183,687</u>	<u>198,351</u>

It may be noted, however, that the higher figures for 1932-33 do not in this case mean a higher consumption of superphosphate, but that the stocks of raw phosphate held by the manufacturers were materially built up, a useful provision against bad-weather risks at the islands.

During the year under review, fine weather mostly prevailed, and conditions were favourable as regards health, labour, &c.

An important development was brought into operation during the year in the speeding-up of the cantilever at Nauru, with the result that on several occasions steamers arriving in the early morning loaded their cargoes of up to 8,300 tons during daylight hours of the same day. This quick work favourably affects the freight rate, and minimizes the risk entailed by having vessels moored close inshore in an open roadstead. The system of shipping at Ocean Island has also been speeded up satisfactorily, and other developments in connection with the mining, drying, and transport operations at both islands are proving very satisfactory as they come into operation.

It is anticipated that with these various developments, Nauru and Ocean Islands will be in a much stronger position for dealing with an increased demand from New Zealand and Australia as it eventuates.