

NAURU AND OCEAN ISLANDS PHOSPHATE.

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THE ninth year of operations at Nauru and Ocean Islands under Government ownership terminated on 30th June, 1929, with the following results as regards phosphate shipments, compared with the previous year :—

					Eighth Year (1927-28). Tons.	Ninth Year (1928-29). Tons.
Nauru	..	..	..	..	310,990	342,770
Ocean	..	..	..	..	190,925	233,820
					501,915	576,590

Bill-of-lading figures are taken in each case. An increase of 74,675 tons in quantity shipped will be noted, but falling short of our previous highest year (seventh year) by 16,750 tons. The latter year was one when particularly favourable conditions were experienced at the islands as regards weather, freedom from epidemics of sickness, labour difficulties, &c. The year just ended was what may be called a normal year, in that bad weather was experienced during the months when it is due, and the usual difficulties with shipping were encountered, though we were fortunate in not having any of the moorings carried away. When the fine season started rapid progress was made, and in May a record month's work was established, viz., Nauru, 44,500 tons; Ocean, 23,825 tons; total, 68,325 tons. The previous best month for Nauru was 41,931 tons, shipped in June, 1928.

As regards phosphate dried and stored ready for shipment, the ninth year constitutes a record, the figures for the last three years being as follows :—

					Seventh Year. Tons.	Eighth Year. Tons.	Ninth Year. Tons.
Nauru	..	..	..	..	326,695	332,230	346,764
Ocean	..	..	..	..	255,362	195,900	251,749
					582,057	528,130	598,513

In this connection it may be noted that under present conditions Ocean Island has no chance of an increased output owing to the phosphate-workings becoming more restricted each year through the difficulties in acquiring further lands. There is, however, reason to think the matter will be settled within a few months.

Importations of Nauru/Ocean phosphate and phosphate from outside sources of supply for the last three years are as follows :—

					Seventh Year. Tons.	Eighth Year. Tons.	Ninth Year. Tons.
Nauru/Ocean	..	..	..	..	139,535	136,718	138,053
Outside	..	..	..	..	10,415	42,946	29,288
					149,950	179,664	167,341

With regard to the percentage of Nauru/Ocean output coming to New Zealand, figures for the last three years are as follows: Seventh year, 21.95 per cent.; eighth year, 24.76 per cent.; ninth year, 24.66 per cent. We could have supplied a further cargo this year, but it was not convenient for the manufacturers to take it, owing to their storage-bins being practically full, and it was accordingly diverted to Australia.

A statement follows giving particulars of shipments of Nauru and Ocean Islands phosphate during 1928-29, together with the countries of destination.

Shipments of Nauru and Ocean Island Phosphates, 1st July, 1928, to 30th June, 1929.

				Totals.		Australia.		New Zealand.	
				Tons.	Per Cent.	Tons.	Per Cent.	Tons.	Per Cent.
<i>Nauru.</i>									
July-December, 1928	..	..	..	166,792	100	117,170	70.25	49,622	29.75
January-June, 1929	..	..	..	175,978	100	136,950	77.82	39,028	22.18
Full year	..	..	..	342,770	100	254,120	74.14	88,650	25.86
<i>Ocean Island.</i>									
July-December, 1928	..	..	..	127,460	100	97,315	76.35	30,145	23.65
January-June, 1929	..	..	..	106,360	100	82,960	78.00	23,400	22.00
Full year	..	..	..	233,820	100	180,275	77.10	53,545	22.90
<i>Nauru and Ocean Islands.</i>									
July-December, 1928	..	..	..	294,252	100	214,485	72.89	79,767	27.11
January-June, 1929	..	..	..	282,338	100	219,910	77.89	62,428	22.11
Full year	..	..	..	576,590	100	434,395	75.34	142,195	24.66

NOTE.—Eighth year shipments: Australia, 377,645 tons = 75.24 per cent.; New Zealand, 124,270 tons = 24.76 per cent.