

Population.

The population of the whole of Western Samoa, according to the census taken after the influenza epidemic at the end of 1918, was 30,636. In that year the influenza epidemic carried off about eight thousand of the population, and affected the development and trade of the island enormously. Prior to this the population had steadily grown from 32,815 in 1902 to 38,302 on the 30th September, 1918, showing an increase of 5,487 in sixteen years.

If sufficient care is taken in the judicious selection of doctors thoroughly conversant with the proper treatment of tropical diseases the population will probably increase in the future. From a trade aspect this is a most important point, for on the rise or fall of the Native population depends the increase or decrease of trade.

In addition to the Samoan population of 30,636 there are—Indentured labourers, 1,166; whites and half-castes, 1,660: making a total population of 33,462.

The Samoans are an attractive race: the men are tall and well developed, the women comely in feature and handsome in figure. Tattooing is universally practised.

These people know nothing of poverty. Their villages are remarkably clean and well kept, and, fortunately, they have not adopted the European style of houses. The Native house, or *fale*, is circular in shape; the floor, raised about 18 in. above the level of the ground, is covered with broken coral or gravel, on which mats made from pandanus-leaves are laid. Having no outside walls, the house is entirely open, matting blinds being dropped for protection against the weather as required. Samoans use little or no furniture: they eat and sleep on the floor.

The women dress attractively in loose bright-coloured cotton dresses reaching to the ankles. They are good needlewomen, and often embroider their garments very tastefully. The men have not adopted to any great extent European style of clothes, most of them wearing loin-cloths or lavalavas, which reach from the waist to the knees; the material may be of drill or cashmere according to the occasion. Women also wear lavalavas as well as dresses. Neither sex wears boots or shoes to any great extent, although we understand there is a demand for a cheap rubber-soled shoe. Apart from the women's dresses and adornments, such as combs, cheap necklaces, &c., and the men's lavalavas, there is little demand for clothing, except perhaps a cheap undershirt or singlet.

They are a religious people, and have at least one church in a village; sometimes they have as many as three. They contribute generously to church funds, and, we understand, several thousands of pounds are annually sent out of the islands to assist in missionary work in various parts of the world.

They are proud of their long boats—*fautassi*—all the villages having one or more capable of carrying up to seventy people. The *fautassi*, which is locally built of imported timber (kauri is preferred), is used for taking the villagers on their periodic visits to neighbouring settlements, and for giving a welcome to visitors arriving at the villages by steamer or launch. Although the Native fishermen are expert in the use of nets, lines, and spears, it is difficult for white residents in Apia, the chief town in Upolu, to purchase fish at moderate prices.

Cricket is the national game, but it is not practised with the orthodox bat or by a team of eleven a side. A round bat is used, and villages, including women, play against one another, having sides of any number up to two hundred each. So much did the playing of the game interfere with the ordinary work of the people, and such a burden, as far as food was concerned, did the opposing team inflict on their hosts—a game might last for a week—that a Proclamation was issued making the playing of cricket illegal except on Saturday and Wednesday afternoons.

As has been mentioned, the total area of land in the two important islands is—Upolu, 275,000 acres; and Savaii, 450,000 acres. Of these areas the following is the position:—

	Upolu. Acres.	Savaii. Acres.
Land alienated	88,500	50,000
Still in the hands of the Natives	186,500	400,000