

The details of the alienated lands are as follow :—

	Upolu. Acres.	Savaii. Acres.
D.H. & P.G.	56,000	20,000
Other Germans	16,000	18,000
British and neutral subjects	16,500	12,500

Areas under cultivation, other than Native : D.H. & P.G., 9,000 acres ; others, 9,386 acres.

No statistics are available showing the total Native lands under cultivation, but, inasmuch as the Natives are responsible for three-quarters of the total exports, it may be safe to assume that at least 100,000 acres are under a semblance of cultivation.

Assuming the total area fully and partially improved to be 118,000 acres, there is, apart altogether from waste land, enormous scope for future development.

Character of the Land.

Taken as a whole, the land is of a rich volcanic character, but, being stony, it is generally unploughable. It is estimated by Mr. Macdonald, Surveyor and Commissioner of Lands and Works, that 86,000 acres of Native lands might safely be leased or purchased by the Administration or by white settlers, and that the Natives would then still possess more land than they could handle. He estimates the value of first-class land at £5 10s. per acre, and second-class from £2 to £4 per acre. Cocoa and coconut require first-class land, while rubber-trees grow well on second-class land. This estimate is given on the assumption that there would be no difficulty in connection with the supply of imported labour. Without labour the lands are worthless for European occupation.

Mr. Macdonald also advocates the individualization of all Native titles ; if this were done he is of opinion that there would be more inducement for owners to work and develop their land.

Deutsche Handels und Plantagen Gesellschaft.

All the lands held by the above old-established company, together with the smaller German plantations, are being taken over by the New Zealand Government, the value of which will be duly assessed, and such assessment will be credited to New Zealand's proportion of the war debt against Germany.

The lands held by the above company—commonly known as the D.H. & P.G.—which are cleared and planted in coconut-palms, are estimated by various witnesses to be worth from £40 to £100 per acre. They are being managed by the New Zealand Government officials. What may be ultimately done with them is a matter for the Government to decide, but various suggestions have been made for their ultimate disposal. One, which seems to have caught the imagination of a section of the community, is that they should be subdivided into suitable areas of from 200 to 500 acres and sold to returned soldiers. In passing, we would point out that the capital value of these developed lands would run into very large figures, and few returned soldiers would be financially strong enough to undertake the purchase of, say, 200 acres without being assisted financially to a much greater degree than are soldiers similarly situated in New Zealand. Without adequate provision being made for imported labour the returned soldier would inevitably face loss and disappointment. Even if the areas were cut into smaller sections—say, of 50 acres—he would require a certain amount of labour, and his living-expenses would be high. We think that with an equal capital expenditure he would, with less exertion, have a much better chance of making both ends meet in New Zealand, where climatic and other conditions are infinitely better.

These plantations can be much more cheaply managed, per acre, in large holdings than in small ones, and, although the easiest way out of the difficulty would be to sell them to the highest bidder as soon as possible, it might be advisable, for many reasons, for the New Zealand Government to hold and develop them for a few years.

The trading-stations in connection with the German company were closed down shortly after the firm was put into liquidation in 1916, and as a consequence the