

candidate is found suitable he is posted to a vacancy in the messenger service. After a period of probation—usually about a year—on being satisfied as to his reliability, character, and intelligence, he is appointed to the regular police as vacancies occur. This system has worked satisfactorily in the past—i.e., during the Military Administration and during the German Administration.

“*Messenger Service.*—The present strength is eleven. Six are despatched every Tuesday to carry mail-matter all over Upolu; the remaining five deliver mail-matter and Court processes in Apia district. The six messengers despatched to the country usually return by Saturday, and they report for duty the following Monday. Those doing Apia district one week take the country mail the following week, and so on alternate weeks. The question of effecting some improvement in the messenger service is under consideration.

“*Rural Police.*—In Upolu there are some fifty-nine and Savaii some forty-eight leoleos who receive a retaining fee of £7 per year. Their duties are very simple and nominal. On the occasion of the Faamasino holding Court they are in attendance in uniform, and go messages, &c. They have no power of arrest, and are really just messengers for the local official. They are clothed in a simple uniform of khaki of a similar kind to that worn by the regular Native police. Their annual cost is—wages, £749; clothing, £200. They are under the control of the Native Department.

“The further regulation of the rural police, and the question as to utilizing them as an adjunct to the regular police, is being looked into.”

Reporting for the period ending 1st September, the Commissioner says:—

“*Police Efficiency.*—Police efficiency is to be judged by (a) prevention of crime, (b) low percentage of undetected offences, (c) public tranquility. As this is not a community of modern development the police here may not be always to blame for an absence of public tranquility; but if there is a prevalence of crime, and particularly if there is an undue percentage of undetected offences, the police are likely to be judged inefficient.

“Attached is a return of crime for twenty months (1st January, 1920, to 31st August, 1921), showing detected and undetected offences which have come to the knowledge of the police. Many of the offences of a minor nature committed by Natives in their own villages are dealt with by the local Native officials. The Resident Commissioners at Aleipata and Savaii have jurisdiction to fine up to £10 and to imprison for a period not exceeding three months. Offences dealt with by them and by the Native Faamasinos are not included in this return. The commonest offences are theft (202), assault (93), housebreaking and shopbreaking (37), breaches of peace (55). Of serious crimes there are—attempted murder (8 persons were tried, 7 convicted and 1 acquitted); conspiracy to murder (1 acquitted); threatening to kill (3); manslaughter (2).

“A corrupting tendency to ‘fabricate’ evidence and otherwise interfere with the course of justice in the Courts evinced itself in some criminal cases which came before the Court here early in the present year. Three Native offenders were brought to trial, convicted, and sentenced. The effect of these convictions has been salutary.

“Gaming offences (26) were by Chinese gamblers.

“In 1920 twenty youths, principally half-castes, were before the Court for consuming liquor, and four persons were convicted for supplying them. In 1921 there has not been a single further case.

“Opium offences—smoking, possessing, or smuggling—total thirty-nine. The offenders were almost entirely Chinese.

“In May last the police discovered the locality of three illicit stills for the manufacture of alcohol. Assisted by the Customs Department the stills were seized and three plantation-managers were each fined £100. This fine, and fear of even more severe punishment, has had a discouraging effect on any who may be similarly inclined.

“The return of offences shows the percentage of detected offences to undetected to be 93·8 per cent., which appears to compare favourably with New Zealand—95·29 in 1917 and 94·62 in 1918; but the favourable percentage here is to some extent discounted by the incomplete records kept up to the end of 1920. Estimating the population of Upolu at 21,000, the percentage of offences (exclusive of by-law and such breaches) is 3·4. The New Zealand percentage in 1917 was 1·89, and in 1918 1·64. The percentage of 3·4 for Samoa, however, is not an accurate indication of the amount of crime here, for, as already mentioned, not only does the annexed return not include offences dealt with by the Resident Commissioners at Savaii and Aleipata, and by the Native Judges, but there is reason to believe a number of offences, such as assaults, thefts, carnal knowledge, and rape, committed in the remoter villages which should be reported to the police are quietly adjusted by conference and not reported to the police at all. It is not improbable the percentage of offences to population is over 4 per cent. As an illustration of the improved police work being done by this small and newly formed service, it is worthy of note that, although the total of offences reported for the eight months of the current year exceed the twelve months of last year by twelve, an increase of twenty-one offenders have been prosecuted and thirty-four more convictions obtained.

“*Police Problems.*—The principal difficulties the police have to meet have been already touched upon—opium and liquor smuggling, breaking into shops and stores, gambling and opium-smoking by Chinese, and the illicit distillation of alcohol. The indentured coolie labourer is responsible for the bulk of the opium offences and gambling, and also to a large extent for the housebreaking offences. The great and ever-present bar to efficient police work is the language problem; working through interpreters is always more or less unsatisfactory.

“Opium and other smuggling is receiving special attention. The Police and Customs Departments are working in close association. This class of offence appears to be diminishing. To deal with Chinese offenders there is pressing need for two trained Chinese police. Steps are being taken to procure, if possible, two from Hong Kong.

“In connection with illicit distillation, most of the German planters had stills, and, prior to 1914, manufactured cocoa, pineapple, and other spirit for their own consumption. The imposition of total prohibition created a demand for liquor and induced manufacture. The substantial fines imposed has cooled the ardour of some who were inclined to risk detection for the profit to be made. At present