

VITAL STATISTICS (SAMOAN).

Population.

The census taken on the night of the 31st December, 1925—1st January, 1926, showed the Native population of Western Samoa to be 36,688, of which number 18,641 were males and 18,047 females. The movement of population during the year is shown below:—

NATIVE POPULATION, WESTERN SAMOA.

	Males.	Females.	Total.
At census of 31/12/25--1/1/26	18,641	18,047	36,688
Live births during 1926	1,056	909	1,965
Arrivals from overseas	427	300	727
Deaths during 1926	376	347	723
Departures for overseas	365	289	654
Population at 31st December, 1926 (estimated)	19,383	18,620	38,003
Natural increase	680	562	1,242
Excess of arrivals over departures	62	11	73
Total increase in population	742	573	1,315

The percentage increase in population during 1926 was 3·58 as compared with 3·26 in 1925 and 3·35 in 1924.

The arrivals from and departures for overseas tend to balance over a period of years. There is considerable traffic between Western Samoa and American Samoa, and to a lesser extent between Western Samoa and Fiji and Tonga, but there is no definite immigration or emigration on the part of Samoans.

Births.

The births of 1,965 living children were registered during 1926, giving the birth-rate per thousand of mid-year population of 52·62. For 1925 and 1924 the figures were 2,033 and 1,901, and the birth-rates 56·30 and 55·38 respectively.

BIRTHS OF SAMOANS, WESTERN SAMOA, 1926.

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Upolu	680	620	1,300
Savai'i	376	289	665
Total, Western Samoa	1,056	909	1,965

BIRTHS BY MONTHS, 1926.

	Jan.	Feb.	March.	April.	May.	June.	July.	August.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Total.
Males ..	86	69	97	77	96	90	108	103	104	87	68	71	1,056
Females ..	74	65	99	74	70	80	89	80	84	79	57	58	909
Total ..	160	134	196	151	166	170	197	183	188	166	125	129	1,965

Still-births, which are not included either as births or deaths in the various numbers and rates given in this report, increased from 37 in 1925 to 48 in 1926. The still-birth rate per 100 live births for the past four years has been: 1923, 1·23; 1924, 1·68; 1925, 1·82; and 1926, 2·44. The figure for 1923 is possibly too low, this being the first year in which the new system of registration of births and deaths came into force, and there may possibly have been doubt in the minds of Native officials as to recording them. The marked rise in 1926 may or may not have been due to the long dry spell in 1925 and the storm of the 1st January, 1926, both of which caused a shortage of Native food-supplies, and thus inevitably led to much extra work on the part of the women on the plantations and in fishing. The shortage of food was most acute during the first quarter of the year, and it is interesting to note in connection therewith that there was a decrease in the number of births in the fourth quarter.

Deaths.

The number of deaths registered during the year was 723, giving a death-rate per one thousand of mid-year population of 19·36. For 1925 and 1924 the deaths numbered 857 and 766, and the death-rates were 23·75 and 22·29 respectively. The death-rate for 1926 was the lowest on record, and the reduction is chiefly if not solely due to saving of child-life. This matter is more fully dealt with under "Child Welfare."

DEATHS OF SAMOANS, WESTERN SAMOA, 1926.

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Upolu	243	222	465
Savai'i	133	125	258
Totals, Western Samoa	376	347	723