

XXI.—FORESTS AND AGRICULTURE.

FORESTS.

The mountainous interior, comprising by far the greater portion of the area of both principal islands, is completely covered with virgin native forest. The Territory has been visited on occasion by representatives of milling interests, who have formed the opinion that the indigenous forest has insufficient millable trees to the acre to be profitable, whilst afforestation with exotic species is rather discouraged by the steep and ravine-cleft nature of the country.

On European plantations teak is planted in a small way, but quite successfully, for general utility.

AGRICULTURE.

The circumstances of the Territory do not warrant the maintenance of a separate Administration Department of Agriculture, but there is inspection of all produce exported.

Copra is the staple product of the Territory; it is produced approximately 75 per cent. by Natives, and the output of the New Zealand Reparation Estates accounts for roughly two-thirds of the balance. Exports for the three years 1932–34 averaged 10,451 tons. The reduction in the quantities exported during 1934–35 is due mainly to the low price prevailing during that period, but is partly accounted for by a considerable carry-over of stocks in store. There is considerable fluctuation in local stocks held between shipments, and for this reason records are kept of Native production as distinct from export, as indicated in the following :—

Year.						Exported.	Native Production.
						Tons.	Tons.
1932	..	..	..	..	..	10,879	11,103
1933 ..	..	..	..	..	..	11,526	8,271
1934 ..	..	..	..	..	..	8,948	7,907

Cocoa is produced in Western Samoa primarily by Europeans, and is of very high quality, being a standardized hybrid of *Criollo* and *Forastero*, but with the *Criollo* predominating, and in a fairly recent report of the Imperial Economic Conference on Cocoa, which classified the world's production into three broad divisions as to quality, Samoan was included in the finest.

Export during the three years 1932–34 averaged 917 tons, an increase over the figures shown in the last report.

Bananas have again proved to be of great assistance to the Territory. During the calendar year 1934 the total number of cases shipped was a record, the figure being 96,225 cases, and an amount of over £21,000 was paid to the growers. Both Europeans and Natives participate in the scheme, the number of shippers being approximately three hundred, of whom not more than ten as a rule ship one hundred cases or more on each occasion. The quotas allotted to each producer range from two hundred cases to ten cases per shipment, according to the capacity of his plantation.

Other particulars of the banana-export scheme are given in the report on Trade (Chapter IX).

Rubber (*Hevea Braziliensis*) is planted to some extent, and export of a good-quality smoked sheet reached 167 tons in 1928. Owing to the depressed state of the market, however, production ceased entirely in 1933, and no rubber was shipped from the Territory either in that year or 1934. With a revival in prices attention is once more being directed to the product, and the first shipment since 1932 was made recently; particulars will appear in the next annual report.

In 1931 the European planters formed themselves into a Planters' Association, which assists the Administration considerably in all questions concerning products of the Territory.

Following on the visit to the Territory of Mr. H. W. Simmonds, Entomologist to the Fijian Government, referred to in last year's report, steps have been taken to control some of the most important pests attacking plant life in the Territory.

The Administration's efforts up to the present to combat the rhinoceros beetle by scientific methods have met with little success, though the scientific basis of the problem has been thoroughly explored. Provision has been made for a further attack on the problem for the forthcoming year.

Colonies of the Lantana Bug, *Telonomia lantanae*, were introduced from Fiji, and did good work in destroying the Lantana plant in the area in which they were released.

A colony of the dung-burying beetle, *Copris incertus*, which is useful in cultivating the ground and destroying the breeding-places of flies was imported, and is now well established.

The leaf-mining beetle, *Promecotheca reichei*, which does great damage to the leaves of the coconut, received attention, and a parasite, *Pelurotropis parvulus*, was received from Fiji and liberated in Vailele Plantation. Definite results have not as yet been ascertained.

The banana weevil, which damages bananas, has a parasite, the *Plaesus javanus beetle*, and efforts are being made to import a large colony from Java.

A parasite, *Coccophagus gurneyi*, of the mealy bug, which attacks cocoa was received from New Zealand, and good results have been obtained.

Other recommendations made by Mr. Simmonds are now being considered, and will be applied when practicable.

XXII.—MINES.

There are no mines or any known mineral deposits of value in the Territory.