

I.—INTRODUCTORY.

In the preparation of this report due attention has been paid to the various points raised by the Permanent Mandates Commission during the examination in its twenty-eighth session of the report for 1934-35. Information required by members has been indexed, and particulars are shown in the following table :—

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Western Samoa is comprised of two large islands, Upolu and Savai'i, and the islets of Apolima, Manono, Fanuatapu, Namua, Nu'utele, Nu'ulua, and Nu'usafe'e. The geographical boundaries are latitudes 13 degrees and 15 degrees south, and longitudes 171 degrees and 173 degrees west.

Upolu and Savai'i are each forty-seven miles long and separated by Apolima Strait, eight miles wide, in the centre of which is situated Apolima Islet; the remainder of the islets are found within the fringing reef surrounding Upolu.

The islands of the Group, which cover an area of 1,133 square miles, are mountainous in character, rising to elevations of 6,094 ft. in Savai'i and 3,608 ft. in Upolu. As a result the great majority of Natives live in coast villages, there being eleven inland villages only out of a total of 192 in the whole Territory.

The climate is mild and equable, the average temperature during the last ten years being 79·4 degrees, and the average rainfall for the same period 120·75 in. per annum. At the 31st March, 1936, the Native population was 51,094, and the non-Native population 3,639.

II. STATUS OF THE TERRITORY.

The Territory is administered pursuant to a mandate conferred upon His Britannic Majesty, to be exercised on his behalf by the Government of the Dominion of New Zealand, and confirmed by the Council of the League of Nations on the 17th December, 1920.

III.—STATUS OF THE POPULATION.

The Natives of Western Samoa are described in documents of travel as "British protected persons, Natives of the Mandated Territory of Western Samoa."

Pursuant to a resolution adopted by the Council of the League of Nations on the 23rd April, 1923, provision for individual inhabitants of the Territory voluntarily to obtain British naturalization was enacted. These provisions are now contained in the British Nationality and Status of Aliens (in New Zealand) Act, 1928.

Since 1923, certificates of naturalization have been granted to sixteen Native Samoans and to fourteen others.

The Samoan Status Ordinance (No. 1 of 1934), which came into force on 1st April, 1935, became necessary principally because by virtue of the Samoa Act all legitimate descendants of European fathers remain Europeans in law *ad infinitum*, irrespective of the number of generations of admixture with Samoan blood. Thus in successive generations many persons under this heading become practically Samoans in everything save legal status, and the new Ordinance was designed to enable them to obtain the benefits of legal status as Samoans, including their rights in Native lands, should they so desire. The Ordinance was received with nothing but commendation; though promoted by the Administration, it was moved through the Legislative Council at his own request by an elected member who is himself of part Samoan blood. There has been no opposition from pure-blooded Samoans; their rights are protected by the provision in the Ordinance whereby the Secretary of Native Affairs is a party to all proceedings. His duty is to oppose any application which may be contrary to the interests of the Samoan family or village concerned, though in the majority of cases the applicant is welcomed as a useful member.