

*January, 1936.*—A cyclone to the north of Samoa moved southwards and was associated with strong westerly winds in Apia on the 16th. Another cyclone occurred near Vila on the 28th and moved away towards the south-south-east.

*February, 1936.*—Early in February a depression occurred to the north-west of Samoa and moved towards Tonga.

## XX.—LAND TENURE.

Under the Samoa Act, 1921, all land is legally—

- (a) Crown land, vested in the Crown free from Native title or any estate in fee-simple, of which there are (including New Zealand Reparation Estates) 103,630 acres ; or
  - (b) European land, being land held from the Crown for an estate in fee-simple, of which there are 40,000 acres ; or
  - (c) Native land, being land vested in the Crown but held by Samoans by Native title, and not by grant from the Crown, of which there are 581,370 acres.
- “Native title” means title to land in accordance with the customs and usages of the Samoan race.

Titles to Crown land, European land, and European interests in Native land (leases) are registered by the Administration. Titles to Native land, when in dispute, are adjudicated upon by the Land and Titles Commission, referred to in Chapter X of this report, and determined in accordance with the customs and usages of the Samoan race.

Usurious contracts with Natives are unenforceable at law, and Native land is incapable of being taken in execution for the payments of the debts of a Samoan on his decease or insolvency.

Generally, alienation of Native land is prohibited, save an alienation or disposition in favour of the Crown. Provision has been made for sale of Native land in the Apia town area, and His Majesty may grant a lease of Native land for a period not exceeding forty years, but in each instance the grant is made only if the Administration is satisfied that the transaction is in accordance with the desires and in the interests of the Native owners and in conformity with the public interests.

Although large areas in the interior of each of the two main islands are incapable of cultivation, there is more than ample Native land available for all requirements of the indigenous population.

## 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 1933–35 averaged 10,992 tons. 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.<br>Tons. | Native Production.<br>Tons. |
|-------|----|----|----|----|----|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1933  | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 11,526             | 8,271                       |
| 1934  | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 8,948              | 7,907                       |
| 1935  | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 12,501             | 10,500                      |

*Cocoa* is produced in Western Samoa principally by Europeans, and is of very high quality, being a standardized hybrid of *Criollo* and *Forastero*, but with the *Criollo* predominating. Samoan cocoa has been classified by the Imperial Economic Conference on Cocoa as being amongst the world's finest in point of quality, and is used mainly for blending.

Export during the three years 1933–35 averaged 834 tons per annum, the decrease from the figures shown in last year's report being due to the comparatively small quantity, 576 tons, exported in 1935.

*Bananas* continue to be of considerable assistance to the Territory, and a record number of 109,000 cases was shipped during the calendar year 1935. Further information regarding this product will be found 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 low prices production ceased entirely in 1933, and no rubber was shipped in that or the succeeding year. In 1935, however, production was recommenced, and a total of 25 tons was shipped from the Territory.