

I.—INTRODUCTORY.

Inquiries concerning points in the 1935–36 report, made by members of the Permanent Mandates Commission during the thirtieth session, are answered in the succeeding pages, reference to such being given in the following index :—

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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 79·3 degrees, and the average rainfall for the same period 120·90 in. per annum. At the 31st March, 1937, the Native population was 52,602 and the non-Native population 3,662.

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.

A reprint of the mandate is included in a " Book of Laws " at present being prepared in the vernacular for distribution throughout the Territory.

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 fifteen Native Samoans and to fifteen Europeans.

In the previous reports sixteen Samoans were stated to have been granted certificates of naturalization, but one has failed to complete the necessary requirements and the certificate has been withdrawn.

Applications for Samoan status under the Samoan Status Ordinance, 1934, were made by two part-Europeans in the period under review. These involved nine persons, including children, and, together with four other applications, await hearing by the Chief Judge.

IV.—INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS.

(a) INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS.

The General International Conventions that have been applied to Western Samoa were described in the report for 1931–32 (page 24). In addition, the International Load-line Convention, signed at London on the 5th July, 1930, which came into force on the 1st July, 1936, has been applied to Western Samoa.

A list of Bi-lateral Agreements extended to the Territory was published in the minutes of the twenty-second session of the Permanent Mandates Commission (page 72), and further additions are given in the reports for 1934–35 (page 2) and 1935–36 (page 3).