

Notes on Storms, 1936-37.

April, 1936.—A cyclone crossed the Cook Islands on the 10th April.

November, 1936.—A series of cyclonic disturbances associated with a trough of low pressure affected conditions over the South Pacific region during the first week of November.

January, 1937.—A cyclonic disturbance appeared near Norfolk Island on the 12th January and moved towards northern New Zealand. Another intense cyclone developed north of the New Hebrides on the 19th and travelled slowly southward.

February, 1937.—An intense depression developed near Santo, New Hebrides, on the 8th February and moved slowly southward. A cyclone, which developed near Nukualofa on the 20th, was associated with strong winds in Tonga and later in Fiji.

March, 1937.—Towards the end of the third week in March a cyclone developed near Santo. After moving slowly at first this disturbance deepened, and then travelled rapidly southward.

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 1934-36 averaged 11,488 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. Tons.	Native Production. Tons.
1934	8,948	7,907
1935	12,501	10,500
1936	13,014	9,230

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 it is used mainly for blending. Export during the three years 1934-36 averaged 889 tons per annum.

Bananas continue to be of considerable assistance to the Territory, and a record number of 128,045 cases was shipped during the calendar year 1936. Further information regarding this product will be found in the report on Trade, Chapter IX.