

V.—GENERAL ADMINISTRATION.

The executive government of Western Samoa is vested in His Majesty the King pursuant to a mandate confirmed by the League of Nations. The Administrator is charged with the administration of the Territory, subject to the control of the Minister of External Affairs of New Zealand.

The laws of the Territory are made by Act of the New Zealand Parliament or regulations issued thereunder, or by Ordinance passed by the local Legislative Council, which as at present constituted consists of the Administrator, six official members, two unofficial members elected by the taxable male adult European community, and four nominated Native members, one of whom remains yet to be appointed. The Council met for two sessions during the year.

The following legislative measures have been enacted since the last report:—

In New Zealand—

The Samoa High Court Amendment Rules, 1937.

The Samoa Anglican Church Lands Order, 1937.

The Samoa Aviation Regulations, 1938.

In Samoa—

No. 1/1937.—The Land Survey Ordinance, 1937.

No. 2/1937.—The Native Land and Titles Protection Amendment Ordinance, 1937.

No. 3/1937.—The High Court Fees Amendment Ordinance, 1937.

No. 4/1937.—The Dog Registration Amendment Ordinance, 1937.

No. 5/1937.—The Revenue Amendment Ordinance, 1937.

No. 6/1937.—The Native Land and Titles Protection Amendment (No. 2) Ordinance 1937.

Copies of all these measures have been furnished to the Permanent Mandates Commission.

The Deputy Administrator, Mr. A. C. Turnbull, continuing in the capacity of Acting Administrator, administered the Territory during the year under review.

For the Samoan seats in the Legislative Council, the *Mau* organization, representing an unquestioned majority of the Samoan inhabitants, included Mr. O. F. Nelson among those whom it nominated for appointment. The Government felt unable to agree on grounds of principle to a European occupying the seat of a Native member, for a similar position would not be permissible in the New Zealand Parliament. The seat remains vacant since no other nomination has been received.⁽¹⁾

The death at an advanced age of the High Chief and Fautua Tuimalalelifano on 14th October, 1937, is recorded with regret. The late Tuimalalelifano, a Samoan of staunch character, had associations with the Government of his country in various responsible positions for over fifty years.

The high level in copra and cocoa prices early in the trade year and the increased exports of bananas were materially effective in maintaining improved conditions. This is reflected in the increased spending-power of the people and the Administration finances. Unfortunately, market prices have shown a declining tendency, especially during the last quarter.

The Chamber of Commerce, the Planters' Association, the United Progressive Party, and the Local Born Labour Party have at various times during the year made representations affecting not only the interests of their particular sections, but also of the general community. The Administration acknowledges and appreciates their co-operation.

As in the past, the Missionary Societies have afforded their whole-hearted support to the Administration.

NATIVE AFFAIRS.

The policy changes mentioned in last report are in operation, and the year has been quiet.

The Acting Administrator was in session with the *Fono* of *Faipule* on intermittent dates from 12th May until 15th July, and conveyed to them the decisions of the Mandatory Government on the remits which the *Faipule* had submitted during the 1936 *Fono*. As there were some requests on which the *Faipule* and the *Mau* were still not satisfied, a deputation to the Government proceeded to New Zealand in January, 1938, comprising Mr. O. F. Nelson as leader, his daughter Miss Olive Nelson, LL.B., the Hon. Tamasese, President of the *Mau*, Alipia and Leiataua, members of the *Faipule Fono*, and Fa'alava'au, a *Mau* Secretary. Their principal requests were (a) for the further repeal of legislation containing dormant provisions whereby executive powers of a restrictive nature could be used, and (b) for further increases in the personnel and rates of pay in the system of Samoan political representation and village officials—to be coincident with a reduction in the personnel of European police. It is the intention of the Government that such legislation as remains and may be described as solely repressive in its objects will be repealed. Decisions on the other requests had not been made at the date of this report.

The system of Samoan representation, additional to the Legislative Council, may perhaps be reiterated, in view of questions asked by members of the Permanent Mandates Commission.⁽¹⁾ It includes:—

Two *Fautua*, advisers to the Administrator, and nominated as representing the two leading chiefly family lines in Samoa.

Thirty-nine *Faipule*, representatives comprising the *Fono*, or Native Advisory Council, nominated by the Samoan people.

One hundred and eighty *Pulemu'u*, village officials, nominated similarly by the respective villages.

Government have approved also the reappointment of fourteen *Fa'amasino*, District Native Judges, and fourteen *Pule Fa'atoaga*, Native plantations inspectors. These two classes of officials were part of the establishment before 1927, but lapsed in consequence of *Mau* opposition and cessation of the Native personal tax. They have not yet been reappointed, as the *Faipule* have made representations that there be thirty-nine of each in lieu of fourteen, a request which is still under consideration at the date of this report, and no nominations for the smaller numbers have been made in the meantime.

⁽¹⁾ See minutes of the thirty-third session of the Permanent Mandates Commission, page 52.