

XI.—POLICE AND PRISONS.

ESTABLISHMENT.

The total European strength, which was twenty-two at the commencement of the year, numbered sixteen on 31st March, 1933. The Native uniformed strength remained at thirty-eight. For some time past a policy has been followed of appointing as Native police only Samoans who speak English, and as a result there is an improvement in efficiency. Native police receive no training in the use of arms.

One of the six posts in outer districts has been made non-resident, being visited as required from the post within nearest distance.

PRISONS.

On 1st April, 1932, the total number of prisoners was 79. During the year 454 prisoners were admitted, and 427 discharged, 106 remaining in custody on 31st March, 1933.

GENERAL.

There are no special police problems from a criminal point of view. Statistics for 1932-33 given in the preceding chapter indicate a general decrease in offences.

Warrants held for execution on the 31st March, 1932, were: For arrest, 97; for commitment, 55; and on the 31st March, 1933, the numbers were 11 and 13 respectively.

XII.—DEFENCE OF THE TERRITORY.

No military forces or defensive bases are maintained in the Territory.

XIII.—ARMS AND AMMUNITION.

Transactions in firearms and ammunition are controlled by the Arms Ordinance, 1921. There is no suggestion of illicit traffic in Samoa, and the subject is one of no special significance. Imports during 1932-33, not including Administration requirements, were as follow:—

Arms—

Smooth-bore shotguns, 5.

Rifle, 1.

Revolver, 1.

Ammunition—

Shot cartridges, 53,400.

Rifle cartridges: .22 calibre only, 6,000.

Revolver cartridges, 600.

XIV.—SOCIAL CONDITION OF THE NATIVES.

The social system of the Samoan people is such that poverty cannot exist. All families (or more correctly "clans") are well endowed with land, and as the soil is very fertile they have little difficulty in growing all food-supplies required. Their wants in the way of clothing are few, and although the *lavalava*, or loin-cloth, is now of European material it is for all general purposes the only clothing worn by adult men and children in the ordinary village life, an additional upper garment usually being worn by the women. On formal occasions, more particularly when Europeans are present, the men wear shirts and in some cases even collars, ties, and jackets. The Samoans are conservative in the matter of housing, in that they have shown no tendency to adopt European ideas as to design and construction, as has been done by other peoples of the Pacific having the same commercial contacts. This is due no doubt to the fact that Samoan Native houses are of particularly good design, being large, well ventilated, and cool. They have no walls, and are quite open to the air on all sides, resembling a beehive roof of cane thatch raised on posts, but are fitted with heavy blinds which when lowered, on the Venetian principle, give full protection from wind or rain. In the matter of housing, as in other directions, the economic aspect has played a part in postponing change, as all materials for a Samoan dwelling are grown by the people on their own land. The Native people are well and suitably housed, and it is in their interests that there be no change.

The economic depression has not affected the Natives of Western Samoa to nearly the same extent as in European communities. In spite of low prices, the production of copra and bananas has been reasonably maintained, the return therefrom generally being sufficient to meet the needs of the Samoans in the way of imported commodities.

The production of food-supplies is well attended to, and the cultivation and planting of new areas for future supplies is kept up to date.

The village areas are clean and well cared for, the grass being cut frequently, and all rubbish burned.

A strong conservatism has retained observance of the best of Native customs as to general village life and employment. The men still spend their time in fishing and the cultivation of food-supplies, and the women in the making of Native cloth and mats, arts in which they are expert.

The people generally show no particular keenness in seeking employment outside their own style of living, though during the year under review they have shown more willingness than usual to accept employment, this no doubt being due to some extent to the low prices of copra and the desire in some cases to supplement their incomes.

The extent to which Native Samoans participate in the Administration Service is indicated in a staff table on page 4 of this report, and the chapter dealing with population (page 18) contains information as to the gratifying way in which their numbers are increasing.