

Islands and China, under conditions which would not be tolerated to-day), although companies with capital could develop large coconut areas and obtain a good return on investments. By far the larger proportion of existing coconut areas have in the past been developed by companies, but this is not so with cacao plantations, which have been successfully developed more by individual private enterprise than by companies. This experience has shown that it is possible for enterprising individuals with small means to take up areas of bush land and convert them into good paying cacao plantations within a period of five or six years.

The desire of the Government to help all sections of the community in Samoa—not only Samoans, but those of mixed nationality—to promote their own welfare by developing the land has been given effect to by reserving an area of 1,200 acres of Crown lands suitable for division into 50-acre blocks for cultivation of cacao. It is intended that this area should specially benefit locally-born young men, whose opportunities in this Territory for taking up vocations other than agriculture are very limited. When this area has been all occupied, further allocations for a similar purpose will be made if required.

The existing land policy aims at—(1) Encouraging companies to take up large areas of Crown lands for cultivation of coconut plantations; (2) lease at normal rental of suitable areas of Crown lands to private individuals for cacao plantations; (3) encouraging the Natives to agree to divide up their lands to individual Native taxpayers, a policy which would lead to greater production.

It is considered that both private planters and Natives should be able to grow small areas of cotton, peanuts, and many other payable products for export; furthermore, when direct steamer communication between Samoa and New Zealand is established a fruit trade could be built up which would benefit both planters and Natives, particularly those resident on the north coast of Upolu.

The Crown Estates which are included in the areas shown on the diagram on page 10 as “alienated lands” may be considered under three heads: (1) Four plantations—three being coconut plantations and one partly coconut and partly cacao—including an area of bush land adjoining and forming part of each; (2) cacao plantations; (3) areas of undeveloped bush land; (4) rubber plantation.

The four plantations under (1) are still being administered by the New Zealand Government, and are managed by a Board of Control, over which the Administrator presides. They are giving good returns, and the Government can continue to run them with profit. They are, however, being offered for lease in an endeavour to free the Administration from carrying on a big trading enterprise, and there is reason to hope that increased development will result from the encouragement of private enterprise.

The cacao plantations (2) have all been leased, and the Director of Agriculture, who inspects them, reports that the planters have had a prosperous year, and that their plantations are in good order.

Those undeveloped areas of bush land under (3) bring in no revenue, and it will be many years before they can be brought under cultivation by purely local enterprise. Small areas of these lands have been allocated to the Natives, where required, for food plantations.

The rubber plantations (4) have all been abandoned for some years owing to the low market value of rubber.

V. COTTON CULTIVATION.

As explained in the departmental report of the Director of Agriculture, the experiments carried out last year prove that a high-grade cotton can be grown here. Owing to the fact that its cultivation will necessarily have to be almost entirely in the hands of the Natives, early successful results cannot be anticipated. Only by education and persuasion of the Natives, and constant supervision of plantations, will this industry be successfully developed in Samoa, but I am confident of ultimate success. In addition to distributing cotton-seed to Native villages, this year a number of schools are establishing small cotton plantations. Arrangements have also been made for a prison plantation, where the prisoners, in addition to growing their own food, will cultivate several acres of cotton.

VI. PUBLIC WORKS.

Although no conspicuously big work has been done by this Department during the past year, it has been very actively engaged in maintenance and in making a number of new improvements in sanitation, main-road construction, Native water-supplies, and extension of sea-wall in Apia. The programme outlined for this Department during the coming year includes the following:—

- (1.) Extend the metalled and tar-sealed portion of the main Mulifanua Road as far as Malua.
- (2.) Continue the construction of the sea-wall in Apia, rebuilding the Tivoli Wharf at the same time.
- (3.) Provide concrete water-tanks and piped-line water-supplies for a number of Native villages, especially in Savai'i.
- (4.) Extend the Apia water-supply to several villages in the suburbs.
- (5.) Rebuild bridges at Letogo, Magia Ford, Fusi, and Falelatai.
- (6.) Reconstruct the lower leading harbour light, and establish a new light on Apolima.
- (7.) Construct a technical-school building at Malifa.

VII. PROPOSED MUNICIPALITY FOR APIA.

During the past year the Administration prepared plans for the establishing of the Municipality for Apia as desired by the citizens in their petition to the New Zealand Government in 1920.