

ROLL NUMBERS AND AVERAGE ATTENDANCE AT GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS DURING THE YEAR ENDED
31ST MARCH, 1926.

Date.	Ifi Ifi.		Malifa (Sen.).		Malifa (Jun.).		Vaipouli.	Avele.	Total.		Grand Total.
	Boys.	Girls.	Boys.	Girls.	Boys.	Girls.	Boys only.	Boys only.	Boys.	Girls.	
Roll Numbers.											
30th June, 1925 ..	87	103	93	11	119	50	68	88	455	164	619
30th September, 1925 ..	83	105	80	11	119	50	68	92	442	166	608
31st December, 1925 ..	96	100	75	6	118	56	66	75	430	162	592
31st March, 1925 ..	80	93	82	6	120	87	84	75	441	186	647
Average Attendance.											
30th June, 1925 ..	168		85		146		62	50	..	..	511
30th September, 1925 ..	155		88		144		62	82	..	..	531
31st December, 1925 ..	160		72		156		65	70	..	..	523
31st March, 1925 ..	156.5		78		180		80	68	..	..	562.5

JUSTICE DEPARTMENT.

STAFF.

This is the same in number and personnel as last year. Although fully employed, it has been able to deal expeditiously and efficiently with the work of the Department.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.

The return shows an increase in civil cases of 121, and an increase in criminal cases of sixty-eight, as compared with the previous year. There were very few criminal cases of a serious nature. The civil cases include seventy-nine petitions for divorce—a number quite abnormal. It has been a common practice in the past among the Native Samoans for couples unsuitably married to part by mutual consent, and thereafter for one or both parties to take another spouse without the formality of divorce and remarriage. As a result of the legislation passed by the Fono of Faipules, and enforced largely through their influence and that of the missionaries, many of these irregular unions of long standing have been legalized by divorce and remarriage. Hence the increase in the number of petitions for divorce.

During the year one session of the Land and Title Commission has been held, from the 8th to the 20th June, in which twenty-six cases were dealt with and twenty-two final judgments given. Some alterations in the procedure have been made, notably by giving litigants a right to challenge Native Commissioners for interest or bias, and fuller opportunities for cross-examining their opponents. This has, it is believed, resulted in enhancing the authority of the decisions of the Commission in the eyes of the Natives and satisfying them of its impartiality. The replacing of one of the European assessors by the Secretary of Native Affairs is a distinct advantage. During the year the Chief Judge held a session of the High Court in the Island of Savai'i, where the Court is usually represented by a Commissioner. Satisfaction was expressed by representative Natives at this innovation, and it is proposed to hold sessions there by the Chief Judge periodically in future.

For the first time a course of instruction has been given for Native Judges (Faamasinos). The course was given by the Chief Judge, and the Faamasinos attended from both islands almost without exception. The points upon which it was found most necessary to insist were the impartiality of Faamasinos and the equality of all persons before the law. Instruction is to be continued from time to time, and promises to prove of great value in ensuring suitable men for the position and in advancing the Natives along the road of self-government in legal matters.

CROWN LAW WORK.

Five local Ordinances have been drafted by the Department and have become law, of which one, the Samoan Individual Property Ordinance, 1925, marks a most important advance in the law towards the individualization of the property of Natives, and coincides with the policy of the Administration on this subject as agreed to by the Fono of Faipules. Several Orders in Council for submission to the Governor-General in Council have been drafted, of which two have been passed. One of these has for its purpose the vesting of the lands of the Roman Catholic Church in Samoa in the bishop for the time being, for greater convenience in dealing therewith.

Drafting of new legislation, and acting as solicitor and counsel for the various departments, and as Crown Prosecutor, has, with his many other duties, kept the Crown Solicitor very fully employed. During the absence of the Chief Judge on furlough during the last two months of the year the Crown Solicitor has been appointed a Judge of the High Court.

LAND REGISTRATION, ETC.

The returns show an increase of forty in the number of registrations as compared with last year's figure. Twenty-five instruments under the Chattels Transfer Act have been registered, and 1,001 marriages recorded. Ten probates and other authorities to administer deceased estates have been taken out. There have been no bankruptcies.

COMPANIES.

Two private companies were registered during the year, making now a total of five companies since the Companies Order came into force on the 1st July, 1922.