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ANNUAL REPORT BY THE ADMINISTRATOR FOR THE YEAR 1931-32.

I. ADMINISTRATORS.

Colonel S. S. Allen, C.M.G., D.S.O., v.d., left Samoa on the 4th April and his successor Brigadier General H. E. Hart, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., v.d., arrived on 1st May, 1931.

II. TRADE.

As a result of the world-wide depression, and especially the drop in the price of copra, the main product of this territory, there has been a considerable decrease in the trade turnover. The reduction in trade for the year 1931 was £359,397 as against the total of £559,870 for the year 1930, a drop of 35 per cent.

III. FINANCE.

Owing to the reduced turnover, which included a proportionate reduction in imports, there was a substantial decrease in the Customs revenue. When this became apparent steps were immediately taken to meet the financial situation. These took the form partly of reorganization of Departments and retrenchment, and partly of an increase of Customs duty equal to a general increase of 5 per cent. As a result of these steps, the revenue for the last quarter of the year under review showed a marked improvement, and after taking into account £20,042 available funds at the 1st April, 1931, the year ended with a small credit balance. It is pleasing to be able to report that this result was obtained without the necessity of any detrimental curtailing of the activities or services of the Administration.

IV. NATIVE AFFAIRS.

There has been a marked improvement in the political situation throughout the Territory, and all Departments having dealings with the natives are now functioning happily and satisfactorily. The Land and Titles Commission sat in April and in November, the natives coming freely to give evidence and have their claims dealt with, and more cases were brought before the Commission during this year than in any of the preceding five years. The better feeling now prevailing not only applies to official transactions, but extends also to sports and social gatherings. A sitting of the Fono of Faipule was held in the month of May. The Faipule were again assembled in December, when the financial position was placed before them and discussed, and arrangements made for the election of the new Faipule. In this matter previous procedure was followed, each district was asked to nominate a Faipule in writing, and in each case the person selected was appointed Faipule. Of the thirty-three Faipule twenty-one formerly held office, and seventeen were members of the solely nominated Fono as it existed prior to the 1st April, 1929. Of the twelve new Faipule some were at one time members of the Mau.

The Honourables Malietoa and Mata'afa, the two Fautua, have at all times given great assistance, and, owing to their profound knowledge of Samoan customs and their high standing in the country, their advice has been invaluable and is cordially acknowledged.