

XI.—POLICE AND PRISONS.

ESTABLISHMENT.

The total European strength (including one clerk) was eleven on 31st March, 1937, the same number as at the end of the previous year. Native uniformed strength increased to forty, exclusive of two Native clerks and eleven messengers under the control of the Inspector of Police.

During the year two police posts, one each on Upolu and Savai'i, were discontinued and their functions carried out from headquarters at Apia and Tuasivi respectively. There are now two police posts in the Territory, one under the control of a District Officer at Aleipata, Upolu, and the other at Tuasivi under the direct control of the Resident Commissioner of Savai'i.

PRISONS.

On the 1st April, 1936, the total number of prisoners was 87. During the year 251 prisoners were admitted and 269 discharged, 69 remaining in custody on 31st March, 1937.

GENERAL.

Statistics for 1936-37 given in the preceding chapter show a decrease in crime in the Territory. Warrants held for execution on 1st April, 1936, were—For arrest, 1; for commitment, 5; and on 31st March, 1937, the figures were nil and 7 respectively.

Adverting to M. van Asbeck's question⁽¹⁾ regarding the increase in crime during 1935-36, it can be said that this was due to no particular cause, and as there were no unusual circumstances prevailing during the period no further explanation can be offered to account for it. As will be seen from the 1936-37 figures, however, the position has returned to normal.

The liquor offences in 1935-36 referred to by Count de Penha Garcia⁽²⁾ were in connection with the illegal manufacture and sale of beer.

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 of no special significance. Importations during 1936-37 were as follows :—

Arms—

Shotguns, 15.

Rifles (.22 calibre), 1.

Revolvers (.38 calibre), 1.

Ammunition—

Shot cartridges, 93,000.

Rifle cartridges (.22 calibre), 5,000.

Rifle cartridges (.303 calibre), 5,000.

All these quantities were imported by private firms, with the exception of 5,000 rounds of .303 calibre rifle cartridges, which were imported by the Administration to replenish police supplies and issue to the Apia Rifle Club.

The following table gives the total of registered firearms in the Territory as at 31st March, 1937 :—

—				European.	Samoan.	Total.
Revolvers	..	..	..	8	..	8
Rifles	..	..	..	37	..	37
Shotguns	..	..	..	160	347	507
				..	..	552

XIV.—SOCIAL CONDITION OF THE NATIVES.

Some of the material aspects of Native social life were described in the report for 1935-36, pages 4 and 17.

The census taken on 4th November, 1936, showed an increase of 42½ per cent. in the Native population since the preceding census of 1st January, 1926. Both of these enumerations are believed to have been fairly accurate, because particulars of every person were recorded in detail. This increase occurred notwithstanding an accumulation of epidemic sicknesses in the earlier months of 1936, which took toll of infant life.

The return of material prosperity and increased prices for Native products are reflected in a happier outlook generally. It is inevitable that Native social usages which previously were enforced physically must undergo some change when confronted by Christian teachings and European law, but the transition in this territory is proceeding very gradually, due to the strong conservatism of the Samoans, as well as to their material well-being in their present mode of life.

(1) See minutes of Thirtieth Session of the Permanent Mandates Commission, page 122.

(2) See minutes of Thirtieth Session of the Permanent Mandates Commission, page 125.