

seemingly large numbers of Government appointments. Even now it is only within the environs of the one town of Apia that the social basis of life is being modified by contact with the materialistic values of civilization.

Contact with law, however, has had a more disseminated effect. Prior to the establishment of settled government in 1900 the *matai*'s advantages of eminence and its concomitant obedience were maintained in the last resort by forcible measures: since 1900 recourse has been limited to the use of social or political pressure; in view of the social basis of life ostracism is a powerful form of discipline which is practised fairly generally. Where this breaks down, however, there is recourse only to litigation which has the tendency of bringing the parties to a common level. Under these conditions there comes a realization that the impersonal authority of law tends to supplant the prominence and authority exerted formerly by individual leaders, and the power and influence formerly enjoyed is found to have become limited. The compensating reward of security in life and property is not always admitted.

Since the change from a repressive policy for one of political freedom of expression there has been a slight but noticeable reversion in Samoan thought towards the powers enjoyed in former days, and there have been minor incidents of local chiefs, or councils, exerting these powers: yet it seems inevitable that equality under law will replace, progressively but very gradually, much of the authority practised under the former social order. Change is retarded by the great value placed upon participation in the social life, and the influence held by the chiefs and orators who are the arbiters of admission to or exclusion from it. In effect there exists a system of village authorities comprising the chiefs and orators of the village which operates alongside the Government system of village officials—*e.g.*, *Pulenu'u*. These latter, by reason of the chiefly titles they hold are also members of the former system, and it may be assumed that the two organizations will continue to operate side by side until such time as usage will enable one system to absorb the other, or the more practicable features of both to merge.

Freedom of expression is affecting social usage in another interesting direction. Before the introduction of law political differences were adjusted or kept in balance by force, and by the same means independence of thought within any group was discountenanced. That there is now freedom in such matters uninfluenced by force is a new and rather educative process.

As stated previously, however, the strong conservatism and social cohesion of the Samoans are causing these changes in viewpoint to come about very gradually, as it is hoped under present policy they will continue to do.

XV.—LABOUR.

Regular continuous employment for wages is contrary to the nature of the bulk of the Samoan population. Admittedly, contract work (arranged through the heads of the families concerned) on plantations is undertaken, but the contracts are invariably for brief periods, and the Samoans are induced to work only because of their temporary need of money.

At the commencement of the year there were 500 Chinese in the territory. The repatriation of time-expired labourers, including all artisans and domestic servants, and allowing for two leper patients at Makogai and five deaths reduced the numerical strength to 326 as at 31st March, 1938. The conduct of the labourers was satisfactory, and 1,103 visits were paid to the Commissioner's Office, as compared with 903 during the previous year. The increase in the number of visits was occasioned by matters relating to repatriation.

During the year the Mandatory power introduced the eight-hour day and increased the rate of pay to Chinese labourers to 3s. per day with 6d. per day deductible for repatriation expenses.

There was no alteration during the year in the population figure of the Melanesian labourers employed by the New Zealand Reparation Estates.

The points raised by Mr. Weaver during the examination of the 1936-37 report⁽¹⁾ are dealt with below.

Experimental Plantation staffed by Samoans.—While suitable accommodation for Samoans who desire to reside on the plantation is provided, very few Natives have availed themselves of these facilities. The resident Samoans have been limited to two drier attendants.

The majority of Samoans employed on the experimental station return to their villages each night, but occasionally families who have been employed weeding blocks have remained overnight in accommodation provided for them.

Generally speaking, contracts made with the heads of families are invariably for task work. The tasks given consist of areas or blocks to be weeded. The contract price is usually a lump sum and is usually agreed upon between the contracting parties before the work is commenced. The contract price for weeding a particular block may vary from month to month according to the condition of the area at the time of contract. This contract work is limited to weeding and picking; in the latter case, however, contracts are not made with the heads of families, but individual Samoans are allocated certain areas, which in the opinion of the assistant in charge may be completely picked in one day. The contract rate is 1s. 4d. per 100 lb. of cocoa picked. A competent picker can harvest 350 lb. per day.

The usual method of remuneration is a cash payment to the head of the family or an individual within seven days after the termination of the month, but payment is sometimes made directly upon the satisfactory completion of a task.

For day-labourers the rates vary from 2s. to 4s. per day according to the nature of the employment. In this case the number of days worked is recorded by the assistant in charge, and a cash payment is made (less deductions for rations purchased) within seven days after the termination of the month.

(1) See minutes of the thirty-third session of the Permanent Mandates Commission, page 59.