

abolished, and all Native matters dealt with in a Council where the local mercantile community would have greater power and influence than the Natives themselves.

The Native leaders are very appreciative of the existing organization, the working of which improves year by year, and enables the Samoans to control their own affairs through a system of committees in which nearly every chief and orator participates, and so prevents any one person exercising autocratic powers, while their decisions and suggestions, which are forwarded to the Administrator, keep the latter in the closest touch with the opinions and needs of the Natives and their progress in every district.

A small local political agitation during the past year indicated that this territory is no exception to the general rule that progress and change in every country is marked by a certain amount of opposition, which in Samoa comes from those persons who oppose the Government in its policy for the development of the Native race.

In October last, and just prior to the triennial political election, the three elected members who represent the 222 European electors on the roll of the Territory called a public meeting in Apia, and agents were sent around to Native villages calling upon Natives to come to Apia to co-operate with Europeans for the purpose of agitating for the revision of certain laws, including the law restricting the use of intoxicating liquor, and certain Native regulations concerning some Samoan customs which the Samoan Faipules had themselves suggested and approved after discussion with their own people, and under which a few Samoans had been penalized. Some of the latter were amongst those who gave their support to this movement to undermine that Native authority which it is so vitally important to maintain in the interests of peace, order, and good government of the Natives.

Such action might be appreciated if the Natives were being oppressed or had no voice in or powers of dealing with their own affairs, or if the European residents sincerely desired to co-operate with the Administration in its efforts to inspire the Natives to work for their own material, physical, and moral welfare. But this movement did not appear to be actuated by any such motives, for while on the one hand the European committee criticized the policy of punishing chiefs for certain Samoan offences, on the other hand objection was made to what was considered to be excessive expenditure incurred on behalf of the Natives in matters of health, education, &c. As to complaints about Native matters made by these Europeans, it is true that some chiefs, who have been punished by deprivation of their titles for various offences, resent their punishment. The leader of those Natives who were induced to co-operate with the elected members in their political agitation is one of the very few "Europeanized" Samoans in the Territory and one who had been so punished after being found guilty by the High Court of theft from Natives of a large sum of money, and also for attempting to degrade some of his own race by manufacturing intoxicating liquor and selling it to them.

None of the high chiefs or political leaders of the Natives took part in this agitation. On the contrary, they strongly opposed it, and requested me that Natives should be prohibited from attending the first public meeting called by the elected members. Two public meetings were held, at the first of which the three elected members and four other Europeans were formed into a committee, together with a few Natives who were neither appointed nor authorized by their villages or districts to speak on their behalf. This committee sent circulars around the Territory referring to the "cruel laws of the Government," and calling for subscriptions to defray the expenses of a deputation to be sent to New Zealand to interview the Minister. The Samoan members of this committee were very keen to have such a trip.

How the Native mind was manipulated can be gathered from the statement of one of the Natives who had been appointed to this committee. On being asked why he was taking part in the movement he informed the Administrator that "I did not understand the matters the Europeans put before us at the meeting, nor do the Samoan people understand, but the words of the Europeans were sweet, and I thought it was all right to do as they wished. We are loyal to the Government, which we know is doing many things for our good."

As the Administration had every confidence in the Natives, and believed them to be able to analyse this movement for themselves, no steps were taken to stop it beyond warning the citizens of Apia of the dangers underlying their action. This warning was based upon the past history of Samoa, which contains several examples of serious consequences arising out of European residents interfering in Native affairs and influencing Natives in political matters.

In order that this agitation may be considered in all its aspects the following documents are printed as an appendix, viz. (see page 41):—

- (1) The Administrator's warning to citizens:
- (2) Report of the "European committee" for presentation to the New Zealand Government on matters concerning Native affairs; and
- (3) Statement by the Fono of Faipule composed of representatives from every district. The statement was made after the Faipules had interviewed those Natives who had associated themselves with the elected members and other European members of the committee organized to work up this agitation.

(b) HEALTH OF THE NATIVES.

The general policy in regard to sanitary measures and medical treatment for the Natives as mentioned in previous reports is being continued with good results.

The child-welfare work has been extended to every village, and has attracted the interest and sympathy of the New Zealand Red Cross and St. John Ambulance Association in the Dominion, who have given their practical support by contributing supplies of glaxo (dried milk) to be used under the control of the Native nurses and Native women's committees for invalids and sick babies. The kind action of these philanthropic bodies is highly appreciated by the Natives, and will probably be the means of saving many lives.

During the year under review there have been two epidemics—viz., dysentery, followed by a wave of mild influenza, which latter spread over most of the islands of the South Pacific. Measles also broke out in one village, but was prevented from spreading owing to the Natives co-operating with the medical authorities and agreeing to the complete isolation of the affected area.