

than formerly, and all accounts are properly checked before being passed for payment. The work of the Secretary is by no means a sinecure. There are grave doubts as to the ability of any locally-born person to do the work as efficiently. Her salary is £320 per annum.

Native Medical Practitioners.—The Administration is already sending two cadets annually from Samoa for training as Native medical practitioners in Suva. If, as suggested in the Samoan report, these cadets should be sent to New Zealand or Australia to qualify, it would take them two years' hard study to learn enough English to master even the rudiments of medicine or surgery, which would of necessity be taught in that language. Of one of the suggested trainees named by you I have no knowledge, or of his ability, but I am informed that he was dismissed from the Department, presumably not without sufficient reasons.

NATIVE AFFAIRS.

I have more than once made it plain that I do not recognize any obligation to consider the "European report" on this subject, as the Native people of Samoa are fully competent and at liberty to submit representations on any subject to the Administration. In my opinion, no good could arise from the conducting of correspondence or any other relationship with the Samoan people through the medium of a self-constituted unofficial European committee. At the same time, your committee's efforts having achieved such publicity on various matters as to create a totally incorrect impression of them, I am forced to state briefly my impressions.

The method of appointment of Faipules has already been dealt with in connection with your representations as affecting the Legislative Council; and the criticism of the Administration with respect to the status of the Fautuas is completely repudiated by a statement addressed to me and signed by the Fautuas themselves and by each member of the Fono, expressing complete confidence in the Administration, and asking that steps be taken to end your committee's activities. This statement will be published as part of the correspondence which I propose to lay before Parliament.

I must construe your further allegations as to the lack of representative authority by the Faipules as arising from the distinct repudiation which the Faipules instantly made to your claim to speak on behalf of Native interests, when the present agitation was first commenced. The further inference that the Faipules have no hereditary standing among their own people is dealt with in the following statement by the Secretary of Native Affairs, the late Mr. H. S. Griffin, whose high character, love for the Samoan people, and knowledge of Native custom cannot be questioned:—

"Quite a lot of use has been made of the expression 'hereditary' titles, &c., by the committee of three members of the Legislative Council lately. One would begin to wonder whether this is done through ignorance of Samoan custom, or whether it is done wilfully to mislead the people of New Zealand. At the outset let me say that there is very little in Samoan life that can be classed as necessarily hereditary; certainly not titles. It is quite true that they may be transmitted from parent to child, but such is the exception rather than the rule. The election by the family or people to a title and position as head of a family is almost a daily occurrence in Samoa. The person elected is chosen by the people, or family, or clan who have a voice in the title, irrespective of his relationship to the immediate predecessor. But when he is invested with the title he immediately becomes head of the family or clan in all discussions with other chiefs or orators. He assumes control over all lands of the clan, and the prestige of the family is vested in him. This law applies to all titles, from that of minor chiefs and orators to the holders of the highest titles in the land. So when the members of the Legislative Council refer to the Faipules as being nominated and appointed by His Excellency the Governor, and that they do not represent the voice of the people, they make a statement that is not true; for, in the first place, the Faipule is the highest chief in the district he represents, and he has already been elected to the title he holds in his district by the leading people in his district. In appointing the Faipule, therefore, for any particular district His Excellency has only to know the names of the leading chiefs in the district; and to appoint a man who did not hold the necessary high title in his district would be to court disaster, for he would not have the prestige to back up his appointment as Faipule of the Government."

Further, the Faipule is not the only authority in his district, for every village has its Committee of Chiefs who are also represented on the District Council of Chiefs. Villages and districts are therefore practically governed in a most democratic manner by committees composed of men whose record and actions constantly show that they do not hesitate to express their views or differ from those in authority when occasion demands.

The custom of local banishment (*i.e.*, from one district within the Territory to another) or removal of titles from Samoans who have offended against criminal law or their own social code is so well known by yourselves to have existed amongst the Samoan people from the earliest times that your statements can have no other effect than misleading public opinion outside the Mandated Territory. The present method, by which the power is placed in the hands of the Administrator and used only after consultation with Native advisers, is considered by the Samoans themselves to be exercised in a fair and considerate manner. They have publicly said so. The practice is not one which has been imposed upon the Samoans—it has always existed with them, and the present participation of the Administrator in the exercise of it is based upon the very principle of assistance to Native races for which the mandates came into existence. I say advisedly that any attempt in the present stage of the social and political development of the Samoan people to force a consideration of this power from the viewpoint of a civilized democracy is entirely wrong. British experience of Native administration covers instances of many similar customs which are accepted and engrafted into the minds of the people, making their administration so removed from that of a modern civilized community as to present little or no similarity whatever. The custom is thus described in the considered view of the Fono of Faipules:—

"We plead with Your Excellency to keep on steering our ship. Regarding their story of harsh administration and tyrannical punishments, it is obvious they do not know our history or