

Most of the Chinese coolies who were admitted to hospital suffered from sores, which, although not very serious, develop into a chronic state if proper rest and treatment is not given. As each coolie pays a small contribution (2s. 2d. per month) for medical treatment and receives no pay from his employer while absent from his work through sickness, the hospital is the best place for him. The question of acclimatization has no bearing on the subject, as Natives themselves are likely to contract the same ailment.

MAIN DISEASES.

Yaws.—Intensive treatment of yaws is still being carried out, and the position is very much improved. On a recent inspection of the children along the south coast of Upolu not a single case of bad secondary yaws could be found.

Jaundice.—During the year several deaths ensued as a result of acute jaundice, most of the cases occurring in one particular village eighteen miles from Apia. The number of cases had considerably lessened at the end of the year.

Enteric.—One hundred and ninety-five cases of enteric were reported during the twelve months; the majority being in the vicinity of Apia and in the district immediately west of the town.

Pulmonary Tuberculosis.—The number of cases reported during the year, 143, exactly equalled those notified in 1934–35, and occurred mainly in and around Apia.

With regard to the apparent increase in the number of cases over those of previous years, it is considered this is due more to increased notifications than to a serious development of the disease. The appointment of additional Native medical practitioners has resulted in more searching investigation of the position, and many cases have been brought to light which would otherwise have been concealed by the Natives themselves. An additional European medical officer was appointed to the staff at the beginning of March, 1936, and during the ensuing year this will enable the Chief Medical Officer to make more frequent health inspections of the whole Territory. The tuberculosis situation is being very carefully watched, and in the course of the next few months it should be possible to ascertain the true position.

Killing and inspection of meat is under the control of the Health authorities. All abattoirs are inspected by a Medical Officer before being licensed. An arrangement has been made for examination by a Medical Officer of all beasts slaughtered before meat is passed for sale and consumption. All licensed butchers have experience of tuberculosis in animals, and use every care in this respect. Cases of surreptitious butchering by unlicensed persons occur from time to time. These, however, are very difficult to detect before distribution of the meat is completed; Government officers are continually on the alert to prevent such infractions of the law, and the penalties are heavy.

Water-supplies are bacteriologically examined at regular intervals. This also applies to milk offered for sale, and, as guinea-pigs are kept at the hospital, testing for tuberculosis is rendered much easier.

Trachoma.—This is met with in a mild but chronic form, and examination of school-children revealed that almost 10 per cent. were affected in some way.

Beri Beri.—Nine cases were notified.

Conjunctivitis.—One hundred and ninety-five cases were reported.

Pneumonia and Broncho-pneumonia.—Eighty-nine cases were notified.

Veneral Disease.—Four cases of gonorrhœa were notified.

Leprosy.—Nine cases were notified, and isolated.

There are at present eight Native mental patients in custody at Vaimea Prison, and one European at Apia Hospital.

NATIVE MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS.

The sudden death of the senior Native medical practitioner, Ielu, on 24th March, 1936, while completing a health inspection of Upolu, leaves a gap in the Health organization which will be hard to fill. One Native medical practitioner finished his studies at the Suva Medical School and returned to duty in Samoa in January, 1936. Two more Native youths were sent to Suva in the same month for training, making four in all at this training-centre.

The Native medical practitioners are doing good work in the outer districts, and each village is visited by them at least once a month. They not only visit the sick, but give health lectures to adult Samoans and school-children and instruct them in general sanitary principles. As a result the sanitation of the villages and the health of the Natives has improved.

WOMEN'S COMMITTEES.

During the year Samoan women's committees were formed in 111 villages, and others are in process of formation. Through these committees drugs are issued by the Administration to the villages at a little over cost price, and the system appears to be satisfactory. Child welfare is, of course, the main work of the committees, and in this they receive full co-operation from the European Health Officers and Native medical practitioners, who give them special lectures on the subject at frequent intervals. Even in the short period since the inception of the scheme there has been a marked improvement in the health of the children, and the work is being extended as rapidly as possible.