

In every village the babies and children were gathered together and inspected, women's committees formed, medicines given to the committee with directions for their use, and talks on subjects in connection with child welfare were given to the mothers. It was necessary to sleep in the Samoan house at night, as there was no other accommodation; but a part of the *fale* screened off by a large *tapa*, or Native-made cloth, with a bed of Samoan mats, gave one a very restful night. The Samoans are very kind and courteous to their guests, and give them of their best: a little dance (*fiafia*) in the evening showed their appreciation of the work that was being done for them and their children.

Eighty-five villages have been visited in the year, and in all there are about 1,360 Samoan women of the women's committees actively engaged in assisting in the work of child welfare.

Our work aims at educating the Samoan mother, and future Samoan mothers, in the care of themselves and their children, and this is being done by enlisting the help of the Samoan women, and in the formation of a women's committee in each village. The numbers in these committees vary according to the size of the village. On an average there are about sixteen women to a committee. They are usually formed of the more enlightened class. The wives of Government Native officials and the wives of the Native pastors of all denominations are the first to be taken into the committee. Others are added according to the size of the village. These women take an active interest in the affairs of the villages in so far as they concern the cleanliness of the houses and children, the treating of any sick children and babies, and the feeding of the babies and children.

Different members of the committee have their duties assigned to them each week by the president or head of the committee. A bell is rung through the village night and morning, and all children needing medical attention have to come to the house of the president, where medicines are dispensed. Other members of the committee are responsible for the children staying indoors through the hot hours of the day, while others have to superintend the daily bathing of the children in the fresh-water bathing-pool in or adjoining each village. Once a week the members of the committee make a thorough inspection of the village, *fales*, cookhouses, &c.

The good work done by these committees, although they have been organized so short a time, can already be seen, and at the present time when there is a threatened epidemic of dysentery there is no doubt that their efforts have gone a long way in checking the disease. At the present time they go every day through the village from house to house and report to the Pulenu'u, and through him to the Medical Department, any fresh cases of dysentery that may occur.

*Rules of the Women's Committees.*—At the ordinary meetings of a committee the women only need be present, but when a Medical Officer is present at a meeting the Pulenu'u (headman) must be in attendance.

1. Duties: Cleanliness of buildings. All *fales*, cookhouses, and latrines to be inspected at least once a week, and any person who is not keeping such places clean and free from rubbish to be reported to the Pulenu'u.

2. Treatment of sick children night and morning at the house of the president of the committee, if such children are not confined to bed; children suffering from any sickness, other than those which the committee have the knowledge to treat, to be taken to the nearest dispensary. All cases of yaws to be reported immediately to the Pulenu'u; all parents not giving their children proper attention to be reported to the Pulenu'u.

3. The committee shall help all expectant mothers, and those who are suckling their babies.

4. The committee must see that suitable food is available for young children. They should see that children at the breast are fed regularly, and that no work on the part of the mother interferes with such regular feeding. If a mother has not sufficient natural food for the baby, the committee must try and get suitable food for such baby.

5. In the interests of the women themselves and of their babies, the committee should use its influence to discourage marriages contracted according to old Samoan custom.

6. The committee should meet at least once a week to discuss matters in connection with the cleanliness and sanitation of their villages. The medical articles in the *Savali* should be read every month, not only to the committee but to all the women of the village.

7. These are the chief duties of the women's committees, but the women can also do good work by taking an interest in such matters as the supply of good drinking-water, the provision of bathing facilities, the construction of sufficient fly-proof latrines or latrines over the sea, the provision of playing-areas for the children, the keeping of pigs out of the villages, and the instruction of boys and girls in the importance of cleanliness of themselves and their surroundings.

The *Savali*, the Government Native paper, is published in Western Samoa once a month, and several pages are devoted to medical subjects. It is through the medium of this paper that written instructions on subjects that concern child welfare in Samoa can be circulated throughout the country, as each head of a family receives a copy. The committees are instructed to read the articles at their meetings, and to call together the women of the village and read it to them too. Some of the articles written since the commencement of the work on child welfare are:—

- (1.) Care of the breast-fed baby in its first twelve months.
- (2.) Common diseases of the Samoans and their treatment.
- (3.) Feeding and hygiene of the Samoan mother during pregnancy and lactation.
- (4.) Work of Samoan mother during pregnancy and lactation.
- (5.) Cleanliness of the villages—comprising *fales*, cookhouses, latrines, water-supply, and exclusion of pigs from the villages.
- (6.) The medicines used by the women's committees and their application.
- (7.) Rules of the women's committees.
- (8.) Cleanliness of the person and clean habits.
- (9.) The teeth and their care.