

I mentioned in last year's report that the Government policy of concentrating on the three essentials for developing the Natives—viz., health, education, and agriculture—was producing good results. The progress in these matters can be judged from the departmental reports, but the following brief facts will assist in making comparisons with the previous year :—

- (1.) Health: Natural increase in Native population last year, 1,176, or 3.26 per cent.; increase previous year, 1,123.
- (2.) Education: Children attending schools under Government supervision, 2,600; number attending previous year, 1,700.
- (3.) Agriculture: Copra produced by Natives last year, 11,700 tons; previous year, 10,185 tons.

Only time will show whether these facts indicate merely a temporary response on the part of the Natives to the efforts being made on their behalf, or whether they are the beginning of a permanent progressive development.

#### HEALTH OF THE NATIVES.

The work of the Health Department is gradually producing better sanitation, improved water-supplies in a large number of villages, better-equipped hospitals, an increasing number of dispensaries in out-districts, treatment of all Natives suffering from tonas (yaws) and hookworm, segregation of lepers for treatment at Makogai (Fiji), the training of youths as Native medical practitioners and women as Native nurses, and an awakening conscience amongst the mothers in regard to child welfare, as well as eliminating those evils which have undermined the health of the Samoan people and prevented them in the past from becoming an increasing race. The advance already made in these matters represents only a small part of what remains to be carried out before every village is fully provided for. The difficulties in the way of rapid progress are limited finance and other resources, and the slow process of education in changing the habits of the people, who do not readily adopt new customs, but rather tend to hold on to their former unsanitary habits and Native methods of medical treatment.

During the past year an epidemic of whooping-cough was responsible for a number of deaths of young children, and at the time of writing there is a mild outbreak of dysentery in several villages. Under existing conditions of Native life it is difficult to prevent such outbreaks occurring from time to time no matter how efficiently organized the Health Department may be. A satisfactory feature in connection with the above-mentioned outbreaks has been the good control maintained by the Health authorities through its dispensaries and trained nurses distributed around the islands, by means of which information regarding sickness is quickly obtained and treatment made available.

The two large water-supply schemes started last year (one in Savai'i and one in Upolu) should be completed within the next few months. They will be the means of providing pipe-lined supplies of pure water to many villages which have hitherto had to depend on inadequate supplies of drinking-water drawn from small pools, and flush latrines with septic tanks, in place of the former primitive sanitation. This important work could not have been carried out but for the financial assistance rendered by the New Zealand Government, and by the Natives on their part helping themselves by providing a large portion of the labour, in addition to voluntarily taxing themselves to pay their share of the costs. (*Vide* Map No. 1.)

The three hospitals (two in Upolu and one in Savai'i) are being gradually improved and better equipped. An X-ray apparatus has been obtained for the main hospital in Apia, and a specially constructed *fale* has been built for maternity cases. These hospitals are becoming more popular with the Natives, who are gradually learning to avail themselves of early hospital treatment in preference to their former methods of first using their own primitive medicines, reverting only to hospital treatment when these failed and the patient was practically beyond the power of the medical authorities to treat effectively.

It is intended to shortly increase the number of dispensaries shown on Map No. 2 during the coming year, and to further add to this number as trained nurses become available.

European Medical Officers have periodically visited every district during the past year and given treatment for tonas (yaws) and hookworm, which diseases appear to have been almost eradicated from Western Samoa. The use of the cinema to educate the Natives in the causes and cure of hookworm has been of inestimable value.

Good reports continue to be received of the treatment and progress of the Samoan lepers at Makogai, Fiji, and we are greatly indebted to the authorities and nursing sisters of that leper institution for their sacrificing efforts and good work on behalf of the sufferers.

The child-welfare scheme initiated by Dr. Ritchie, Chief Medical Officer of this Territory, provides for letters and instructions to be issued monthly from the Health Department to the Women's Committee in every village, and for the periodical visitation of villages by the two lady doctors (Dr. Mabel Christie and Dr. Roberts, the latter giving her services voluntarily) to inspect the children, advise the mothers, and help the Women's Committees. Unfortunately, these ladies cannot personally visit every out-district as frequently as they would like, but they do splendid work, which is gradually making itself felt in every district of Samoa and awakening the consciences of Native mothers to the importance of child welfare, the results of which can best be judged by reference to the vital statistics.