

[TRANSLATION.]

MEDICAL.—SAMOAN REPORT.

1. A really competent doctor is required to take charge of the Department which has the care of the health of the people of Western Samoa.

2. The medical-tax should be abolished, and the people be called upon only to pay for medical treatment as received.

3. Private doctors should be encouraged to practise in Samoa, so they may be of great assistance to the Medical Department, thus inspiring the necessary confidence in the people, so they may cease to go to Pago Pago for treatment.

4. Samoan people who have already acquired some knowledge in medicine, such as Atimalala, Taimalie, and Ielu, should be sent to New Zealand or Australia to complete their studies and to obtain the necessary diplomas to become doctors.

SAMOAN NATIVE AFFAIRS.—EUROPEAN REPORT.

It does not require a student of Native affairs in Samoa to note and be struck by the inconsistency of the Government's Native policy. Nor does it need the experience of an old resident to know that such a proud and highly-intelligent race as the Samoan, would tolerate the existing anomalies without resentment.

The Faipule, which were elected, or selected, by the districts in the Samoan way in former Samoan Governments, are now, after twenty-six years of colonial rule, still nominated by the Administrator in such a way that not one of them could offer any actual opposition to Government policy without the fear of losing his job. The two Fautuas representing the High Chiefs of Samoa, have never been called upon to perform the functions of the office which their designation implies—viz., "Adviser"; thus the office has become a sinecure when valuable service might have been obtained from it.

The Legislative Council now operates the limited legislative powers granted to the Territory, and three representatives of the Europeans are elected to it; but though the matter of Native representatives has been introduced in the Council by the elected members on more than one occasion, it has been turned down on every occasion by the Government majority, on the plea that the Faipule claim the Samoans prefer to be represented only in the Faipule. For a nominated Council, such as the Faipule, to be asked to decide on such a momentous question as the political advancement of the Natives is a question which may well excite resentment in the Natives and needs no further comment.

It may, however, be mentioned here that the Faipule are not only Government officials or Civil servants, but are looked upon as such by the Natives. The Faipule have lately been vested with a large amount of administrative and executive powers in the districts, which they have exercised in a manner only worthy of the feudal system.

Since the inauguration of mandatory rule the slogan almost shouted from the housetops has been that "The primary duties of the mandatory Power are the welfare and political advancement of the indigenous population"; yet one has no difficulty in finding measures to the contrary. Offences which would have satisfied the High Court in the issue of a warning or at most the payment of a monetary fine by a European, have on several occasions caused the loss to a Native (including some of the highest chiefs) of his citizen's rights, the removal of his hereditary family name, and the banishment from his native village. The village to which such a Native is banished is alleged to be the one which he belongs on another branch of his genealogical tree. As the genealogy of a Samoan chief is a sacred matter which may not be referred to by any one else with impunity, and the fact that the Administrator could not have even made the allegation without obtaining the information from a Samoan source, insult is indeed added to injury.

A tax of £1 per annum per adult male is imposed on the Samoan Native for medical service. This has been objected to and protested against from its very inception. With the exception of a few districts who have access to a Medical Officer, the most of the Natives can only bring serious cases to the hospital, and that is often fraught with danger in transportation. The proof of the unpopularity of the medical tax is the fact that the strongest protests against it come from the Natives of the Apia district, who live in the vicinity of the main hospital in the Territory. The Natives prefer, and rightly so, to pay for medical comforts as they receive them. They still pay for the same from chemists and others in spite of the medical tax. The campaign against yaws, hookworm, and other endemic diseases can well be a charge on the general revenue of the country. The cost of such a campaign is, however, more than exceeded by the generous contribution by the New Zealand Government to the Medical Department of Samoa. The Natives themselves would even be prepared to pay a reasonable charge for treatment if such were necessary. The medical tax is arbitrary, and should be repealed.

The abolition of time-honoured customs of the Samoan Natives has resulted in utter disregard of the law: This is the natural outcome of all laws imposed arbitrarily or prematurely on my people.

Through the Faipule, the "fine mat" custom—one which Samoans still honour and respect—has been disallowed. The celebration of marriages, the ceremony of the installation of chiefs, and even the honour paid to the dead, have all been controlled and curtailed. These restrictions, if adhered to, would cut so vitally into the prestige of the chiefs, not to say anything of the liberty of the subject, that they are being disobeyed on every hand. The trade in fine mats particularly is going on to such an extent that if the biblical test of the guiltless casting the first stone were again made, not even the most law-abiding Faipule, who are said to be responsible for the restriction, could conscientiously cast one stone. Nevertheless, these uncalled-for measures are an usurpation of the rights of the Samoan people, and they recognize the danger of the opportunities thus given all and sundry to break the law.