

Medical staff in the Group at present consists of :—

—		S.M.P.	Dressers.	Staff Nurses.	Nurses.
Fakaofu ..	.. }	1* {	2	1	..
Nukunono ..	.. }		2	..	1
Atafu ..	.. }		1	1	2
Total ..	..	1	5	2	3

\* Moves from island to island at approximately three-monthly intervals.

### *Training*

Staff are trained at the Central Medical School, Fiji, in the case of the assistant medical practitioners, and at Apia, Western Samoa, in the case of dressers and nurses. At present, one Tokelau Islander is being trained in Fiji, a Tokelau youth is being trained in Apia as a laboratory assistant, and three Tokelau girls have commenced their training in Apia as nurses. During the year refresher courses at Apia have been given to the three male dressers.

The practice of seconding assistant medical practitioners for short periods of service in one or another of the islands has continued, and both Nukunono and Fakaofu have had the services of an assistant medical practitioner this year. A senior Samoan Staff Nurse has been seconded to Atafu and has done good work. It is intended to continue the secondment of more highly-trained nurses and other staff until the Tokelau staff have themselves been trained.

No vital statistics are available for the Group.

### *Nutrition*

The food of the inhabitants consists of coconut, fish, fowl, bananas, pulaka (a type of taro), the fruit of the edible pandanus, and occasionally pork. Fish is plentiful and easily caught. Fowls and pigs are kept in each village but not in sufficient numbers to provide a continuous source of fresh meat. Few bananas are grown due to the absence of humus. Ta'amu, a large member of the taro family, is grown on all three islands, and to some extent replaces taro, which cannot be grown in the Group. Pulaka, a coarse tuber similar to the Samoan wild bush taro, is cultivated on each atoll, and a variety of kumara is grown on one islet of Fakaofu. The edible pandanus fruits twice a year in May and November. The diet, although apparently deficient in some ingredients, does not seem to impair the health of the inhabitants.

### *Medical Problems*

One of the major problems facing the islands is that of rodent control. The problem appears at present to be more an economic than a medical one, for while great damage is done to the coconut palms by rats, none of the rats caught have been found to carry any disease. Plans have been drawn up for an intensive campaign against this pest, and advice has been sought from the South Pacific Commission and Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (New Zealand) on the problem. It is anticipated that the campaign will take place in the forthcoming year.

It is also hoped to carry out an antifilarial campaign as soon as suitable transport can be arranged.

The health education of the people is largely carried out by the assistant medical practitioners and staff nurses, assisted by the women's committees. This organization is most active in the Group and its activities include home nursing, maternal and infant welfare, as well as giving attention to village sanitation.