

1830, by the father of the present British Consul, the Rev. J. Williams, who landed a number of Native teachers from Tahiti. A few years afterwards, about 1835, five English missionaries, belonging to the London Missionary Society, landed on the islands, and from that time to the present several Congregational missionaries have been constantly resident on the group. In addition to these, there is a Roman Catholic Bishop resident at Apia, and a number of Catholic priests in various parts of the islands. The Natives for nearly thirty years past, I understand, have annually contributed considerable sums towards the support of the mission establishments.

There is no principal chief having authority over the whole group, although there are three great chiefs having the title of *Tui*, or King—viz., *Tui-Manua*, *Tui-A-ana*, *Tui-Atua*. The first-named is at Manu'a and the other two at Upolu. Although holding the high-sounding title of King, these chiefs really have no more authority than the *Alii*, or chiefs of towns, all being controlled by the councillors of the towns. Formerly there was a *Tui Samoa*, or King, of the whole group, similar to the Tui Tonga and Tui Viti (King of Tonga and King of Fiji), but this has not been the case for probably hundreds of years. Each town or village has its own chief. In some cases a number of villages are banded together in a kind of confederacy, over which the chief who has the greatest influence exercises a nominal kind of rule. The principal chiefs are called *Alii*, next to whom are the heads of certain families in each village, called *Tu-la-fale*, who comprise a very considerable section of the community, and really exercise more influence than the chiefs. Everything affecting the interest of the village is debated in council, where the *Tu-la-fale* sit with the chief, and do most of the speaking. The decisions of the council become law for the whole village. The system of government varies in different districts. In some towns the *Matuas*, or Patriarchs, exercise considerable authority, whilst in others the *Tu-la-fales* have the most influence; this, however, they only possess collectively, not individually. The Natives, having so little to do, spend a great deal of time in their councils, where they discuss and regulate all the affairs of the town or village, down to the most trifling matter. They are constantly laying down laws for the price of food when sold to the Europeans, and what shall be paid by Europeans to the Natives they employ as boats' crews. The village council leaves no man, not even the chief, free to bargain for the disposal of what is his own. No argument can overcome its decisions, and the only way to remove these restrictions is for foreigners to abstain altogether from having any dealings with the Natives whilst they endeavour to enforce these mischievous and absurd laws for regulating prices.

None of the Samoan Natives, up to the present time, have been taken away in labour vessels. They would have the strongest objection to being removed from their own islands, and would not willingly engage themselves as labourers. There is, however, on Samoa a considerable number of Natives from islands near the Line, and from Niue, or Savage Island, who have been imported to work on the cotton plantations and about some of the warehouses. I saw a gang of thirty-five of the Line Islanders hoeing in a cotton field;—they are darker in colour, and much smaller men than the Samoans. It struck me that they looked wretchedly dejected and forlorn, and that they plodded along at their work in a most languid and monotonous manner. Some were engaged, I was told, for five years, and some for three years, with pay of from three dollars to five dollars a month. They have to labour from 6 o'clock in the morning to 6 o'clock in the evening, with a rest of an hour for breakfast and an hour for dinner. The Niue men that I saw were working about one of the stores at Apia; they were clothed in European costume, and had a lively and cheerful look. Several of them, I was told, after being sent back to their homes, had engaged themselves for a second term of service and returned to Apia; but I did not hear that this had been the case with any of the Natives from the Line Islands.

A feud has existed for some time past between two sections of the Natives on Upolu and Manono; they have already fought twice during the last three years, when several were killed on each side, and hostilities are again imminent. The quarrel commenced about three years ago between *Tua Masanga* and *Manono* (one of the small islands off the western end of Upolu, the inhabitants of which formerly had considerable political influence over the people of Upolu), as to which party should have the right to nominate a chief to succeed to the title of *Malieatoa*, which is an old hereditary title of high rank. The *Tua Masanga* nominated for the title the eldest son of the late *Malieatoa*: the *Manono* party set up the brother of the deceased chief. The chieftainship, although hereditary, does not necessarily descend from father to son. Although the present war began ostensibly for the purpose of settling the succession to the title of *Malieatoa*, yet it soon took wider dimensions; and the *Manono* party, with a view of gaining more adherents to their side, declared it to be the *Taua o tu la fono*, or "war for establishing laws;" but probably the real motive that impelled the *Manono* party to take up arms, was a jealousy of the advantages enjoyed by the *Tua Masanga* in having the foreign settlement of Apia within their borders. This jealousy, and the fear of being deprived altogether of their political supremacy, induced the *Manono* party to establish themselves on the long low point that forms the western boundary of Apia Harbour, the name of which they changed from *Murinu'u* to *Samoa na tasi*—"Samoa is one." From this position they hope to gain the ascendancy over the party who are now paramount in Apia. Great preparations are being made by both sides, and blows will no doubt be come to very shortly; but the Samoans do not appear to be a warlike race, and the war, although it may be protracted, is not likely to be a sanguinary one. The present disturbed state of affairs, however, is most disastrous to the Natives, as they congregate together in large numbers and neglect their cultivations. They are selling their land in all directions to buy arms, without retaining sufficient reserves for their own support; and of course this disposition is being eagerly taken advantage of by many of the white settlers who desire to acquire land. Although not a warlike they are a very vain race, and their vanity compels them to enter into hostilities that both sides would probably gladly avoid. It is the opinion of many of the oldest residents who are thoroughly acquainted with the Natives, that the parties now at war would be glad to see peace restored, and that they, as well as the rest of the Native population, would welcome a foreign Power that could put an end to their troubles and establish law and order among them.

Whilst I was at Apia, I took the opportunity, through the aid of Mr. Williams, the British Consul, (who has been thirty-three years in the islands, and is thoroughly acquainted with the language,