

gator Islands and their old-established agencies in China and Cochin. An examination of the chart will show how vast was the scope of their operations, when we come to consider that, between the two points I have last mentioned—that is Samoa and Yap (which may be considered as one of the Palos, known to the English as Pelew Islands)—they have, or had lately, an agent in their employment upon every productive island inhabited by the copper-coloured race, upon which the natives are as yet sufficiently well disposed to permit a white man to reside. I append a list of these islands and of their products as far as they are known to me.

The manager for Messrs. Godeffroy, in the choice of his employés on the various isles of the Pacific, takes no account of nationality; most of his agents are naturally English or American, as most of the mariners who have run wild in these seas during past years, and so got a thorough knowledge of the native language and habits, are sure to be. He is a very shrewd man of the world, although young. I am speaking of Theodore Weber, who really made Godeffroy's business what it is, but has now retired. A Mr. Poppé supplies his place. He had but three questions usually to put to a man who sought employment of him:—"Can you speak the language?" "Can you live among the natives without quarrelling with them?" "Can you keep your mouth shut?"—i.e., concerning your master's business when you meet with white men. To a man who can return satisfactory answers to these queries, Godeffroy never refuses employment. He gets the means of transport to those isles upon which he is to be at home; everything necessary to build a storehouse and stock of trade to put into it. They pay no salaries; they simply trust a man with so much goods, and expect of him, within a reasonable time, so much produce at a fixed rate. There is another stipulation upon which they lay great weight: "Have a woman of your own, no matter what island you take her from; for a trader without a wife is a man in eternal hot water." Lastly, they impose the condition, "Give no assistance to missionaries either by word or deed (beyond what is demanded of you by common humanity), but, wheresoever you may find them, use your best influence with the natives to obstruct and exclude them." It would occupy too much space for me to explain the reasons of this last condition: it is enough to say that it originated on very simple grounds. Throughout the Pacific, for the past twenty-five years, there has been a constant struggle for the mastery between missionaries and merchants, each being intensely jealous of the influence over native affairs obtained by the other. Merchants make the greatest profits out of savages, for the reason that savages are content to sell their produce for blue beads, tomahawks, and tobacco. When these savages are brought under the influence of the missionaries, they are instructed to demand payment in piece goods wherewith to clothe themselves, and in coin for the purpose of subscribing to the funds of the missionary societies. This reduces the profits of the merchants, who bitterly resent such interference. Moreover, the English missionaries were for years the grand opponents of the Messrs. Godeffroy in the matter of the circulation of Bolivian coin; and although the firm came off victors, they have never forgotten or forgiven their ancient antagonists.

Another peculiar feature of the Godeffroy system is, the sending of their vessels to sea from their head-quarters at Samoa with *sealed orders*, so that no one on board knows positively where they are bound to until, in a certain latitude, the master opens his instructions in the presence of the mate. Furthermore, they ship no man as mate who is not fully competent to fulfil the duties of the captain in case of need; and they do not insure their ships. It has been a matter of conjecture with many, what could have been the object of Messrs. Godeffroy in purchasing such a vast tract of land on Samoa. I have enjoyed peculiar facilities of knowing their exact intentions. Very much of their land is so elevated as to possess a mild temperature, well suited to the European constitution; it consists of fertile plateaux, anciently inhabited and cultivated. Their idea was to subdivide it among German immigrants, to whom they would lease it in small lots, with the option of purchase, Godeffroy providing means of transport and all necessaries to begin with. It was intended for them to cultivate corn, coffee, tobacco, cinchona, and other produce which had been scientifically and successfully experimented upon; while the low lands in the vicinity of the sea beach were to be devoted to the growth of cocoa palms, sugar-cane, rice, jute, &c. by the labour of Chinese, who were intended to be brought over in families and established as tenants on a small scale, so as to do away entirely with the idea of servitude. The Franco-German war prevented the realization of this scheme at the time intended. The results, there can be no doubt, would have been very great and very beneficial. It is to be hoped that the idea, which they have been compelled to abandon in consequence of the present Imperial German policy of discouragement to emigration in any form, may be acted upon by our own countrymen at no distant date.

The suitability of the Samoan Isles (especially that of Upolu, which the Messrs. Godeffroy selected as the nucleus of their operations) for European colonization will be better understood, if I have the opportunity to describe their local conditions and resources, as far as they are known to me, as I purpose to do.

It is not too much to say that the Tongese from some very ancient time possessed a civilization peculiar to themselves. They have more moral stamina, energy, and self-reliance than any other existing race of the Pacific. Had they been acquainted, formerly, with the use of metals, they would have subdued all Polynesia. Their immense war canoes, rigged with a lateen yard 100 feet long, and crowded with a whole tribe of several hundreds of people, in which they made voyages to Fiji, Samoa, and even to much greater distances, were miracles of patient ingenuity as concerns their construction, and needed indomitable daring for their navigation.

It has been stated by some travellers that the Tongese are not well affected towards Europeans; but the eagerness which they have displayed to adopt our civilization, and the manner in which they have modeled their government and framed their laws wholly upon the advice and under the direction of English missionaries, is a proof to the contrary.

At the present time, their condition is most prosperous. Their lands are inexhaustibly fertile, industriously cultivated, and intersected by good roads. Wheresoever a traveller may turn in Tonga, he but wanders in gardens. There is no want, squalor, or beggary to be seen there. All are clothed in such manner as is suitable to their climate and condition; all can read and write, and are familiar with the Gospel. In their manners, they are courteous and dignified; in their dealings, they are honest and manly; in their domestic habits, they are cleanly even to fastidiousness. With the exception of