

gobbled up by "man-of-war hawks," or the like birds of prey, if it be daylight, or if in the night, by the "koviū" or great land-crab, concerning which I have something hereafter to say, inasmuch as his peculiarities not only invest him with a certain amount of interest, but entitle him to be ranked among animals of superior intelligence. It has long been customary with natives of the coral seas to rear and tame turtles. They become much attached to the persons who feed them, and though they spend much of their time in the salt water invariably return to the houses where they are domesticated.

#### ADDITIONAL MEMORANDA BY MR. H. B. STERNDALÉ.

##### THE UNITED STATES AND THE SAMOAN GROUP.

In my previous memoranda, I mentioned the Island of Upolu as being the most important of the Samoan Group. Lying midway between Savaii and Tutuila, upon the latter being the splendid harbour of Pago-Pago, Upolu is of much greater commercial consequence than either of them, for the reasons that Savaii possesses but one harbour, and that a small one, very inferior in point of security, and that Tutuila is much less fertile than Upolu, and has a smaller area of land available for plantation purposes.

The scheme propounded by the Americans appears, as far as I understand it, to be the establishment of a naval station and the purchase of some 10,000 acres of land contiguous to the seaports, *i.e.*, partly on Tutuila and the remainder on Upolu. It is reported that Americans have already purchased a considerable area at Pago-Pago. The inference is that they propose to monopolize what vacant land may still be available on that harbour, and to take up the remainder of the 10,000, which will probably be the larger portion of it, on Upolu. This is very significant, and will, if carried out, exercise a very important influence on the commercial future of the Central Pacific. Upolu (or its port of Apia rather) is now the commercial centre or receiving depôt for the products of Tonga Hapai, the Union Group, the Ellice Group, the Gilberts, the Marshalls, and the Carolines, as well as for the detached outlying islands near them all, such as Niuafofū, Fotuna, Alofa, Uvea, Tokerau, Manihiki, Niuè, and many others. The port of Apia is divided between three commercial interests, the Germans, the English, and the Americans. The American trade up to the present time has been insignificant; the German, very extensive; the English, although represented by about seven establishments, entirely divided among small business men. The Germans and Americans have always pulled together: so much so, that for several years, while the Germans were extensively engaged in the purchase of lands, they registered all their title deeds in the American Consulate. The Germans bought up large tracts of land. Indeed, four years ago, Caesar Godeffroy owned somewhere about 25,000 acres on Upolu alone. The Americans also, including their Consul, acquired lands by domesticating themselves among the natives, intermarrying, &c. Their lands are all of the best as regards future agricultural prospects, and are contiguous to the harbour of Apia. The English have very little land, and what they have is of no great commercial importance as regards the future settlement of the place; for the reason that no property of consequence was acquired by English settlers at Apia during those times when land was easily procurable, except such as was given by the natives to John Williams, the Samoan missionary. This he bequeathed to his son, the present British Consul, who sold much of his best land to the French Roman Catholic Mission when they founded their present establishments, so that very little valuable land, or such as is contiguous to the seaport, now remain in the possession of Englishmen.

Mr. Consul Williams is now an invalid in Sydney, and his case is said to be hopeless. His son, a very young man, is, I believe, discharging his duties, and will probably be appointed in his stead. He is a storekeeper, a business which of course he must relinquish if permanently appointed to fill his father's place. The policy of Consul Williams has not given satisfaction to the English residents of Samoa. His private character has been such as to render him much respected and beloved by his countrymen at the Navigators; but in his consular capacity he has caused irreparable mischief. Many British subjects have renounced their nationality and made common cause with the Germans and Americans. His son, consequently, does not possess the confidence of the English residents, and English interests at Apia are in an unhealthy state. This has not been made sufficiently apparent in the New Zealand papers, because their correspondents have been usually persons more or less connected with the Mission.

If the Americans take up (say) 5,000 acres of land contiguous to Apia harbour, they can only obtain it by purchasing the property of their own countrymen, and by buying up the remainder of the native lands which lie between the settlement and the mountains; unless, indeed, they make some composition with the Germans, which they are very likely to do from community of interests. In either case, the English proprietors will be in a manner thrust out, as many of them are now located upon land to which they have no tenure but by sufferance of the chiefs. The English settlement will be confined to a fractional part of the whole harbour, with but small facilities for the conduct of their business. The question will resolve itself into this: Is Apia to be regarded as an American or as a German possession? The possession of Apia means the sovereignty of the Navigator Islands.

This is one view of the question, but yet another may be taken. To the east of Apia, and about nine miles distant, is another harbour called Salafata. It is regarded by whalers and other seafarers as equal in security, &c., to that of Apia. There is no settlement, but around it are considerable tracts of land already the property of Americans and Germans. No English of any consideration are there. If the Americans elect to purchase their land and form their station at Salafata, the result will be that the American Consul and residents will remove from Apia to that place, which will become the great nucleus of American trade in the Pacific; and then the English now in Apia, or who may subsequently settle there, will have only their old rivals, the Germans, to contend with. Although but a few miles apart, there will be no land communication between the