

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 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 Marinnu 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, manners, and customs of the natives, and has their confidence), to ascertain their views, from one of the leading chiefs from each side in the present quarrel, as to the feelings of the natives with reference to a foreign power assuming the government of the islands. The most influential chief of the Manono party, and representing one of the three great districts into which the island of Upolu is divided, said: "There is no country we should like to take over Samoa equal to England. We know the English are just; an English protectorate would be sweet." The principal chief belonging to the Tua Masanga, or section inhabiting the central district of Upolu, in which is the harbour and settlement of Apia, said that "his own feeling and that of his people was that they would gladly welcome British rule, but that they did not want any other Power." He was repeatedly questioned, and his answer was always the same. He was then asked why the natives preferred the English? His reply was that "they knew that the British would deal justly by them, but other Powers would oppress them." This conclusion, he said, was formed from the experience of the oppressive treatment they had already experienced at the hands of the subjects as well as the vessels of war of other nations. His opinion was that the great majority of the natives were anxious for the British Government to come to Samoa to establish law and good government. What they would prefer would be to have a council of chiefs, aided by English officers, to frame and carry out laws, and to have the occasional presence of an English vessel of war to back up the authority of the Council.

On Tutuila, Maunga, the chief at Pango Pango Harbour, told me that the natives would be glad to see Great Britain take the Islands under her protection. He said they made an application to this effect through the British Consul to the Queen about twenty-five years ago; that they were still of the same mind, and were waiting for a favourable reply. An answer, I was told, was returned to this application, to the effect that the British Government was not prepared to take possession of the islands, but that it would not stand by and see any other Power exercise greater authority in them than it did. The chiefs of Tutuila and of Upolu, I understand, have twice forwarded requests, through the British Consul, to the Home Government to take possession of the islands, or establish a protectorate over them. The foreign residents are exceedingly desirous of seeing some settled form of Government established, and the great majority of them are in favour of British rule. In an interview I had with the Roman Catholic Bishop at Apia, he told me that he very much regretted the present disturbed state of the natives on Upolu, as it stopped all progress among them. He would like to see some Government take possession of the group, and thought that the natives would be glad to welcome any Power that would establish law and order, and put an end to their fights. He would rather see England or America than any other foreign power take possession of the islands. He knew that British rule was just and liberal, and that all religions would have equal liberty. Any authority that came to the islands would have to be from some recognized Government, and should be introduced by a vessel of war. He estimated the population at about 34,000; this was the number set down a few years ago, after careful inquiry, and he did not think there was much difference now—the population was about stationary. He had a high opinion of the Samoans, and considered them docile, truthful, and honest; but the chiefs were exceedingly jealous of each other, which led to frequent wars.

In the course of conversation with Mr. Weber, the German Consul, he informed me that he had large claims against the natives, and that he had been applying to his Government for several years past to get a vessel of war to call. The Prussian Government had at length acceded to his application, and promised that the "Nympha" should visit the islands on her way to China. This vessel is expected at Apia very shortly. Mr. Weber told me that he had no intimation whatever that it was the intention of his Government to take possession of, or to assume any authority over, the islands. On reaching Auckland, on my return from the Navigator's, I learnt from a gentleman just returned from Sydney that the "Nympha" had reached that place, and that the captain had stated that he had instructions to proceed thence to the Navigator's Islands, where he was to refit his ship, and to land and exercise his men.

There can be no doubt, I think, that both natives and Europeans would gladly welcome the establishment of British authority on the islands, and that it will be a matter of lasting regret to all who are in any way interested in the extension of commerce and civilization among the countless islands of the Pacific if the Government disregard the wishes of the natives, and refuse to take possession of, or to establish a protectorate over, this valuable group. The importance of securing possession of the harbour  
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