

A *patu*, having plantations of cocoanuts, has one son and two daughters. He intends giving his land and cocoanut-trees to his son; but, the son dying before the father, he bequeaths all to the younger daughter, to be hers after his own and his wife's death. The father dying, the mother and daughters occupy the land. On the marriage of the elder daughter the mother gives her some land and cocoanut-trees. The younger sister also marries and has a family, but her sister is childless. The mother dying, and subsequently the elder sister, after the death of the elder sister, there being no children, the younger sister, to whom the land was given by her father, requests the husband of her deceased sister to return to his own family; but he elects to remain, and claims the land and cocoanut-trees which he and his late wife occupied. But this not according to Niue custom; the law will take the land from him and restore it to the younger sister, to whom it rightly belongs.

The son of a *patu* marries the daughter of another *patu*. After the marriage the father-in-law, with his family, build a house and reside upon the land (*kaina*) of the son-in-law. The son-in-law leaves the island or dies and the father-in-law remains in possession, whereupon the brother of the said son-in-law claims the land and cocoanut-trees, it being the property of his brother inherited from their father; but those in possession being stronger than he refuse to give up the land. The land rightfully belongs to the brother of the deceased son-in-law, and not to the father-in-law or his family. The rulers shall decide whether the said brother shall take the whole of the land, or whether a portion of it be given to the occupants who have taken possession of the said land.

Two men with lands adjoining each other; one has bearing cocoanut-trees the other not. The one who has cocoanut-trees accepts money or money-value from the other, not in purchase of the land, but as a bond of agreement, and the two men work together and enlarge their cocoanut plantations, sharing the produce. On the death of the fathers the sons shall take the shares of their fathers, but other relatives of the deceased shall not have any claim upon the land. The plantations shall belong to the children of the deceased, who agreed to work the land in partnership. Whoever shall oppose the above laws, and not accept the decision of the Judges, shall be liable to a fine of £1, and the land shall be restored to its rightful owner.

Land given in Niue for the erection of churches, schoolhouses, the residences of teachers, &c.: These lands shall be preserved and guarded by the Church and by the law of the land for the purpose for which the said lands were given. These lands, as above stated, shall remain for the use of the Church from generation to generation for ever.

That is all.

Agreed to at meeting of the chiefs and rulers at Alofi, 22nd May, 1900.

Confirmed at Fono at Uhomotu, 5th June, 1900.

TONGIA,
The King of Niue Fekau.

NOTES ON SAVAGE ISLAND OR NIUE.

Situated in 19° S. lat., 169° 48' W. long. Forty miles in circumference by sea; about 200 ft. high. Population 4,015, and 561 away working in Guano and other islands. A road round the island made by forced labour as punishment for breaches of the law; the road has lately been widened by free labour by the people in the various villages. About thirty-three miles round the island by road. There are eleven villages. The island is flat. A good depth of soil on the tableland; but very rocky everywhere, abounding in caves. The soil is fertile, producing taro, yams, bananas, sweet potatoes, sugar-cane, manioc (sweet casava), papaw apple, oranges, limes, lemons, maire, and cabbage, beans, &c., also grow.

Exports.—Arrowroot, indigenous and abundant. The only cultivation needed is to burn the bush and undergrowth. The arrowroot is good in quality, but owing to the primitive mode of drying particles of dust fall on to it, which renders it unsaleable in the foreign market.

Cotton thrives well. Kidney cotton in past years was extensively cultivated, and formed the staple commodity of trade. But the cotton degenerated and became practically worthless, and it is not now cultivated. Sea island cotton grows well and should be tried.

Fungus: An edible fungus, in demand amongst the Chinese, grows in the bush, especially at Liku, Tamalagau, and Mutalau. It grows on decaying wood, and is cultivated by cutting down sticks of certain kinds of wood and lodging them in slanting direction against rocks or trees.

Coffee will grow, but has not been fairly tried. Vanilla has been lately introduced.

Hats were extensively made from 1890 until 1897, since which date there has been no sale for them. The stores are buying them again this year in smaller quantities. The hats are made from the pandanus-leaf. The women and girls are clever plaiting hats. If the material used in the Marshall Group could be cultivated they could make hats equal to those.

Copra: Last year 600 tons or more were exported; this year not half that quantity.

The planting of cocoanuts proceeds slowly. The able men and youths are away from home. Had it not been for the constant drain of men for the last twenty-five years for labourers in Guano Islands the number of bearing cocoanut-trees would have been double what it is. And so long as Niue remains the labour-market for the Pacific there is no hope of increasing the productions of the island.

Form of government, patriarchal. Heads of clans, *patu*s, rule. In olden times the *patu*s arranged for feasts, made wars, also elected and anointed kings. Nowadays the *patu*s rule in their own villages in local affairs; but once in two months these *patu*s meet alternately at Alofi and Tuapa, or Uhomotu, where the King resides, for the discussion of all matters of importance in the island. The Government has worked well so far as keeping the peace is concerned: there has been no fighting or serious quarrel for fifty years. But of late years there has been no advance in legislation; the island is at peace, but in most things pertaining to the welfare of the people and the prosperity of the island Niue is retrograding.