

SAMOA.

Reigning King.—Malietoa Laupepa, restored November 9, 1889.

Group of 14 volcanic islands in the South Pacific, the chief of which are Upolu, Savaii, and Tutuila. At a Samoan conference at Berlin in 1889, at which Great Britain, Germany, and the United States were represented, an Act was signed (June 14) guaranteeing the neutrality of the islands, in which the citizens of the three signatory Powers have equal rights of residence, trade, and personal protection. The three Powers recognise the independence of the Samoan Government, and the free rights of the natives to elect their chief or king, and choose the form of government according to their own laws and customs. A supreme court is established, consisting of one judge, who is styled Chief Justice of Samoa. To this Court are referred (1) all civil suits concerning real property situated in Samoa; (2) all civil suits of any kind between natives and foreigners, or between foreigners of different nationalities; (3) all crimes and offences committed by natives against foreigners, or committed by such foreigners as are not subject to any consular jurisdiction. All future alienation of lands is prohibited, with certain specified exceptions. A local administration is provided for the municipal district of Apia.

Apia in the island of Upolu is the capital and centre of government.

Area, 1,701 square miles; population, about 34,000, of which 16,600 in Upolu, 12,500 in Savaii, 3,750 in Tutuila. The natives are Polynesians. There were in 1891, 235 British-born subjects (163 males and 72 females), about 90 Germans, and a few of other nationalities. The natives are all Christians (Protestant and Roman Catholic), and schools are attached to the churches. Revenue from taxes and customs duties on the foreign population in 1891 5,670*l.* The trade is in the hands of German and British firms, and British trade is increasing. Imports, 1892, 67,318*l.*; exports, 36,356*l.* Imports, 1893, 68,250*l.* (38,162*l.* from Great Britain and Colonies). Of the imports 489*l.* came from United Kingdom; 23,584*l.* from New Zealand, and 14,098*l.* from Australia; exports, 1893, 34,326*l.*, of which 3,158*l.* went to Great Britain or Colonies. Chief imports, haberdashery, kerosene, lumber, galvanised roofing, and tinned provisions; chief export, copra. During 1892 many acres were planted with cacao, with a view to export. In 1893 81 vessels of 74,955 tons (26 of 26,925 tons British) excluding men-of-war and coasting vessels entered the port of Apia. During 1893 the North German Lloyd steamer ceased running to Samoa, but the remainder of the fine steam communication with New Zealand, Australia, and California continued in operation. New Zealand is reached in five days, Australia in eight.

The Berlin Treaty made the American coinage the standard of exchange in Samoa. English silver and United States, English, and German gold are exclusively in circulation.

Acting Consul.—C. M. Woodford, Deputy Commissioner for Samoa and Union Group.

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