Notes on the Natives of Fakaofu (Bowditch Island). Union Group

Author(s): J. J. Lister

Source: *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, Vol. 21 (1892), pp. 43-63

Published by: [Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2842209>

Accessed: 15/06/2014 01:33

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

From the SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES.—Proceedings. Vol. xiii.
No. 2.

From the SOCIETY OF BIBLICAL ARCHÆOLOGY.—Proceedings. Vol.
xiii. Part 4.

Mr. CHARLES H. READ exhibited some objects from the Pacific Islands and the West Coast of America, collected during the voyages of Vancouver. Mr. LISTER and Dr. TYLOR joined in the discussion.

Mr. J. J. LISTER read a paper on the Natives of Fakaofu.

NOTES *on the* NATIVES *of* FAKAOFU (BOWDITCH ISLAND). UNION
GROUP.

[WITH PLATES I TO IX.]

By J. J. LISTER, Esq.

THE Union Islands lie in the South Pacific Ocean some 300 miles north of Samoa.

They consist of four islands, viz.—*Atafu* (Duke of York Island), *Nukunono* (Duke of Clarence Island), and *Fakaofu* (Bowditch Island), which are situated in a line from N.W. to S.E.—the two former rather less than 50 miles apart, the two latter rather less than 30. The fourth island, *Swain Island*, lies some 100 miles to the south of Fakaofu. *Atafu* and *Nukunono* were discovered by Admiral Byron in 1765, *Fakaofu* by the United States Exploring Expedition, under Commodore Wilkes, in 1841. *Swain Island* is said to have been discovered by Quiros in 1560. He named it *Gente Hermosa*—from the beauty of the inhabitants. There are no native inhabitants now, but bones, and stone implements, and slabs of stone set up on edge have been found there. The people of the neighbouring islands call it *Olosenga*.

The islands were visited by Commander Oldham, R.N., in H.M.S. *Egeria*, in June, 1889, and on the three northern ones the British flag was hoisted, and they were declared to be under British protection. On this occasion a stay of only a few hours was made at each island, but in August the *Egeria* returned to Fakaofu and stayed ten days while a careful survey was made.

Owing to the kindness of Captain Wharton, R.N., F.R.S., the Hydrographer, I was in the *Egeria* at the time, in the capacity

of naturalist, and had the opportunity of making the following notes :—

The three northern islands are regular coral atolls or ring islands, consisting in each case of a somewhat pear-shaped ring of reef completely enclosing a lagoon (Plate I). At Fakaofu and Nukunono the lagoon is about 7 miles in its longest diameter, at Atafu about 4 miles. Numbers of low islets varying in length from a few yards to a mile or more, are situated on the ring of reef, and these support an abundant vegetation of cocoanuts and other trees. The islets are most numerous and largest on the eastern (windward) sides of the atolls.

The natives of Atafu and Nukunono are of the same race as those of Fakaofu, though there appears, from what I was told, to have been more intermixture of white blood in them.

Each island has a white or half-caste trader living on it, who buys the "copra" (dried cocoanut kernel) from the natives for the New Zealand firm he represents. The trader at Fakaofu is Mr. Polsen. He is a native of Schleswig-Holstein, but speaks English perfectly. Mr. Polsen was interested in reading mathematics. It was curious on going into his house in this out-of-the-way island to see the familiar backs of Todhunter's "Euclid" and "Algebra," and Tables of Logarithms arranged along his book-shelf. I am greatly indebted to him for the assistance he gave me in interpreting to the natives. His wife and two of the older women of the island were the source of almost all the information relating to the traditions of the people, contained in the following notes. Nothing pleased these ladies better than to be summoned to the verandah of Mr. Polsen's house and to be asked questions about the beliefs and customs of the people before the introduction of Christianity, which occurred about twenty years ago. Plate VI represents them adorned with cocoanut leaves to show the decorations of the old times. The method of eliciting information was as follows :—I asked my question of Mr. Polsen in English, he passed it to his wife in Samoan, the matter was discussed in the Fakaofu speech, and the answer returned to him in Samoan, to come back to me in English. I am well aware that this method of obtaining information is liable to error, and my excuse for offering these necessarily imperfect notes is that the beliefs and customs with which they largely deal exist only in the recollection of a few of the older generation of the natives, and will die with them.

Most of the natives of Fakaofu were pleased to be taken under British protection. On our first visit they did not seem to grasp the situation, but on the second they were evidently highly gratified, and very anxious, even for Polynesians, to produce a good impression.

A dance was performed in honour of our visit (the dances have been in abeyance since the coming of the missionaries), and a present of cocoanuts and fish was made (Plate VIII). I extract the following account of this function from my journal:—

“It took place on the open shingly space in front of the Samoan missionary’s house, where we were gathered. The crowd of natives, almost the entire population of the island, were assembled on the left. They advanced with slow steps chanting some kind of song; first came a small child crowned with a wreath and carrying a green cocoanut, then two children side by side, who also carried cocoanuts, then the whole body of the people, old men first, then young men and women, most of them with green wreaths and girdles, made in many cases of the tangled stems of the green dodder-like *Cassytha*, which is abundant in the islands. They carried cocoanuts, fish, and some roots of a coarse kind of taro (arrow-root).

“A halt was made before they came in front of the house, and a few of the younger men came forward with stakes—instead of clubs—which they brandished about with more vigour than skill. Sometimes they lost hold of their twirling clubs, and away they flew—fortunately doing no damage. The whole thing was, we understood, the revival of a ‘heathen’ ceremony, permitted by the king for this special and so important occasion, when their island had become part of the British Empire. The procession then moved past the house and returned, throwing down their gifts on the coral shingle. Then a grey-headed old man made a long speech, with short abruptly finished sentences, in which one detected the mannerism of the missionary preacher, saying—as we were afterwards told—how small the gifts were, and reminding us that we had come to a very poor little island, the people of which were ignorant and as the dust of the ground beneath our feet; and more to the like effect. To this Mr. Polsen replied on our behalf. Then a dance was performed, in which four old men alone took part, while the old women beat time and chanted an accompaniment.¹ The dancers advanced in single file, and in a spiral course, stepping and executing grotesque gestures in time with the song. As they advanced they became more excited, and ended with a loud shout, given all together.

“The children were much amused at seeing these reverent seniors cutting such unwonted capers.”

Physical Characters.—In their general appearance the natives looked very like Tongans or Samoans. They were well made

¹ The younger generation has grown up in ignorance both of the dances and the songs that accompany them.

and well nourished people. What struck me in their appearance was the great breadth of the lower part of the face at the angles of the jaw.

Measurements.—I took measurements of 13 men and 6 women. The results are given in the following table,¹ with those of 13 Tongan men for comparison. (I happen to have measured the same number of men in both places.)

		Fakaofu (men).	Tongan (men).	Difference.	Fakaofu (women).
Percentage to stature	Stature in inches	67·98	67·66	·32	
	{ Chest girth	59·2	53·5	5·7	55·4
	{ Arm span	108·7	104·2	4·5	103·6
	{ Finger patella index	4·8	7·3	2·5	6·1
	{ Upper limb	34·6	32·8	1·8	33·7
	{ Lower limb	50·1	48·9	1·2	49·7
	{ Intermembral index	69·05	67·	2·05	67·8
	{ % Forearm to arm	87·08	88·9	1·82	87·1
	{ % Leg to thigh	75·7	74·9	·8	75·5
	{ Cephalic index	80·2	84·76	4·56	82·88
	Facial angle	105·°	104·9°	·1°	104·2°

The most striking feature appears to be the great length of arm and girth of chest of the Fakaofu people. The great length of the arm is seen in the actual measurement of the upper limb, and is borne out by the high figure reached by the arm-span, the very low finger patella index, and the high intermembral index. The high proportion of the arm-span is the result of the large chests combined with the long arms.

¹ In the table the terms 'arm' and 'leg' are used in the anatomical sense; the *arm* being that part of the upper limb between the shoulder and elbow, the *leg* the part of the lower limb between the knee and ankle.

The measurements of the limbs were taken from the following points—

Upper Limb—

- (1) A point half an inch outside and on the same level as the coracoid process.
- (2) The middle of a line joining the junction of the radius and outer condyle of the humerus with the inner condyle.
- (3) The middle of a line on the front of the wrist, joining the tips of the styloid processes of radius and ulna.

Lower Limb—

- (1) A point on the front of the thigh, on a level with the middle of the line between the great trochanter and the anterior superior process of the ilium.
- (2) A point over the ligamentum patellæ, level with the external tuberosity of the tibia.
- (3) A point on the middle of the bend of the ankle, over the junction of the tibia and astragalus.

For the cephalic index the greatest length of the head was measured from a point between the eyebrows to the most projecting point at the back of the head.

The small figure attained by the finger patella index (in one man the tip of the middle finger was *only one inch* above the upper margin of the patella) is the result of three factors: (1) the long arms (2) the short thighs (this appears in the proportion of the leg to the thigh—8 per cent. more in a native of Fakaofu than in a Tongan), and (3) the comparative shortness of the spine in proportion to the height—which appears in the comparison of the length of the lower limb with the height.

Thus, though the legs are long in proportion to those of a native of Tonga, the arms are much more long and the chests are very large.

The number of women measured (six) is perhaps too small to make the averages of the measurements of much value. So far as they go, they appear to show that the women have big chests and long arms, though in a less degree than the men.

It seems possible that the great development of the arms and chests of the natives of Fakaofu may be associated with the very peculiar conditions under which they live. To meet almost every need of their lives they must take a journey in a canoe; and the heavy work of this nature would be done, as usual among the Polynesian races, by the men. Their houses are crowded together on one of the smallest islets, which is one of the few situated on the leeward side of the atoll; while the plantations of cocoanuts, yams and taro, are on the other islands—mostly on the windward side. Hence, a visit to these plantations means a canoe journey of at least six to eight miles—poling over the shallows, and paddling across the deep water of the lagoon.

On the other hand, for fish, which constitutes the other main staple of their food, a trip to sea is needed.

The action of paddling, unlike that of rowing, is done entirely with the arms and body, the legs being folded together beneath the seat.

The natives of Fakaofu have lived so long on their island, that, as stated elsewhere, I could hear of no tradition of their originally having come from another place; they supposed that their first parents sprang from the coral stones of Fakaofu.

May it not then be possible that the great length of arms and size of chest of the present race are the result of the peculiar conditions under which so many generations have lived?

I much regret that I have not a larger series of measurements, and especially of women and children, to offer. It was not till after we had left the island for good, that I worked out the percentages of my figures and became aware of the peculiarities presented by the people. There are, of course, many other small communities in the Pacific, living under

similar conditions, and it would be a matter of great interest to know whether these people present similar peculiarities to those of the natives of Fakaofu.

I obtained three skulls of natives from the piece of ground belonging to Mr. Polsen. The king, whose permission I asked, made no objection to my taking them. These are now in the collection at the Royal College of Surgeons.¹

Colour.—The colour varies a good deal in different individuals. This, I was told, was not due to intermixture of foreign blood; the paler or darker shade went in families.

I copied the colour of five individuals who represented the varieties of shade. On comparing these with M. Broca's colour types, given in *Anthropological Notes and Queries*, I find that the darkest nearly matches No. 29, but is slightly redder. Two others are distinctly lighter and brighter in colour, between Nos. 29 and 31. The remaining two which were copied from women are much paler, falling between 31 and 32 in the less exposed parts of the skin, and deepening to a browner shade than 31 on the top of the forehead and the outer aspects of the arms. These were, however, exceptionally pale women.

In the neighbouring island of Atafu, where the people are of the same race, we saw a girl who was an Albino. Her hair, eyebrows, and eyelashes, were pale yellow, but the irides were greenish brown.

The normal people have the irides dark brown, with a darker ring at the outer margin.

The *hair* is black. It varies a good deal in growth; in some people it was straight, in others wavy.

Diseases.—*Elephantiasis* is frequent among them. By far the most common disease is the skin affection known as the "*Tokelau Ringworm*." I should think that more than half the population is affected in this manner generally in large patches, but frequently investing a whole limb and in some cases covering the whole body except the scalp.

Language.—Hale, who visited the island with the United States Exploring Expedition in 1841, found that he was able to understand a good deal of the speech of the people from a knowledge of Samoan. The Samoan interpreter they had on

¹ Professor Stewart has kindly furnished me with the following measurements—

YAPOKA, ♂, æt. 50 (circ.), *Fakaofu*. C., 530; L., 188; B., 147; Bi., 782; H., 142; Hi., 755; BN., 104; BA., 102; Ai., 981; Nh., 59; Nw., 27; Ni., 458; Ow., 43; Oh., 37; Oi., 860; Ca., 1590.

LANGITASI, ♂, æt. 60 (circ.), *Fakaofu*. C., 525; L., 188; B., 137; Bi., 729; H., 141; Hi., 750; BN., 104; BA., 99; Ai., 952; Nh., 58; Nw., 28; Ni., 483; Ow., 42; Oh., 37; Oi., 881; Ca., 1650.

board was able to understand them when he had become used to inserting the K sound (thus Samoan Fa'aofu = Fakaofu) and one or two other similar changes.

In this respect as well as in the substitution of H for S in Samoan the Fakaofu speech resembles Tongan. I found on reading some of the sentences which I wrote down in the Fakaofu speech to an oldish man in Tonga that he understood them. It is more like the old Tongan—of which examples are given in Mariner—than the modern Bible Tongan of the missionaries.

Mr. Polsen told me that he had received a parcel from New Zealand done up in a Maori newspaper. His wife on looking at this found she was able to make out something of it, and when he pointed out certain constant changes, as *f* into *wh*., e.g., Maori *whare* = Fakaofu (*Fale*, a house), she was able to gather the gist of a story the paper contained.

Only the old people use the Fakaofu speech now, the young ones are taught to read in Samoan, and this is the language used in church.

Gestures, &c.—As in Tonga one sees people raising the eyebrows for an instant, whilst making an affirmation; and if the reply amounts to a sentence they are raised several times whilst it is uttered.

The head is shaken in negation. Beckoning is effected by a downward movement of the raised arm, the palm of the hand being carried towards the beckoner.

I noticed a curious sound used to threaten children. When a child hesitated to carry out an order, the person who gave it uttered a sound (the terminal sound of the letter N) at first very low, gradually and slowly ascending the scale. By the time it had reached a moderately high note, the effect was so serious that the child, unless it was very naughty, became obedient, and went about its business.

I saw two boys quarrelling, which was not a common event. The matter did not come to blows. They stood perfectly still some distance apart, looking at one another under lowering brows for several seconds. Then a quick threatening movement on one side would be responded to by a defiant one on the other, and then followed another spell of mutual inspection. These became longer and longer, and the threatening movement less and less energetic until they each went their own way, and the incident was over. The whole was conducted in perfect silence.

Mythology.—My enquiries into the old mythology resulted in the following information :—

VOL. XXI.

E

Tui Tokelau, "the ruler of Tokelau," was the chief of the gods, and ruled on earth and in the sky.

He was also present in the stone which stood in the centre of the island.

This is described in the narrative of the Wilkes' expedition as being ten to fourteen feet high, and wrapped round with mats. The stone is said to have been broken in pieces by the first white missionary. A large piece of it used to lie about when Mr. Polsen first came—it has since been used in building up the side of the island. He said it was not carved.

Good and bad fortune and diseases were sent by the Tui Tokelau; the bad fortune came as punishment for failure in the proper observances in his honour.

Sick people were washed with cocoanut water, some of which had previously been sprinkled over the stone.

If a person wished to die, he would crawl to the foot of the stone and remain there. His friends might bring him food and he might eat it, but in the course of two or three days he would die—and people had been known to die in this manner, so great was the power of their belief.

If a good haul of fish was taken, part of it would be offered before the stone by the king, and afterwards it was distributed among the *Taulaitu*¹—the priests.

A yearly feast was held in honour of the Tui Tokelau, and the people of Nukunono and Atafu came over with offerings of mats and pearl shells—the mats being hung to the masts of the ships as they approached, to display them. When they landed, the mats were wrapped round the stone, to remain until they rotted away, and the pearl shells were placed along the eaves of the house sacred to the god, close at hand. (Hale describes the stone wrapped round with mats, and the pearl shells hanging from the eaves of the house. There is a picture of the house in Commodore Wilkes' account.) The stone was anointed with cocoanut oil scented with flowers; then the king was carried in front of the stone, seated in his chair, with the cocoanut leaf emblem of royalty round his neck,² and a black line of charcoal drawn over his forehead—the people following in procession with shouts of "*Tu-tu*" and general rejoicing.

Turner³ gives some details of the beliefs of the natives of Fakaofu, which he obtained from a boy belonging to the island, who had attended the missionary schools in Samoa. He says that *fire* was regarded as sacred to the Tui Tokelau, and it was

¹ *Taula*, a priest; Samoa, *taura*; Hawaiian, *taula*, prophet (Hale).

² *Vide infra*, p. 53, and Plate III.

³ "Nineteen Years in Polynesia," p. 526.

forbidden to use it at night except on special occasions. The story of fire having been first obtained by Talaŋga, who descended to the regions beneath the earth, is almost the same as the Samoan one.

If any unauthorized person entered the house sacred to the god, he would be burnt, at night, by the mysterious "fire of Tui Tokelau."

Another god was named Semoana, and his stone stood beside that of the Tui Tokelau, but was smaller.

A third was named Fakafotu. He was the god of storms and hurricanes, and thunder was called "*the anger of Fakafotu*."

I heard nothing of Tangaloa, the widely recognized god of Polynesia. Hale, however, says that they spoke of "*Tangaloa i lunga i te langi*"—"Tangaloa above in the heavens."

In addition to the generally recognised gods, of whom there were many besides those mentioned, certain animals were supposed to possess supernatural powers, and were called "*aitu*." Pritchard, speaking of the family gods (*aitu*) of Samoa, says: "These private gods were supposed to dwell in some tangible object or thing which was held in the highest veneration by the individual whose god was enshrined in it, though others might abuse it with impunity" ("Polynesian Reminiscences," p. 107). In Fakaofu the "Feki" (the octopus) was the "*aitu*" of certain families, who always abstained from catching or eating it.

The "*Pusi*" (a species of *Muraena* which frequents the reef, much dreaded by the natives for its severe bites) was another family *aitu*.

They never offered human sacrifices, and never killed children to propitiate the gods if any calamity was impending.

Future Life.—After death the king and the priests, with their families, went to the moon, where they enjoyed all sorts of pleasures.

The common people went to a region far away, which though inferior to the moon, was still a place of many delights, where there was constant dancing and feasting, fruits were abundant, and where wreaths of flowers grew naturally in the women's hair. From here they supposed that their ancestors went to the land of white people, and were born again as "*papalangi*" (white people).¹

They had no idea of a place of future punishment, and none of transmigration into animal bodies.

Origin of the World.—The sea and sky were always in existence.

¹ This is of course a modern view. I was told that for some time the country of white people (in general) was called "America," probably a result of the visit of the Wilkes' Expedition. Hale and Dana describe how they were supposed to have descended from the skies.

Men came originally from the stones of the ground, "as a chicken comes out of an egg."¹

The first to appear in this way were named Kava and Singano who were both men.

After them came Tiki-tiki (a man) and Talanga (a woman), and from them all mankind are descended.²

Their son was named *Lu*.

Now, until the time of *Lu*, the heavens were low down, resting so close to the earth that men had to crawl about like creeping things; and *Lu* heaved up the heavens off the earth on his shoulders, saying, "*Apei pei i é te langi o te Atua elu te kena*" ("Rise up, rise up, oh heavens, till you reach God"); and having lifted them as high as he was able, he called on the twelve corners of the earth for help. Then the winds, and water-spouts, and hurricanes came and carried up the sky to its present height.³

And *Lu* gave names to the winds from the twelve corners of the earth as follows:—

North	....	....	....	....	....	Matangi Tokelau. ⁴
North-north-east	....	....	....	....	....	" Fakalua.
East	....	....	....	....	....	" Tonga. ⁵
East-south-east	....	....	....	....	....	" Sulu.
South	....	....	....	....	....	" Sema.
South-west	....	....	....	....	....	" Lafalafa.
South-west (nearly the same direction)						" Lakilua.
West-south-west	....	....	....	....	....	" Fakatiu.
West	....	....	....	....	....	" Laki.
West-north-west	....	....	....	....	....	" Palapu.

(The other two names were forgotten.)

Lu was the first man to "cry to God."

¹ Note, in connection with this explanation, the Fijian story of the origin of the human race from two eggs which were found and incubated by the god Dengei. Pritchard, "Polynesian Reminiscences," p. 394.

² In *Tahiti*.—Ti'i is said to be the name of the first man, and also another name for Ta'aroa (= Tangaloa).

In *Rarotonga*.—Tiki was the first man, and he rules over the dead—a dead man has "gone to Tiki."

In *Samoa*.—Ti'i-ti'i was the god who supports the islands. Hale, "United States Exploring Expedition."

³ In *Samoa* this exploit is performed by Tiitii, the son of Talanga, who was a man. The heavens are said to have fallen on the earth, and he raised them. His footmarks (6 feet long) are shown. (Pritchard, 'Polynesian Reminiscences,' p. 114.)

⁴ Hale states (p. 171) that Tokelau is the name of *East* and *South-east* trades in Tonga and Samoa—for the *North-west* in Tahiti and Rarotonga, and for *North* in Nukuhiva. It means the north-east side of an island in Hawaii. He says the word means *in the direction of the open sea* (not a very distinctive name for any wind in most of the islands). Matangi = wind.

⁵ Hale states (p. 171) that Tonga is the name for the *south* wind in Samoa, New Zealand, Rarotonga, Tahiti, and Hawaii; but says that it is stated to mean *east* wind in New Zealand in Professor Lee's vocabulary "by mistake."

He also drew the trees and other plants out of the ground, pulling them as though with a rope.

He drew Nukunono and Atafu and Samoa, and the land of the Papalangi (white men) from the sea, "laying hold of them by the roots of the cocoanut trees."

The land of white people was drawn out first, which explains why they are so much in advance of other peoples.

There is no tradition that the Fakaofu people came originally from Samoa or elsewhere. The kings are said to be descended from Kava and Singano, the first men, who came from stones.

Time was reckoned by days, months, and years.

I was given the names of twelve months as follows:—

<i>Fakaofu.</i>				<i>Samoa.</i>			
1.	Palolo muamua	....	....	Palolo mua	....	....	June.
2.	Palolo lua	....	....	Palolo muli	....	....	July.
3.	Mulifa	....	....	Mulifa	....	....	August.
4.	Takaogna	....	....	Lotuaya	....	....	September.
5.	Selinga-mua-mua	....	....	Taumafa mua	....	....	October.
6.	Selinga lua	....	....	Taumafa muli	....	....	November.
7.	Utua mua mua	....	....	Utuv'a'a mua	....	....	December.
8.	Utua lua	....	....	Utuv'a'a muli	....	....	January.
9.	Vainoa						
10.	Fakaafu	....	....	Fa'aafu	....	....	February.
11.	....	....	....	Lo	....	....	March.
12.	Caunono	....	....	Aununu	....	....	April.
13.	Oloamanu	....	....	Loamanu	....	....	May.

It seems that Vainoa, the ninth on the list, may be the name of the intercalary month—inserted occasionally to make up for the deficiency caused by reckoning from lunar months. In this case I was given no name for March.

The Samoan *muli* (= after—or behind) corresponds with the Fakaofu *lua* (= 2nd).

It is curious that the word Palolo should occur in the Samoan names of June and July, as October and November are the months in which the Palolo worm is taken. I was told that the worm is unknown in Fakaofu.

The name for February—identical with that used in Samoa—is derived from *afu* (perspiration), this being the hottest month of the year.

Society.—The king was chosen by the whole body of the people—a middle-aged or old man belonging to the royal family.

Two islets of the atoll were set apart as his property. Besides his civil functions, he officiated at ceremonies.

When he went abroad he wore a peculiar chaplet made of cocoanut leaflets round his neck. When not in use this royal

chaplet was hung in a special place in the house, where fresh fala (*Pandanus*) fruits were kept, sacred to the Tui Tokelau.

The death of the king was the occasion for the planting of cocoanuts. If anyone planted them at other times he would die.

If a man of the royal family married a woman of another family, his sons were eligible for the kingship. But the sons of a woman who married out of the royal family were not eligible.

The Taulaitu—the priests, chosen by the king, formed an upper class in society.

Disputes were settled by a judge known as the “Palapalau,” who pronounced judgment after consultation with the king and the Taulaitu (priests).

Punishments were generally mild—the offender being set to make a certain length of rope or a certain number of fish-hooks for the king. Death by strangling was, however, sometimes inflicted—as for stealing food in time of scarcity.

Property.—Two islets belonged, as we have seen, to the king. Two others were common property, and the rest were divided up as the property of individuals.

On the death of a man his land was divided up among his children, the eldest, whether son or daughter, receiving the largest share, and the rest in proportion to their ages.

Marriage.—A man might take several wives, but the first was always the chief wife.

There appears to have been no special wedding ceremony except feasting.

The relatives of a maiden had small burns dotted over their face and chest in token of their pride in her. In case they had to appear without these decorations they felt that the family had been degraded.

I was told that a man went to live with his wife's people; I suppose in the case of the first wife only.

Burial.—The body of a dead person was anointed with oil and wrapped in mats, a shell ornament, described as resembling the pearl shell shank of a native fish-hook, being suspended in front of the neck.

The body was placed in the grave lying on the back, and with the knees bent to the utmost extent, so that the leg was parallel with the thigh. The thigh was extended in line with the body. Two leaflets of the cocoanut were laid transversely across the chest.

No food or weapons were placed in the grave with it.

The grave was about three feet deep; a mound of coral shingle—of which the island is mainly composed—was raised over it, with a vertical slab of stone at the head, and other slabs laid on the top and sides of the mound.

A funeral dance, called a *tangi* (mourning), was performed by the relatives, who shaved the crowns of their heads (like a monk's tonsure), and burnt spots on their chests and faces.

For five nights after the burial the relatives came to the grave, and removing the stone which lay over the region of the head, poured cocoanut oil into the heap. This function was acted before me, a little heap of stones being made, with large ones, to represent slabs, over them; one of these was removed and water poured, instead of oil, with a cry of mourning.

The anointing the grave with oil is still performed in Tonga.

A representation of the dead person was often tattooed on the upper part of the chests of the near relatives. Plate II is a sketch of the present king, and shows four such figures on his chest.

He described the figures as follows:—

The upper figure on his left hand side represents the last king. That on the right hand side was a female relative, the wife of a Samoan living on the island. Of the lower figures that on his left represents a son, that on the right a daughter. The marks between the upper and lower figures, and those on either side within the line of the shoulder, represent children who died young. The markings on the upper parts of the arms are simply ornamental.

The queen had a similar figure on the right side of her chest, and at Atafu I saw an old man marked similarly to the king. Many of the old people are, however, without the figures.

The ordinary ornamental tattooing was not nearly so elaborate as that of the Samoans and Tongans.

The most tattooed person that I saw was an old man, who told me that formerly many were tattooed much more than he.

He had two bands across each cheek, passing from in front of the ear forwards and downwards towards the mouth. Each band consisted of an upper and lower line, the space between being filled in with oblique cross lines. A similar band encircled each wrist, and several interrupted lines were traced round the lower part of each forearm. There were two horizontal bands across the gluteal region, a representation of a fish over the hip joint, and a circular ornamentation above, at the crest of the ilium. A transverse band was tattooed across each calf, limited to the back of the leg, and there were interrupted lines above and below it; a single line surrounded the leg above each ankle.

Many, if not all, of the old women, were tattooed with triangular markings round the mouth, each triangle having its base to the margin of the lip, and the apex pointing up or down. There were ten of these, five above and five below.¹

Beside these markings and those of her dead relative and children, the queen was tattooed about the shoulders and upper part of the arms in a similar manner to the king. She also had a large quadrangular figure over the upper part of her back with cross lines, resembling a fishing net, and rows of fishes on each side.

The lobe of the ear is pierced by a largish slit—to hold a leaf or flower, or other ornament.

The hair used to be dressed with lime; but the custom is now abandoned—they would be pleasanter companions if it were not.

Dress.—The dress of the men in the old times consisted of the “*malo*”—a narrow strip of matting encircling the waist as a girdle, and passing between the legs.’

The women wore the *titi*²—a heavy fringe reaching from the waist nearly to the knee. Common ones were made of leaflets of the cocoanut—better ones of the pandanus, the strips of which were fastened in separate small bundles to the girdle of plaited cocoanut fibres.

Ornaments.—A single shell or whale’s tooth was worn on the forehead or hanging on the breast. Strings of white cylinders, made by grinding down shells, were worn on the head or round the neck.

Wreaths of leaves and flowers were also worn. The kanava flower (*Cordia* species) was a favourite, and at the dance which was got up in our honour, many of the people wore tangled wreaths of the dodder-like *Cassytha*, which abounds on the islets.

Musical Instruments.—The lala, or wooden drum of the island, was constructed on the usual plan, consisting of a cylindrical log of wood, some five to six feet long, hollowed through a narrow opening along one side. It is struck with a heavy beater, and gives out a deep note. It is now used as a church bell.

Fighting.—I was told that the people of Fakaofu were great fighters in the old time—the islands of Nukunono and Atafu being subject to them. It was also related that they had beaten Samoa in fight!³

Their arms consisted of *clubs*, *stone axes* made from the clam

¹ Cf., the *Maori* custom of tattooing the women’s mouths with lines and festoons on the lower lip.

² *Titi*, a cincture made from the leaves of the *Dracena terminalis*. Tonga and Samoa. (*Dracena australis* = the New Zealand *ti*, tree). Hale, “United States Exploring Expedition,” p. 333.

³ Hale, on the other hand, saw no arms, and considered that they might be ignorant of war.

shells, *spears* of old cocoanut wood (which is very hard), and *bows and arrows*.

They had no armour, but went to fight with their bodies freshly oiled.

The leader in their fighting would be chosen from among the party.

Canoes.—I was told that in the old times they had two vessels—each with two masts and without outriggers—described as being as large as the trading schooners which visit the island. Each of these would hold, it was said, all the available fighting men in the island—perhaps 150 to 200 men.

The canoes at the present time are built just like those of Samoa—having a single outrigger. Owing to the scarcity of large trees on the island, the body of the canoe is built of several pieces each separately hollowed, and these are laced together with sinnet (plaited cocoanut fibre). Often there are as many as four distinct pieces along the bottom, and the sides are built up with additional pieces to the required height. Each piece is accurately shaped so that it will fit in among the neighbouring ones, and the joins are caulked with resin. The bow and stern are covered in for a short distance, and on their upper surfaces a number of small pyramidal projections are left in the middle line, to which the white shells of *Cypræa ovula* are attached for ornament. The upper surface of the stern piece is not horizontal, but slopes obliquely downwards to the end.

The canoes would hold seven or eight people.

The bailers are scoop-shaped and cut out of a solid piece of wood, with a handle left projecting in the middle of the concavity.

The paddles have longer blades than those of Samoa—in botanical language they are oblong acute, not ovate. This difference may be due to the small size of the timber on the islets.

Houses.—The mode of building houses has changed of late years, and there are now none of the old-fashioned style left.

Pictures of the old style of house are given in Commodore Wilkes' account—with the eaves reaching nearly to the ground. They were oblong in shape, supported by posts at the four corners—the posts being *in* the walls of the house—not standing in the space included within the walls as in Samoan and Tongan houses. The house of the Tui Tokelau was, however, like a Samoan house in this respect, though it was oblong in shape—not oval.

There were no *walls*, but a low fence or railing formed a definite limit to the inside of the house. The open sides could be closed with screens of plaited cocoanut leaves at pleasure.

Fishing.—Nets. Like the Samoans they used a netting needle and mesh exactly like ours. The material was twisted cocoanut fibre. The nets were often of great size. I was told that some were as much as 200 fathoms in length.

Bags made of netted cocoanut fibre cord are used.

Fish-hooks.—These are made of various materials.

Large ones (for sharks?) are made of wood.

The hook consists of two pieces (*a* and *b*, Plate IX, Fig. 1), each cut from a forking branch. The larger piece (*a*) forms the greater part of the hook—the line being attached to one end. To the other end is lashed one arm of the second piece (*b*), the other arm projects, forming the barb.

The large hooks are about a foot long, and have the lashings protected by wrappings of the strong spathes of the cocoanut (a small hook of this pattern is represented in the figure).

A very simple form of hook is made of cocoanut shell. These are shaped like the wooden hooks, but are all cut out of one piece; they are of course slightly concave on one side and convex on the other.

Other hooks are made entirely from bone (Plate IX, Fig. 2).

What appears curious about these hooks is that the barb or point approaches so near the shank, that it is astonishing the fish should be secured by them. No doubt, however, they serve their purpose.

The smaller hooks are more delicately fashioned, and are of a widely spread pattern. The shank is made of a piece of pearl shell, in other cases of some gastropod shell, and the barb of turtle shell or of bone, is fastened to it. White feathers are fastened on to the two ends of the shank. These hooks are evidently intended to represent small fish, the glistening pearl shell shank closely resembles the white under side of a fish, and in some cases the feathers are so fastened that the front ones resemble the two lateral fins, and the end one the forked tail fin of the fish.

The *Octopus* bait was made on the same plan as those of Tonga and Samoa—*i.e.*, with a mottled cowrie shell for a body, and a tail with slips of cocoanut leaflets fastened to it. It was, however, not so *rat-like* in shape as the bait is in those islands; and I found that though they have a version of the widely spread rat and octopus story—they do not look on the bait as representing a rat.

Drills.—The well-known drills described in Wilkes' account were in use at the time of our visit. One which I saw had a nail used as a point. An old man made a rough one for me, and he used for a point one of the five teeth of a sea urchin—enclosed in its conical apparatus of plates.

I was told in Tonga that similar drills are well known there.

Axes.—I obtained a number of small cutting implements made by grinding down pieces of clam shells. One that was brought off from the island of Atafu, had one of the natural grooves of the shell deepened—to allow it to be attached to a handle after the fashion of an axe. There is no hard volcanic stone to be found nearer than Samoa.

Turner was told (*loc. cit.*) that it took from ten to thirty days to cut down a tree with these implements.

I saw small shells being used for slicing taro, &c., in preparation of food.

The round boxes, which Wilkes describes, cut out of a single piece of wood, and with an accurately fitting lid, are still in regular use.

Fire was obtained in the usual way, by rubbing a pointed piece of wood in a groove in another piece.

Food.—Besides fish and cocoanuts, and shell fish, they obtained seabirds at night from their roosting places on the trees. Wild yams grew on some islets, and a kind of wild taro called “Pulaka.” The outer part of the ripe fruit of the fala (*Pandanus*) is also eaten.

Young *frigate birds* were often brought from the islets, where they nest, and kept on perches near the houses. I saw several of these tame birds about the islands. I was told that long after the birds can fly they come back for food, and when they are soaring high up aloft, the cry of “ika! ika!” (fish) will bring them wheeling down to settle on the upstretched arm.

History.—The traditions seem to go back only a short distance into the past.

I could hear of nothing of their ancestors having originally come from Samoa, or elsewhere. The tradition was that their ancestors had sprung from the stones of the island.

I was given the names of 15 kings, including the present one. They are—

1. Kava.	9. Avafatu.
2. Tai.	10. Savaike.
3. Telaufue.	11. Letaiolu.
4. Temafanga.	12. Lika.
5. Leōōa.	13. Langitasi.
6. Foōōa.	14. Vaopuka.
7. Pofou	15. Kava (or Tetaulu).
8. Tāūpě.	

I was told this list first in the order here given, and then in

the reverse order. The only difference the second time was that the names of No. 6 and No. 7 were transposed.

The kings were believed to be directly descended from Kava and Singano—the first men; but an indefinite period was supposed to have elapsed between them and the Kava, who comes first on the list.

Taupe was king at the time of the visit of the Wilkes' Expedition in 1841. Hence the present king is the seventh who has reigned since his time (50 years). This rapid succession is explained by the custom noted above of choosing an old man as king.

In the reign of Savaika a famine occurred, owing to a failure of the cocoanut crop, coinciding with a time of great scarcity of fish. Many people died, and a large number were taken away to Wallis Island in a French ship. Here they lived for some time, learnt the Roman Catholic religion, and later, some of them returned to Fakaofu. Since their return there have been frequent quarrels between the Roman Catholic and the Protestant converts. The last king was shot in these troubles.

The reign of Lika was marked by two events. The natives received the missionaries of the London Missionary Society from Samoa, after refusing to listen to them in the previous year; and there were two raids made on the island by Peruvian slave ships—in which large numbers of the people were carried off—the slavers being assisted in their plans by a white man who was living on the island.

I will conclude these notes with an old story which was related to me.

The Story of Tasi and his Brothers.

In the old times there lived a man and his wife whose names were Ulu and Iva. They had ten sons and one daughter. The names of the sons were those of the numerals—Ulu, Iva, Valoo, Fitoo, Ono, Lima, Va, Tolu, Lua and Tasi.¹ But at that time the names stood for the numbers in the reverse order, *Ulu* meaning one, *Iva* two, and so on, *Tasi* standing for ten. The daughter's name was Hina (= white or shining).

A man named Saipuniana, who was a kind of demon (*aitu*) and a cannibal, came from another island, and made love to Hina, and carried her off in his canoe. And when her parents

¹ The names of the numerals in Fakaofu (from 1 to 10) are—

(1) Tasi; (2) lua; (3) tolu; (4) va; (5) lima; (6) ono; (7) fitoo, (8) valoo; (9) iva; (10) ulu.

and brothers found that she had gone they mourned over her for they all loved her.

Now until the coming of this man the Fakaofu people had never seen a canoe. And the parents called together their ten sons and urged them to build canoes and go in search of their sister. And they distributed stone axes among them, giving ten to Ulu, nine to Iva, eight to Valoo, and so on—Tasi, the youngest, only receiving one axe. So they set to work, each at his own canoe; and they called on the wasps (*Tangi-susu*) to make sails for them, because they use leaves to build their nests. So the wasps wove the leaves of the *fala* tree together, and made sails; and this was how the women first learnt to make mats.

Before his canoe was finished, Ulu the eldest broke all the ten axes which had been given him; so he went to his next brother Iva, and asked, with many apologies, if he could spare him an axe.¹ But Iva refused and referred him to Valoo, and by Valoo he was sent to Fitoo, and by him to Ono, and so on till he came to Lua; and Lua had not the face to send him to Tasi, who only had one axe to begin with, so he gave him the spare axe he had received. So Ulu returned and finished his canoe; and all the ten were finished about the same time. Then the canoes were put to sea, with the mat sails which the wasps had made, and the ten brothers started to look for their sister; and each was anxious to be the one who should find her and bring her back.

Now the other nine canoes went on ahead, and Tasi remained behind in his. Then Tasi called to the canoe of each of his brothers in turn, "*Seki-seki itua' peau*" (= "Come back with the waves," or "Let the waves wash you back"), and as he spoke the words each canoe stood still as though it were anchored, and Tasi alone went on to the island where Hina was.

Now Saipuniana suspected that some rescue of Hina would be attempted, and to prevent her escape he tied the end of a long string to her wrist and kept the other end in his hand. And he used to live in a kind of cave in the ground. And Hina was soon tired of Saipuniana, and longed to be back with her own people. So when Tasi came to the island he found Hina wandering about with the string made fast to her hand; and they met and began to plan an escape, when tug, tug, came on the string, and Hina had to hurry away for fear she should be found talking with Tasi. And as she went she told him to hide in the *fala* tree which stood near the cave. Shortly after she made the excuse that she felt very hot down there, and that as

¹ The ordinary narrative is told plainly, but when anyone speaks, the words are chanted.

Saipuniana was sleepy she would go and walk about. So she went up and straight to the fala tree where Tasi was hidden. Then he slipped down, undid the cord from her wrist, making it fast to the tree instead, and they went off to the canoe and left the island.

Now when Saipuniana awoke, he began pulling at the cord for Hina to come, and finding the resistance he pulled harder, and called "Hina, hau!" ("Hina, come"). At last he got in a rage, and pulled with all his might, and down came the fala tree. But Hina was gone.

Meanwhile the other nine canoes had recovered from their enchantment, and had put back to shore. And Ulu came first to land. And the parents stood on the shore and called to him as he came,

*"Ulu e alo mai te vaca iacoy.
Au te fesiliatu ia Hina si-aku tama.
Penau siki penau fasa.
Oli oli i toku manava.
Hina safea Hina kavea!"*

Which may be rendered, "Oh, Ulu, come quickly in your canoe, I ask you for Hina, my darling child (whom I have brought up), whether carrying her or correcting her, the gladness of my embrace. Hina taken up and carried away."

And Ulu had to reply, "No, she is not here." Then they were angry, and drove him off.

And when Iva came they addressed the same words to him, and he too was driven off, and so with Valoo, Vitoo, Ono, Lima, Va, Tolu, and Lua.

At last Tasi came, and they called in the same way, "Oh Tasi, come quickly in your canoe," &c. And he answered, "Here she is," and the parents embraced Hina, and rejoiced over her.

Then they said, "Since Tasi has brought our girl back to us, he who has always been the last of his brothers shall henceforth be the first, and Ulu who was reckoned first shall be last." And so the meanings of the names of the numbers were changed in honour of Tasi, and ever since Tasi has stood for one, Lua for two, Tolu for three, Va for four, Lima for five, Ono for six, Vitoo for seven, Valoo for eight, Iva for nine, and Ulu for ten.

It is interesting to note in the parents' speech to the sons as they returned from their journey—a sort of metre in the third and fifth lines, and in the fifth—"Hina safea, Hina kavea,"—rhyme as well.

Both rhyme and metre are known among other peoples of the Pacific (as in Tonga and Fiji).

SKETCH OF THE KING OF FAKAOFU SHOWING THE TATTOOING ON HIS CHEST.

FIG. 2.

FIG. 1.

FIG. 2.

FIG. 1.

FIG. 2.

FIG. 1.

DISCUSSION.

Sir JOSEPH LISTER, commenting on the results of the measurements of the natives of Fakaofu, and the suggestion that their long arms and large chest girths—as compared with the natives of Tonga—were due to the peculiar conditions, involving almost constant use of canoes, under which they lived, remarked that he would not have expected the frequently repeated action of paddling to have produced lengthening of the arms, though he could understand its resulting in increased size of chest. He pointed out that the natives of Tonga, too, were accustomed to use canoes, and hence it was not clear that the peculiarities of the natives of Fakaofu could be referred to the cause assigned.

Professor STEWART, Mr. READ, and Dr. TYLOR also took part in the discussion.

Mr. LISTER replied that though the Tongans use canoes, canoe work is not so essential a part of their lives as is the case with the natives of Fakaofu. A native of the Island of Tongatabu has many avocations quite apart from the sea, living on an island twenty-two miles in length, and many villages are situated some distance from the water. The natives of Fakaofu, on the other hand, live crowded together on a small islet situated on a ring of reef, and to meet every need of their lives they must do more or less paddling.

Explanation of Plates.

- I.—Map of Fakaofu (Bowditch Island). From the Survey of H.M.S. *Egeria*, 1889.
- II.—Sketch of the King of Fakaofu, showing the tattooing on his chest.
- III.—Fig. 1. The King of Fakaofu wearing the emblem of royalty. The tattooing does not appear in the photograph from which the plate is prepared.
Fig. 2. The Queen of Fakaofu, in full face.
- IV.—Fig. 1. The Queen of Fakaofu, in profile.
Fig. 2. A woman of Fakaofu.
- V.—A woman of Fakaofu.
- VI.—Three women of Fakaofu.
- VII.—Son and daughter of the King of Fakaofu.
- VIII.—Group of natives of Fakaofu, with present of cocoanuts and fish.
- IX.—Fish-hooks used by the natives of Fakaofu.
Fig. 1. A wooden hook, half size.
Fig. 2. A bone hook, real size.

FAKAOFU (BOWDITCH ISLAND).
From Survey of H.M.S. Egeria, 1889.