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The Navigator Islands

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was exceedingly fertile. Where there were large mountain-streams running down into an alluvial valley under a tropical sun, it was a law of nature that there must be fertility. Sir George Campbell was quite right, however, in saying that the immediate banks of the Oxus were comparatively uncultivated, because the irrigation water was all consumed before reaching that point. At the same time the character of the Valley of the Oxus, taken as a whole, was certainly one favourable to cultivation.

The PRESIDENT, in summing up, observed that the paper and the discussion to which it had led, proved that with regard to this part of Asia less was positively and scientifically known than of almost any other portion of the world. Geographers must, therefore, be very grateful for every modicum of real knowledge that could be obtained. Mere general observation was of very little value when such a confused chaos of mountains was under consideration. He hoped that now, when by a new convention with China, the road into Central Asia, Mongolia, and Thibet, seemed likely to be opened up, the Government would take care that any political mission that was sent to these little-known regions would be accompanied by scientific explorers, who could really obtain trustworthy scientific results, and he thought the Society would be perfectly justified in pressing that consideration as one of great importance.

ADDITIONAL NOTICES.

(Printed by order of Council.)

1. *The Navigator Islands.* By LITTON FORBES, M.D.

THE annexation of the Fiji Islands by Great Britain has to no small extent altered the political and commercial importance of many of the island groups of the South Pacific. More particularly is this true with regard to the Friendly and Navigator Islands. Both of these groups are in close proximity to the Fijis, and the future of both is bound up with that of the latter. Geographically the three groups form a triangle, the apex of which is Samoa, the base Fiji and Tonga. These groups are almost equally distant from each other, and are moreover connected by language, inhabitants, productions, and now by a nascent commerce. Colonisation has already passed from New South Wales, which was no long time ago the outpost of western civilisation in the South Pacific to Fiji, and from Fiji it is rapidly passing on to the two neighbouring groups. A few years ago the Navigator Islands were known to the world chiefly as the ill-omened spot where so many of La Pérouse's crew were massacred; but to-day they are actually the seat of an important commerce with Germany, and one of the most profitable channels for Australian enterprise. In a few years more, important and difficult problems will have to be solved regarding this group, just as they had to be solved with regard to Fiji. By their position, the three groups of Fiji, Samoa, and Tonga, are well adapted for a confederation. The distance from Ongea, in Fiji, to Vavau, in the Friendly Islands, is not more than 240 miles; while the distance from Savaii to Vavau is about 300 miles. From Vanua Levu, in Fiji, to Savaii, is 420 miles, or 36 hours' run for a steamer. The three groups are not only geographically allied, but also are being peopled simultaneously from the

Australian colonies, by a race of men whose objects and pursuits are identical. Cotton, coco-nut oil, and sugar, are essentially the staple products of the three groups; while the difficulty and importance of the great labour question is felt equally in all of them. English influence is now so decidedly paramount in the South Pacific, that to a great extent it must determine the development and social future of most of the Polynesian islands. But especially will this be the case with regard to those two beautiful, fertile, half-civilised archipelagos that lie scarcely a day's sail from the Crown colony of Fiji. British interference is sooner or later inevitable; and taught by the example of Fiji, it would be better to interfere too soon than too late, and by a timely policy of protection, foster the rising commerce of the groups, and check even the potential abuses of a nascent labour traffic.

On May 3, 1768, Bougainville, coming from Tahiti, saw high land before him in the north-west, and in a position where his chart showed no land. Bearing down upon it, he was met at some distance from the shore by canoes filled with natives. These differed in appearance and language from any he had before seen, and displayed, moreover, an amount of fear and distrust very different from the greeting he had received from the friendly Tahitians. Bougainville describes the islanders as of mediocre stature, bronze coloured, beardless, and tattooed in a strange manner. On the 5th of May he saw other islands belonging to the same group, to which he gave the name of the *Isles des Navigateurs*, from the skill with which the natives managed their canoes. Bougainville did not land on any part of the group, and, indeed, saw little more of it than the island of Tutuila, and the eastern portion of Upolu.

In the early years of this century the Navigator group was occasionally visited by small vessels from New South Wales and by whalers from New Bedford, and there can be no doubt, also, by slavers from Chili and Peru. Sailors and runaway convicts from Van Diemen's Land and Botany Bay also at intervals established themselves on shore, much as they did in Fiji and other groups. The Spaniards do not seem to have visited the islands, or, if they did so, have left no record of themselves, either in the traditions or language of the people. In 1838, Commodore Wilkes, of the United States Exploring Expedition, visited the group, and added considerably to our knowledge of it. His surveys and observations were, however, chiefly confined to the coast; nor did he remain a sufficient length of time to gain any intimate acquaintance with its resources or capabilities.

In 1872 I was appointed by the German Government to take medical charge of their Consulate at Apia, and, during a residence of some duration, enjoyed exceptional opportunities of becoming acquainted with the topography and natural productions of the group. In my researches I was not a little aided by the labours of my predecessor, Dr. Gräfe, an accomplished naturalist, and by Mr. Grote, surveyor to the firm of Godefroy, of Hamburg, as also by the Admiralty Charts.

The Navigator group lies between the parallels of $13^{\circ} 30'$ and $14^{\circ} 20'$ s., and the meridians of 169° to 173° w. Taking Cape Falealupu, in Savaii, as the extreme western point, and Manua as the extreme eastern, the whole group extends over a distance of about 240 miles, and lies in a direction N.N.W. and S.S.E. It numbers in all thirteen islands, many of which are little more than barren and isolated rocks. The island of Rosa, though generally counted as belonging to the Navigator group, is entirely separate from it. It belongs to a different geological formation, being not a volcanic, but a coral island.

The chief islands of the group, and, indeed, the only ones which present points of either geographical or commercial interest, are Savaii, Upolu, and Tutuila.

Savaii is the largest island of the three, measuring some 40 miles from east to west, by 20 from north to south, and containing a superficies of about 700 square miles. In shape it is nearly circular, and for this reason, perhaps, possesses no harbours of any importance; in which respect it contrasts strongly with Upolu and Tutuila. The little bay of Mataatu, in the extreme north of the island, is the only place where large vessels can anchor; but even it is not safe from November to February.

The interior of the island is occupied by two parallel chains of mountains; one of these runs along the southern shore in a direction east and west, while the other is more centrally situated. On the west and north-west, behind the bay of Safata, these chains approach each other. Wherever, as on the south side of the island, they run close to the coast, they form a precipitous and rock-bound shore, destitute of harbours or reefs. Wherever, on the other hand, they recede from the coast, they leave a strip of alluvial soil of varying breadth, but always covered with luxuriant vegetation, dotted over with native villages, and sheltered by a friendly reef from the perpetual roll of the ocean.

These ranges are in their nature volcanic, and many of their peaks are extinct craters. Especially is this the case with the lofty peak of *Mua*, which rises to a height of 4000 feet, and which I have seen at an estimated distance of 60 miles. In proceeding towards the interior from the district of Aopo, the traveller passes over a tract of country strewn thickly with scorïæ and ashes, which are evidently of very recent origin. So little changed, indeed, are these evidences of volcanic action, that the native tradition of the last eruption having taken place about 200 years ago is probably correct. In the north-west of the island, in the districts of Sasina and Asana, are also many miles of lava-plains, as yet little altered. They have received from the natives the name of *O le mu*, or the "burnt country," in which name there is, perhaps, a proof that the period of volcanic activity in Savaii was not prior to the arrival of the present inhabitants. An older but larger lava-bed is to be found in the east of the island, and is called by the natives *faasa-leaga*. The soil is here a decomposed lava, and is covered in some places with a scanty vegetation, in others with vast blocks of stone or small fragments of lava.

The interior of Savaii is occupied almost entirely by barren and lofty mountains, interspersed with rock-covered plains. Its sterility has so far been a barrier not only to all settlement or cultivation, but even to the visits of travellers or explorers. These solitudes are destitute of all animal life, are alternately parched by a tropical sun or deluged by fierce rain-storms, and afford neither food nor water. They are more barren than even the deserts of Australia; and more than once, natives, who have attempted to traverse them, have succumbed to fatigue and thirst, and have perished miserably.

In spite of a considerable rainfall, Savaii possesses no rivers, a phenomenon which is due probably to the porous nature of the vesicular lava, of which the island is mainly composed. Along the coast, however, numerous large springs abound. At ebb-tide the fresh water from these may be seen bubbling up out of the sand and on the reefs, and frequently bearing with it leaves and branches, and other vegetable *débris*.

On the northern portion of Savaii, from Falealupu, the coast is rocky, with here and there small bays, at the heads of which are the villages of Papa and Satana, and, further on, Asau. Advancing towards the east, the traveller arrives at Mataatu. This is the only spot along this shore where a vessel can lie at anchor with any security during the trade-winds. The harbour is formed, not in the usual manner by a passage in the reef, but by the reef itself, which runs parallel with the shore, and at some distance from it. It is only safe during east and south-east winds; and should the wind work round at all to the westward, vessels must at once get under weigh.

The scenery of Savaii is in many places very picturesque. The mountains, somewhat barren and gloomy, are by no means destitute of a certain beauty and grandeur. They rise rugged and sheer from a foreground of blue ocean, their bases laved by an eternal surf, their summits wrapt in clouds and storm. Further on their slopes are seamed with deep glens, and covered with a heavy growth of timber. Anon they slope down more gently to the sea, forming a narrow belt of fertile soil, covered with all the luxuriant vegetation of the tropics. Here are lofty groves of coco-nut trees, beneath which the traveller walks in a dimmer light and a cooler atmosphere. Under this friendly shade the natives build their villages, which are mere collections of huts, laid out without any plan, and constructed to last at most a year or two. Savaii, for its size, is sparsely populated. The natives are a somewhat turbulent set of men, fond of war for its own sake, and in skill and valour and determination not inferior to their kinsmen the Maories of New Zealand. To conquer them by arms would be a most difficult matter, as they could always retreat to their mountain-fastnesses, and keep up a guerilla warfare for an almost indefinite period. As already stated, Savaii possesses no rivers, and but one harbour; so that vessels have to lie off and on the coast, and take in their cargoes by boat. A considerable quantity of land on the island has been sold to Americans and Germans, but it is extremely doubtful whether the purchasers could venture to cultivate it while the natives are in their present temper. Foreigners, indeed, have never been particularly welcome in Savaii; and until there is some fixed government in the group, it will be impossible to utilise the latent wealth which the island undoubtedly contains.

In the strait between Savaii and Upolu are the islands of Manono and Apolima, distant from each other about 2 miles. Manono is 4 miles in circumference, and thickly wooded. The strait that separates it from Upolu is shallow, and almost impassable at low water, and will probably in time, with the growth of coral, become perfectly dry. This island, in spite of its small size, has played a conspicuous part in the political history of the group. It has long been the stronghold of the feudal aristocracy of Samoa, and a focus of native politics. This is to be attributed to the possession by its inhabitants of the rock of Apolima, which lies close to it, and is evidently the crater of an extinct volcano. It is about 470 feet high, and accessible only at one spot on its northern side. Should any European power take possession of the Navigator group—as sooner or later will be the case—these two islets would form important points in any system of defence. If fortified by modern appliances they would be well-nigh impregnable, and, from a military point of view, might prove the key to the whole group.

The Island of Upolu, the second in point of size, but the first in point of fertility and population, lies to the south and east of Savaii. It is 37 miles long, 11 broad, and contains a superficial area of 550 square miles. Its interior is occupied by a chain of mountains of volcanic origin, but without the lava-beds of Savaii. The hills are, as a rule, thickly wooded to their summits. Towards the north the range slopes gradually, but towards the south it continues rugged and abrupt, and consists chiefly of great dome-shaped masses of basalt. At about 4 miles from Apia the whole range becomes lower, and gradually trends away towards the sea. Along this coast to the west and north is an unbroken coral-reef, with frequent openings, which correspond to clefts in the range. On the south of Upolu, owing to the greater steepness of the mountains, the coral-reef is either absent or very much disjointed. On the west the central range terminates in a beautiful and fertile plain, from which rises a lofty volcanic peak called Tofua.

From its shape and small extent, Upolu cannot possess any large rivers. The largest and most constant streams are the Sigato Vailoa, the Latonga, and the Nafata. These, properly speaking, are mere mountain-torrents,

and not navigable even by canoes. As they come down from the hills they form in their course numerous cascades, some of which are very conspicuous objects when seen from the sea. One in especial at the back of Apia, is some 300 feet high, and forms a good guiding-mark to vessels entering the harbour.

In the centre of the island, on the summit of a volcanic peak, is the remarkable lake of Lanuto. The best way to reach this is from Vaiuso. After a weary climb of some hours, cutting his way through a tangled undergrowth, and walking in an atmosphere as warm and moist as that of a hot-house, the traveller, suddenly emerging from the forest, finds himself at the shore of a lake. The lake lies about 120 feet below the edge of what was once a crater, and has a depth of 60 feet. It has no apparent outlet, or no continuous supply of water, and is probably sustained entirely by the rainfall, which, during one portion of the year, is very considerable. The foliage immediately round the lake is of great variety and beauty. Many legends are connected with the spot, and one Samoan poet commemorates its perennial verdure in some pretty verses, beginning

“Lanuto e le toi a e lan mea.”

Lanuto, untouched by withered leaf.

Between Matautu and Moolinoo, at the head of an oval bay, lies Apia, the chief town of the island. It is prettily situated, having a background of mountains thickly wooded, and a foreground of harbour and coral-reefs. The harbour consists of two portions, the most westerly being the best for vessels that intend to remain for any length of time, especially during the rainy season. It is, perhaps, the best in the group for sailing-vessels, affording as it does good shelter, and being, moreover, easy to enter and to leave. Some precautions are, however, necessary to be observed. The high land at Wailili, some 3 miles higher up the coast, bears a great resemblance to the land at the back of Apia, and, indeed, has been mistaken for it. Wailili, too, is reached through a passage in a reef, and has, moreover, a waterfall on the hill above it. Many vessels have thus been nearly lost, as Wailili is a blind harbour, and ends abruptly in a wall of rock. A strong current sets past the entrance of Apia Harbour, so that vessels entering should never allow themselves to go to the westward of the passage. On entering or leaving the harbour a steady breeze is absolutely necessary, as there is always a heavy sea at the entrance. On one occasion I saw a vessel—which was momentarily becalmed in the passage—drift among the breakers, and become a total wreck in less than twenty minutes. Notwithstanding these disadvantages, Apia Harbour is by no means a bad one. It is as good as Levuka in Fiji, and certainly superior to the roadstead at Tongataboo.

Passing down the coast a succession of beautiful bays are met with. At the distance of from half a mile to two miles from the shore a coral-reef protects this portion of the island for nearly twenty miles. At high tide canoes and boats can pass between this and the mainland, and thus a great deal of the insular traffic is carried on. The coast lands of this portion of Upolu are thickly wooded to the water's edge. Timber trees, some of them as hard and durable as teak, alternate with the coco-nut, the bread-fruit, the orange and the lime; while beneath the shade of these is a thick undergrowth of such plants as wild cotton, sago, arrowroot, turmeric, and many others. In most places the shores are sandy, and formed from the *débris* of the coral-reef. The depth of water is unfortunately very limited, so that vessels cannot pass between the reef and the mainland. This district is the most fertile in the Navigator group. It is at present, owing to tribal wars, to a great extent uncultivated, but, judging from the luxurious vegetation that the rich, black soil now supports, its productiveness would be almost inex-

haustible. The forest in this part is the habitat of that strange bird the "Manu mea," or *Didunculus strigirostris*, the nearest living relative of the extinct Dodo. The Manu mea used at one time to frequent the forests of Upolu in great numbers, but the natives have now learned its value, and are always on the look-out to capture it or its young. Its numbers are rapidly decreasing, and it will probably soon be extinct. A fully-grown bird even now fetches in Apia about 7*l.* sterling, and probably not more than two or three can be captured in a year.

To the west of Aana is the village of Falealili, one of the largest native towns in Upolu. Its inhabitants have a feudal claim to the allegiance of the people of Tutuila, to which island they pay annual visit, called *Malagas*. It was during one of these visits that La Pérouse arrived at Tutuila, and so far as can now be learned, it is almost certain that the massacre of his boat's crew was carried out by a few chiefs from Upolu and their followers, and presumably from Falealili. The country about Falealili is stony and unproductive, but nevertheless yields coco-nuts and bread-fruit.

At the extreme eastern end of Upolu are two small islands—Nuutele (big coco-nut) and Nuulua (two coco-nuts)—of little importance in themselves, except as landmarks, and as affording strong points for the erection of fortifications. During my stay in the group they were both purchased from the natives by an American, who proposed to stock them with sheep.

Passing down the coast from Nuulua the bay of Fangaloa is reached. It is a treacherous harbour, and affords a very precarious shelter. Saluafata is a pretty little town at the head of a small bay. It is surrounded by groves of coco-nut trees and by an amphitheatre of hills thickly wooded. Some excellent land here stretches inwards from the coast, but is at present quite uncultivated. Below Saluafata is Wailili, a German cotton-plantation, where some 300 Polynesian labourers, principally from the Caroline Islands, are annually employed.

From Wailili to Apia the country is thickly wooded and the land is excellent. A coral-reef here runs parallel with the shore at a varying distance, and affords boats an easy and safe way of passing up and down the coast. At one time there were numerous villages between Wailili and Apia, as is shown by old walls of houses and tombs. The whole district has many times been laid waste by war, but, under proper cultivation, would be capable of great things.

As seen from the sea there are not many islands in the Pacific that present a more beautiful or picturesque appearance than Upolu. La Pérouse, indeed, held that it must be counted amongst the largest and finest of the South Sea Islands. Though not so high as Savaii by 1000 feet, it shows, nevertheless, a bold and majestic front. Its central range is not less than 3000 feet high, and is wooded almost to its summit. High up, indeed, the trees are small and stunted, and the undergrowth thin. But with every foot of descent the vegetation changes rapidly in character until within a short space the forest becomes thoroughly tropical. Trees of a hundred different species struggle with each other for light and air. They meet overhead and form a leafy canopy through which the rays of a vertical sun strive in vain to pierce. Beneath this the traveller walks in a dim twilight. Around him all is moist, damp, and decaying. The air is sickly and oppressive, the grasses rank and matted, and from every trunk and bough snake-like creepers and supple vines hang down and encumber the ground. On the stems and branches of the trees are clustered rare ferns and orchids that would be the glory of an English hot-house. Here they grow luxuriantly on the moss-covered bark and dead wood, and reck little of sunlight or fresh breezes. The ground in many places is covered with flowers as with a carpet, while in others it is overgrown with a dense and impenetrable mass of underwood. Such is the usual charac-

ter of vegetation of Upolu. It is throughout a very fertile island, and fully equal to the best portions of the Fiji group. It produces already considerable quantities of coco-nuts and cotton, although but little has been done in the way of scientific cultivation. The hill-sides on the northern aspect of the island, if cleared of their forests, would afford a magnificent section of country, and from their position should be admirably adapted for the growth of coffee. The rich, black loam and warm moist climate of the lowlands already grow sugar-cane and tobacco, but as yet neither skill nor capital has been brought to bear on their cultivation.

The natives of Upolu are hospitable and friendly to a degree, much more so, in fact, than the natives of either Savaii or Tutuila. They are all nominally Christian and have abandoned most of their heathen rites and customs. They are willing to sell land, and have already parted with more than 100,000 acres, principally to American and German purchasers. The price varies a good deal according to the necessities of those who sell, but may be said to range from a few pence in the mountainous districts to about 1*l.* an acre near the sea-shore.

Tutuila, the Maouna of La Pérouse, is geographically the most central island of the group, and lies about 40 miles south and east of Upolu. It is 17 miles long and 5 broad. On its southern side is the deep bay of Pago-pago, which almost cuts the island in two. This harbour, which is one of the best in the whole South Pacific, is surrounded by hills of from 2000 to 3000 feet high. Surrounding the harbour at their base is a small strip of level land, upon which the native villages are built. This would be admirably suited as a site for a wharf or for the storage of coal, and a portion of it was actually purchased with this object by an American company in 1872. The harbour of Pago-pago is half-a-mile wide at the entrance, and runs north and south for the distance of a mile, when it turns in a westerly direction, and opens out into a fine sheet of water. It is somewhat difficult for sailing-vessels to leave, in consequence of the trade-wind blowing directly into it; but for steam-boats it is unsurpassed by any harbour among all the island groups of the South Pacific. Here vessels of any size can lie at anchor secure from every wind all the year round. It is well adapted as a coaling-station or for refitting and repairing ships, and affords, moreover, plentiful supplies of timber, food, and water. It was here that Captain Mead, of the United States navy, in May, 1872, hoisted the American flag, and, under a treaty with the chiefs, took possession of the place. I am not aware whether his Government subsequently sanctioned this proceeding, which was much criticised at the time, and gave rise to a good deal of speculation in the Australian colonies.

The central portions of Tutuila are occupied by a mountain-range, the highest point of which is Matafca, some 2300 feet above the sea. The whole island is evidently of volcanic origin, and is well wooded almost to its summits. The tree-fern and the coco-nut are the prevailing species; but there is also much useful timber, and an abundance of bananas, pine-apples, and other tropical fruits. The small island of Anuu, 300 feet high, and with a population of 200 inhabitants, lies half-a-mile off the coast. Passing westward, numerous small bays are met with, some of which rise above the dignity of boat-harbours. Not far from Vatia is Asu or Massacre Bay, the scene of the deaths of MM. De Lamanon and De Langle, and a boat's crew. As related by La Pérouse, the massacre seems to have been entirely unprovoked by any violence on the French side, while such acts are quite foreign to the usually friendly and hospitable people of the group. The natives say that the actual murderers did not belong to Tutuila, but had come on a *malaga*, or political mission, from Upolu, which at that time and still claims a feudal supremacy over Tutuila.

From Asu to the extreme west of the island, the coast presents much the

same character everywhere, and is high, steep, and inhospitable, or broken occasionally by small bays, which afford shelter to native canoes, and at the head of which are native settlements. Tutuila, indeed, possesses few points of geographical interest. It is destitute of rivers or lakes, while its interior is possessed by a single mountain. Its scenery is in many places grand and picturesque, especially on the west side. But the possession of such a harbour as Pago-pago renders it important both commercially and politically, while the island itself is actually capable of a great deal of development, if only capital were at hand. There is no reason, apparently, why it should not grow cotton and coffee, while even now its production of coco-nuts is very considerable. Its inhabitants are not so friendly as those of Upolu, and have shown a great aversion to parting with their lands to white settlers. At present the only export from Tutuila is *cobbra*, and this is entirely in the hands of the Germans.

To the east of Tutuila lie the three last islands of the group, Manua, Oloosinga, and Ofu. They possess little interest, either geographically or commercially. They have no harbours, while their interior is mountainous and unproductive. The culture of the coco-nut, which is almost the sole food of the natives, here assumes great importance. There is a native tradition that Manua is the spot whence sprang the whole race of the Samoans; and in this tradition may possibly linger a record of that migration which, following the course of the trade-winds, brought the first inhabitants to the Navigator Islands.

Ethnologically the Samoans belong to the same stock as the Maories of New Zealand and the Kanakas of the Sandwich Islands. They are representatives of the so-called light race of the Eastern Pacific; but have evidently intermixed in many cases with the swarthier tribes of Fiji and Tonga. Physically they are a fine race of men, are possessed of considerable mental ability, and are capable, under favourable circumstances, of great improvement. They have for ages been semi-civilised, but have never succeeded in advancing beyond a certain point. They have a system of social government which closely resembles the feudalism of mediæval Europe. They have an exact and elaborate code of laws to regulate the inheritance and transmission of land, which descends as a rule through the females of a family. The power of the great chiefs is very considerable, but not so absolute as in Fiji and Tonga. It is practically limited by certain wise, understood rules, and by the power of any individual chief to command obedience. Judged by the standard of other Polynesians, the Samoans will take a high position. They are less ferocious than the Fijians, and more active and energetic than the Tahitians. Of late years, however, a great change has passed over them. They have abandoned many of their native industries, and have learned not a few of the vices of civilisation. A succession of civil wars has damaged the material prosperity of the country and demoralised its inhabitants. These wars are generally about some question of precedence among the leading chiefs, and are carried on with great cruelty by both sides. No quarter is given or asked, and wounded prisoners are beheaded as soon as captured. During the last war the natives substituted breech-loading rifles and artillery for their ancient club and spear, and showed considerable skill in the construction of earth-works and fortified camps.

At present the islanders enjoy an autonomy, but this evidently cannot last very long. Every day the amount of capital invested by Europeans in the group is increasing. Hitherto this has been almost entirely in the hands of Germans, but now there are unmistakable signs that this will be no longer the case. The annexation of Fiji has drawn increased attention to the fertility and wealth of the Navigator group, which is only a day's sail distant from it. The stream of colonisation from Australia has already commenced to flow towards Samoa, which will before long of necessity attract more attention. Then the

same problems that presented themselves for solution in Fiji will present themselves once more in Samoa. The labour-trade will again demand attention, and perhaps legislation. In spite of herself, it is inevitable that England will have to interfere sooner or later with this group. It belongs to Australia geographically, and is too valuable and too close to our colonies to be allowed to pass into other hands. The natives are thoroughly weary of the anarchy and civil wars which for the last generation have distracted their country. They would gladly welcome the interference of a strong power, that would settle all differences between rival chiefs and compel a policy of peace. The geographical position of these three groups of Fiji, Tonga, and Samoa, with regard to each other, at once suggests the idea of a Federation. Those who know the natives best know also that some such measure would meet with their hearty approval. It is indeed inevitable, sooner or later; but were it done at once, most of the difficulties which were encountered in dealing with Fiji would be avoided from the outset. The group itself would benefit by the change, the Australian colonies would be secured from a possible danger, while a new field would be opened up to capital and enterprise. The annexation of Fiji has rendered a further interference with the two neighbouring groups of islands almost a logical necessity. It cannot in the nature of things be long avoided, and the sooner it is undertaken in the interests of civilisation, of our Australian colonies, and of the natives themselves, the better.

2. *The Two Providence Islands.* By W. NOEL SAINSBURY.

At the request of Major-General Lefroy, Governor of the Bermudas, who had considerable doubts about the history of the Island of Providence, east of the Mosquito Coast, Mr. W. Noel Sainsbury, editor of the 'Colonial Calendar of State Papers,' has been at some pains to elucidate the subject, which proves to be as important as it is interesting, and clearly shows that General Lefroy had good reasons for his doubts; for it is now certain that both the early history and the geography of that island have hitherto been much confused, and, indeed, mixed up with those of an island of the same name, viz., Providence, one of the principal islands of the Bahamas.

On the 4th of December, 1630, King Charles I. granted to the Earl of Warwick and others two islands. These islands are described in the Patent as Providence, "heretofore called by the name of Catalina," and Henrietta, "heretofore commonly known by the name of Andrea," lying between 10° and 20° N. lat., and 79° and 81° W. long., and both these islands will be found in the map between 12° and 14° N. lat.

Now there are preserved in the Public Record Office two contemporary MS. volumes of the proceedings of the 'Company of Providence Island,' one a journal, the other containing a copy of their Patent, also Commissions, Instructions, and Letters, to their Governors and other officers in the said Islands from 1630 to 1641. In the year 1641, Providence Island was taken by the Spaniards and the English were expelled; and this will account for the record of the English Company's proceedings abruptly terminating in that year. The Spaniards "carefully garrisoned" the island, and seem to have kept possession of it until 1666, when Captain Mansfield surprised and retook Providence Island for the King of England. The Governor of Jamaica then sent Major Samuel Smith with a small supply of men to govern Providence Island for his Majesty, who, in November, 1666, appointed Sir James Modyford, brother of the Governor of Jamaica, by Letters Patent, Governor of the Island of Providence, *alias* Sta. Catherina. Before sailing from Portsmouth, Sir James Modyford memorialised the English Government for certain arms and ammunition with which