

I.—The Islands generally:  
Mr. Sterndale.

extending between the Navigators and the Carolines which contains any deposit of pearl oyster; but the quality is very inferior, the shell being small, and the pearls of little value.

Oaitapu and St. Augustine.

The Tarawau or Gilbert Group, commonly spoken of as the Kingsmills, Arorai, Tamana, Peru, Onotoa, Nukunau, Tapetua, Nonoiti, Maiana, Tarawa, Apiang, Marakei, Makin, and Putaritari. This includes all the Kingsmills, with the exception of Apemama, Kuria, and Aranuka, which belong to the King Tem Baiteke, who, as far as I know, has not for some years back allowed any Europeans to live on his islands. I have heard since that Messrs. Godeffroy had established an agent there, but I do not know whether it is so.

In the Marshall Group, Ebon, Jaluit, Naperick, Mille, and Aur.

In the Carolines, Strong Island, Ascension, Yap, and the Palaos. These last are generally spoken of as unsafe to approach; but, although it is true that the people are ill-disposed to white men generally, there are living upon them two agents of Messrs. Godeffroy, one Frenchman, and two Spaniards of Manila.

#### ADDITIONAL MEMORANDA.

##### Re FRENCH OCCUPATION OF THE MARQUESAS.

It has been my impression, as stated in my previous paper, that the French Government had abandoned these islands as unprofitable, as they undoubtedly were to them, from the fact that in 1859, to my own knowledge, all their establishment had been removed thence, except a pilot and two gendarmes, who had remained on their own application. I have lately been informed that France continues to lay claim to the Marquesas, and that they have some officials located there. This was brought under my notice within the past three weeks, in consequence of shares in a cotton plantation at Nukuhiva (in Marquesas), or rather portions of the cultivated land on freehold purchase, having been invested in by some men of business in Auckland, of whom one told me he had bought ten acres of cotton as his share in the concern. I could get no further information, as they seemed desirous to keep the matter private. A branch of the Terre Eugénie concern has been for at least eight or nine years established at Nukuhiva, on plantation grounds originally commenced by the Jesuit mission. I have no doubt this is the land in-question, especially so as my informant told me that it was their intention to transport the Chinese labourers from the Tahitian plantation to Nukuhiva. The Tahitian plantation was a gigantic affair. I have seen a good deal of it. At one time they had as many as 1,500 Chinese employed upon it, besides a very great number of Polynesians. It was originally intended to have been worked by Chinese labour only; and such would have been done, but for the fact that the Chinamen imported during the first two years, being dissatisfied with their treatment, wrote letters, which were published by the authorities in the seaports of China, warning the people not to engage themselves to the agents of the Tahitian plantation. Many statements were published in American and Australian papers some six years ago, as to great ill-usage of labourers on this plantation. These stories were not altogether true. It is certain, however, that, under just and humane regulations, an abundant supply of excellent labour could have been obtained and kept up by the managers from the China and Indian Seas. Between 1860 and 1865, as well as at a former period, I was employed officially in the engagement of Coolie labourers in that part of the world, so that I speak from experience.

##### THE NAVIGATOR GROUP.

Concerning the Navigators, a paragraph, copied from a San Francisco paper, appeared recently in the *Southern Cross*. It stated that a company had been formed in San Francisco for the purpose of occupying some part of this group. I did not regard the matter much at the time, as the capital mentioned did not seem very large; but, in looking over some of my letters of last year, I found one which seemed to bear upon the question of a desire on the part of the United States to form some kind of establishment at the Navigators. It was written to me by a resident of Apia, who is generally regarded as being better acquainted with the native mind, and as having more influence among the natives, than any other European in the group. He wrote, "There is a special Commissioner from the United States Government here, sent by the President in consequence of a petition to him from the chiefs of Samoa for a Protectorate. The chiefs have all agreed to it, so it only awaits the sanction of Congress to establish a Protectorate. Colonel Steinberger, U.S.A., the Commissioner, is now on a visit to Savaii. We expect him to return here to-morrow, and he will sail from here in his yacht for San Francisco."

#### TRADE AND TRADING ARRANGEMENTS.

(By MR. STERNDALE.)

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THE enormous impetus which is now being given to commercial enterprise on the western coast of North America by the completion of the railway across that continent, and which may possibly, before long, be followed by a canal through the Isthmus of Darien, will render San Francisco and Panama (or whatsoever city will be founded in its neighbourhood) two of the greatest commercial centres of the globe. Their stupendous traffic will extend its ramifications to Japan, China, the Indian Archipelago, and the whole face of the Pacific will become overrun with ocean steamers and every description of trading craft. The inevitable consequence will be that every available oasis of its surface will be turned to account, and ultimately become the property of Europeans or their descendants. Where harbours exist coaling-stations and warehouses will be established, fertile lands will be cut up, brought to the hammer, and converted into plantations, while the low coral isles will fall into the possession of traders in cocoanut, whale oil, pearl shell, and other products.

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