

stead. He is a storekeeper, a business which of course he must relinquish if permanently appointed to fill his father's place. The policy of Consul Williams has not given satisfaction to the English residents of Samoa. His private character has been such as to render him much respected and beloved by his countrymen at the Navigators, but in his consular capacity he has caused irreparable mischief. Many British subjects have renounced their nationality, and made common cause with the Germans and Americans. His son, consequently, does not possess the confidence of the English residents, and English interests at Apia are in an unhealthy state. This has not been made sufficiently apparent in the New Zealand papers, because their correspondents have been usually persons more or less connected with the Mission.

If the Americans take up, say, 5,000 acres of land contiguous to Apia harbour, they can only obtain it by purchasing the property of their own countrymen, and by buying up the remainder of the native lands which lie between the settlement and the mountains; unless, indeed, they make some composition with the Germans, which they are very likely to do from community of interests. In either case, the English proprietors will be in a manner thrust out, as many of them are now located upon land to which they have no tenure but by sufferance of the chiefs. The English settlement will be confined to a fractional part of the whole harbour, with but small facilities for the conduct of their business. The question will resolve itself into this: Is Apia to be regarded as an American or as a German possession? The possession of Apia means the sovereignty of the Navigator Islands.

This is one view of the question, but yet another may be taken. To the east of Apia, and about nine miles distant, is another harbour called Salafata. It is regarded by whalers and other seafarers as equal in security, &c. to that of Apia. There is no settlement, but around it are considerable tracts of land already the property of Americans and Germans. No English of any consideration are there. If the Americans elect to purchase their land and form their station at Salafata, the result will be that the American Consul and residents will remove from Apia to that place, which will become the great nucleus of American trade in the Pacific; and then the English now in Apia, or who may subsequently settle there, will have only their old rivals, the Germans, to contend with. Although but a few miles apart, there will be no land communication between the two settlements, as the nature of the country will not permit it; but a considerable trade along the sea-coast will spring up between them, which cannot fail to be beneficial to both.

THE KOBRA TRADE.

The kobra trade of the Society Islands is assuming large proportions. A French gentleman who has been for some years associated with Mr. Brander, of Tahiti, has purchased the island of Rurutu from the natives, and has been engaged in cocoanut plantation for eighteen months, and in improving the existing wild trees. He anticipates that, at ruling-rates for kobra, this property will, in four years from the present time, begin to yield an income of £4,000 per annum.

A large portion of the island of Tubuai has been purchased by the same firm for a like purpose.

Active operations of the same kind are being commenced in the Paumotus, which it is believed will soon be occupied entirely by Europeans. The French authorities have declared their intention to give every encouragement to settlement in those islands. It is worthy of notice that the Paumotus, or Low Archipelago, are an absolute possession of France, and not a protectorate, as are the islands of Tahiti, Moorea, and those of the Austral group, including Rapa. The two splendid islands of Raiatea and Huaheine, with their small dependencies, are in no way subject to France in reality, but had their independence secured to them by virtue of a treaty of which the terms were guaranteed by England, somewhere about the years 1846 and 1847. The Marquesas are still retained as an absolute possession of France, and are now regarded by them as very valuable.

Mr. Brander, of Tahiti, has erected very expensive and powerful machinery at Valparaiso for the manufacture of cocoanut oil from kobra, which is shipped to that port from his warehouses in Tahiti. A San Francisco firm have proposed the establishment of a dépôt of the same kind at Raiatea. Mr. Brander has also purchased Easter Island, which lies in the direct route, about half-way between Tahiti and Valparaiso. He has removed most of the aborigines to his own Tahitian plantation, and has replaced them by Chilenos and others in his employ, who are stocking the island with cattle and sheep, for which it is well adapted.