

Report of Captain A. N. Tripp, His Majesty's Special Commissioner to Central and Western Polynesia.

HONOLULU, HAWAIIAN ISLANDS, }
June 17th, 1884. }

To His Excellency W. M. Gibson, Minister of Foreign Affairs, etc.

SIR:—I have the honor to report that, in accordance with instructions received from the Foreign Office July 31, 1883, and in conformity with the tenor of the Royal Commission held by me, as His Majesty's Special Commissioner to Central and Western Polynesia, I visited the Gilbert group of islands, and had the honor of presenting His Majesty's autograph letters to Te Taika, King of the Island of Apiang; Nantiti, King of Makins, and to Tim Benuku, King of the Islands of Kuria, Apamama, Aranuku, Maiana and Nonute. From them I received replies, addressed to His Majesty, which, with others, I have the honor to enclose herewith to Your Excellency.

At Apiang I employed an interpreter, Mr. Randolph, a trader, who has been long established on the island, and through him made known His Majesty's wish to establish friendly relations with the King and people of the islands.

The result of the interview was that the letter enclosed, marked "A," was prepared by the King, with the advice and consent of his counsellors, and signed by him, his uncle Ten Nabana, and his brothers Ten Taakai and Teng Kabana. It was reported to me that the principal chief of the Island of Tarawa had been killed, and the Prince Tintaworo was then living on Apiang, leaving no one ruler over Tarawa.

Leaving Apiang, I arrived at Makins August 24th, and was received by King Nantiti, in the large church building in the principal town, Butaritari.

On this occasion Mr. Paul Kanoa, the Hawaiian Missionary stationed there, acted as interpreter, and there were present besides the King, his brother and his grandfather, with the head men of the island and a large number of people. The King was accompanied by a guard of honor, and upon the conclusion of the interview, three cheers were given for King Kalakaua, with whom many of these present are personally acquainted.

The reply of King Nantiti to His Majesty's letter I enclose, marked "B."

On the 6th of September I touched at the island of Onotua—to return labor—and found that the Government was vested in the "old men." They met at intervals in the Council-house, each district acting independently of the other, and made such laws and inflicted such fines and punishments for misdemeanors as seemed good to them, and in this manner preserved a tolerable degree of order amongst the people. They expressed themselves as willing to set up one of their own number as King, if they had proper guidance and advice to enable them to do so.

At Taupatua, where the Julia landed some return labor on the 7th, I found the same state of things existing as at Onotua, and the wants of the people to be the same. An English man-of-war, the *Espiegle*, Captain Bridges, had been at the island a short time before, and had enforced a fine of a large amount of *coprah* in payment for articles stolen from an English trader resident there.

On September 24th I reached the Island of Kuria, and was received by the King, Tim Benuku, who also rules over Aranuku, Apamama, Maiana, and Nonute. I found him to be a very intelligent man, well educated, and fully alive to the advantages of being connected in terms of friendship with the King of the Hawaiian Islands.

King Tim Benuku has inherited the sovereignty of Apamama, Kuria, and Aranuku, and acquired by conquest the supreme control over Maiana and Nonute. He is by far the most powerful of the reigning chiefs in the group, and is endeavoring to introduce as many of the ruling customs prevailing in civilized nations as are practicable in the confined area, both physical and geographical, of his kingdom.

The interview with the King took place in the Council-house on Kuria, and was largely attended. The King has a very fair knowledge of the English language; but I thought it best to employ an interpreter in order that the purport of His Majesty's letter might be fully understood.

At the close of the interview, the King requested the "old men" to give their opinions in the matter, but they signified their entire willingness to abide by his decision, his word being "the law."

The King then ordered a variety of presents to be brought forward, and re-

tired to his house, where he wrote his reply, marked "C."

The Julia then left the Gilbert group for the Fijis and New Hebrides to procure labor.

While in the latter group I studied the political and social condition of the race—the Papuans—inhabiting them, and found that each island, and, generally speaking, each district, had its own petty ruler, who held the reins of authority either through fear or by sufferance.

The condition of the people is very low in every respect—the language, even, is not the same throughout the group, and in some localities that spoken on one part of an island is not understood by those living on another part. Cannibalism prevails, and, so far, it would seem as though the efforts made by the missionaries in the group to Christianize the people had not met with a satisfactory measure of success.

Upon my return to the Gilbert group in January of this year, the Julia was unfortunately wrecked on Byron's Island, south of the Equator.

I then considered it my duty, as Captain of the vessel and Government Agent, responsible for the sixteen laborers obtained in the New Hebrides, to remain with my people on the island, while I gave instructions to Mr. F. L. Clarke—who was attached to the Expedition as Secretary to the Commissioner—to take passage in the American bark *J. W. Seaver*, which touched at Byron's Island the day after the Julia was wrecked, and to endeavor to procure a vessel to take my people and myself to Honolulu. Mr. Clarke was empowered by me to act in this matter as my agent as captain of the Julia, and also as representing His Majesty's Commissioner.

Previous to Mr. Clarke's departure, I deemed it advisable to call the head men and people of the island together, to lay before them my commission, in order that they might more clearly understand that the Hawaiian Government would be fully informed of their acts for good or bad towards my people and myself.

The meeting was attended with good results, inasmuch as the pilfering of stores that had been saved from the Julia was temporarily checked, and some articles already taken away returned.

The head men of the island expressed a wish that they might be included in the number of those who had sent letters to His Majesty, and evinced an intelligent comprehension of the objects of the mission.

Mr. Clarke took his departure on the 18th of January, and on the 17th of February fell in with the Hawaiian schooner *Kaluna*, Captain Lovell, with whom he arranged for our passage to Honolulu, I having advised Mr. Clarke to make the best of his way to Honolulu, should there be a reasonable chance of his reaching there before the vessel he might charter; he did so, arriving at the Hawaiian Islands again about the middle of April.

I was obliged to remain on Byron's Island ninety-three days before the *Kaluna's* arrival, and arrived in Honolulu June 15th.

Mr. Clarke, while in the *J. W. Seaver*, re-visited several of the islands in the Gilbert group, and I extract as follows from his report to me:

"On Jan. 20th, touched at Peru Island. I found there a trader named Fraico Vallerio, a Tyrolean, who informed me he had been appointed by Captain Freeman 'Commercial Agent of the Hawaiian Gov't for the islands of Peru, Araria, Tamana, Nukunua, Onotua, Taupatua and Nonuti.' He had proposed a federation of the above named islands and was flying their (proposed) flag of six alternate red and white horizontal stripes with a star in the center. He reported that the *Espiegal* had enforced a fine here of thirty tons of *coprah* in consequence of the natives having stolen articles from the wreck of the brigantine 'Crwell,' which was lost on this island Aug. 25th."

"On the 23d of Jan. arrived at the island Nonute, where we found that there had been some hard fighting in December, 1883, between a party of returned laborers belonging to Tarawa and Apiang islands, who had been left there at their own request by Captain Holland, on the occasion of the Julia's previous voyage a year ago, and the people of one of the districts of Nonute."

(Mr. Clarke procured from one trader living on Nonute a full account of the war, written before the *Seaver* touched at the island, which I enclose, marked "D," and also another account from another trader, J. J. Gleeson, which corroborates the one enclosed.)

As will be seen from Lowther's statement, the war was ended by the subjugation of the island by King Tim Benuku, who is now its ruler.)

Mr. Clarke further reports:

"On January 30th, arrived at Kuria and King Tim Benuku came on board. He expressed his regret at the loss of the Julia, and tendered the hospitalities of Kuria and Apamama to me, and endorsed my Commission as Hawaiian Consul for Apamama, and gave me a letter to the 'Governor' he had placed in charge of that island."

"Feb. 4th the *Seaver* arrived at Apamama, and I presented King Tim Benuku's letter to the Governor. He immediately placed at my service all that he had, and gave me to understand that the King's wishes were law to him."

"On the 13th I arrived at Tarawa, where I found that there was no form of Government, save that exercised by a few 'old men,' who acting sometimes in accord, made laws and regulations.

Mr. Haina, the Hawaiian Missionary, called together those old men, and they expressed a wish to send His Majesty a letter which I consented to be the bearer of." (Letter marked "E.")

"They evidently desire that some arrangement should be made, by which they can secure a good Government, and be safe from raids made on them from other islands.

"While at Tarawa I met Capt. Lovell, commanding the Hawaiian schooner *Kaluna*, and effected an arrangement with him; as per agreement enclosed.

"On February 21st I arrived at Makins, where I found that King Nantite had died on February 7th, and his brother Nabukutokia had been proclaimed King during the minority of the Prince, Nan Tiata. The Prince is now about 15 years of age, and lives with the King. King Nabukutokia received me at his residence, and entrusted to my care a letter for His Majesty, which I enclose." (Marked "F.")

From Makins the *Seaver* proceeded to Jaluit, Marshall's group, and thence to San Francisco, from which port Mr. Clarke reached Honolulu.

In reporting to Your Excellency upon the mission, I beg leave to present the following as the conclusions I have arrived at in reference to the future of the Gilbert Islands.

The people of the greater part of the Gilbert Island group have been taught for the last thirty years to look to the Hawaiian Islands as being the source from whence has come to them all they have of Christianity, and consequent civilization.

Their language has been reduced to writing, and books have been printed for them by the Hawaiian Evangelical Board. They have had teachers sent to them who are native-born Hawaiians, and the influence and example of those teachers has done, and is doing, very much to raise them socially and morally in the scale of humanity.

The Gilbert Islanders have of late years been brought in contact with foreigners of all nationalities, who have come to trade with them, hire them to go abroad as laborers, or to live in their midst. Of the latter class there are a few who lead respectable lives; but the majority, the natives have learned to distrust or despise.

The natives have but crude ideas in regard to self-government. With the exception of the islands ruled over by King Tim Benuku, and King Nabukutokia, it can hardly be said that there is any government in the group.

The Kings and Chiefs whom I met all spoke with one accord of their desire to receive counsel and advice from His Majesty, and the time seems to have come when the Sovereign of the Hawaiian Islands can, by a judicious exercise of kindly wisdom and experience, materially assist the Gilbert Islanders in becoming a happy, united nation.

Left to themselves, they will waste away through civil wars, and before the foreign influences for evil that have found their out—evils that the missionary cannot, unaided, banish from those coral shores.

I have the honor to be,
Your Excellency's most humble Servant,
A. N. TRIPP,
H. M.'s Special Commissioner to Central and Western Polynesia.

Below we publish the letters sent by the Kings and Chiefs of the Gilbert group in reply to letters of amity and friendship conveyed to them by Capt. A. N. Tripp, H. H. M. Special Commissioner, as well as a memorial addressed to Mr. Clarke, as Secretary of the Commission:

"A."

KOINA, APAIANG, August 20, 1883.

KALAKAUA, KING OF KINGS:
MY GOOD BROTHER,—I note what you say through Captain Tripp. It is excellent. I desire that you should assist our land, for

we desire to be under your rule, in the same way that you are under the rule of foreigners.

(Signed) TE KAIEA, King of Apiang.

Chiefs {
TEN NABUCHA.
TEN TOAKAL.
TENG KABANE.

"B."

FROM NANTITI, KING OF BUTARITARI (MAKINS.)

MAKINS, Aug. 25th, 1883.

Nantiti, by the Grace of God King of Butaritari, to His Majesty Kalakaua, King of the Hawaiian Islands.

GREETING—With great regard I have received your Commissioner, Capt. Tripp, who has arrived here, and has handed me Your Majesty's letter, which has been read before me and my people, being translated from the Hawaiian language to the Gilbert Island language by the Rev. J. M. Kanoa, and we have heard every word that is written in the letter.

I wish to express my good feeling towards your Commissioner and Assistant.

I take the lesson from Your Majesty's letter as the foundation for my government, and as an expression of good will between Your Majesty and myself. I have received your Commissioner with gladness as the one who has Your Majesty's confidence.

I therefore place my full confidence in Your Majesty, and hope that you will be as a father to me and my people.

NANTITI,
King of Butaritari.

"C."

APAMAMA, KURIA, Sept. 23, 1883.

KING KALAKAUA:

MY BELOVED BROTHER,—May you be in health in God.

I have received your letter. What you say is good, viz., that we fraternize with one another, and that we agree with one heart to love one another in truth.

Kalakaua, let us assist one another in looking after those of the Gilbert Islands which are bad.

Tarawa is the only island that is bad. Do you then settle upon your day for righting matters there, for you have ships. And when you have fixed upon a day for settling its matters, do you come to me first in order that I may prepare my men to accompany you.

(Signed) TIM BINOKA, King of Apamama, Kuria, Maiana, Arenuka, and Na Noute Islands.

"D."

MEMORIAL from A. T. Lowther, Resident Trader on Na Nante (or Sydenham Island) Gilbert Group.

NA NAUTE (OR SYDENHAM ISLAND,) }
December 24th, 1883. }

F. L. Clarke, Esq.—Sir: Last November a civil war broke out on the island of Na Nante, Gilbert group, between the residents of this island and some people from Apiang (of the same group) who had been to the Hawaiian Islands on a labor term of three years, and having a quantity of arms and ammunition, they very easily became masters of this island, driving away about 25 canoes, containing some 200 souls. These canoes reached Apamama (or Simpson's) island. The King of that island, Tim Benuku, took up their cause, and arrived at this island on the 6th of December in the fore-and-aft schooner *Kate McGregor*, of Auckland, commanded by Captain Hayward, and sailing under the British flag.

At daylight three boats belonging to the schooner landed about 150 native soldiers belonging to Apamama, who made war on the Apiang people, and utterly destroyed them, several being killed and wounded, and their wives made prisoners.

About 5 p. m. King Tim Benuku declared himself King of Na Nante, and had shot four men in a canoe and wounded another. Throughout the day and night of the 6th about forty lives were destroyed by the Apamama Island people. The 7th and 8th were given up to plunder, canoes being taken to carry away the spoils, and houses were burned. My house was robbed of about thirty chests and their contents, the property of natives who had left them with me on storage. I also lost two of my own and other items. Some of the natives of this island were compelled to go on board the *Kate McGregor* against their will, and if they refused they were shot.

On the night of the 8th I complained, by note, to Captain Hayward. He then hauled off his vessel, which was full of food and plunder, her decks being crowded with the besiegers and their prisoners. My note was read to King Tim Benuku, who then, in a great rage, ordered the male prisoners ashore, but kept the women and children. I had my boat alongside the schooner about 9 o'clock that night, and took a great many ashore who were thrown overboard from the schooner by the Captain and the Apamama natives. The schooner left during the night, taking away, I should judge, about 150 people belonging to this island, and leaving behind about 20 of their people.

From the 9th to the 11th this island was in a state of confusion and terror. The Apamama people who had been left here marauding about, capturing people and taking them to the south end of the island, to

await the return of the schooner. They also exacted cocoanuts from our people, and stole the young women, not to gratify a temporary lust, but to take them to sea at an after date.

On the arrival of the French bark *De Farcatte*, La Noquette, Nantes, with Lieutenant J. C. Garnier, de Port Tahiti, I obtained the following information: He had called at Apamama island, and had made arrangements to bring back here about 30 of her people, and take on board the Apamama people who had been left behind by King Tim Benuku and return them to Apamama. For his trouble he was to receive 150 of the prisoners taken from here, and take them to Tahiti for the term of three years to labor at the rate of \$5 per month, when they were to be returned to Apamama.

The French bark arrived here on the evening of the 16th of December, and left on the 19th, with about 131 natives belonging here and to Apamama. The bark also brought letters, and the Chief Chamberlain of King Tim Benuku, with instructions regarding the government of this island. King Tim Benuku lays claim to just one-half of the products of this island to be at his disposal upon the arrival of any of his vessels.

It may be well to state here that this King has been the legal owner of several English vessels sailing under the British flag, and is the owner of one at this time, named the *Sun Beam*, of Auckland. The *Kate McGregor* was a chartered vessel, and has taken many cargoes to Auckland and other ports, and it will be the duty of the British Government to see if this King's acts were legal. We have several of the Apamama Islanders here yet keeping watch over some prisoners, and the whole island is afraid of them, the people raking and scraping together everything they can to please them. My own losses will be heavy. The island has lost about 450 people out of a population of 3000.

You will be kind enough to give this letter to any headquarters where it will be the earliest received, for assistance we are really in great need of.

Yours Respectfully,
ASIA JAMES LOWTHER,
Resident.

"E."

FROM THE HIGH CHIEFS OF THE ISLAND OF TARAWA.

TARAWA, Feb. 13th, 1884.

To His Majesty Kalakaua, King of the Hawaiian Islands. Regards to you, Your Majesty.

We have learned this day Your Majesty's mind, and we wish to join together with one mind in this work, that we may live and be in peace with each other. We wish to express to Your Majesty our deep aloha for the kindness you have done us, and we send you our never-ending love.

(Signed) TOAGLU, the Chief.
TERIAKU, the Chief.

"F."

FROM NABAKATOKIA, KING OF BUTARITARI (MAKINS) ISLAND.

MAKINS, Feb. 22, 1883.

To our Great and Good Friend King KALAKAUA, of the Hawaiian Islands, Greeting:

At the present time I inform you, with sorrow, that King Nantite departed this life on the 13th of February, at the hour of 3 o'clock in the morning, while he was away at one of the provinces of his kingdom, consulting with his people at that place. The God of Gods came while he was there and ended his work in this world, to rest in the other world.

I wish to inform you, with great respect, that he has left what he had not finished for me to do; and that I place full confidence and regard in your aloha, and help towards me, the same as you gave to my predecessor now dead, so that the love that binds our people together may be perpetual.

I further ask you, with deep respect, to listen: Our heir to the throne is Nan Tiata, who is 15 years old. He is granted permission to go to your capital city of Honolulu to study and receive education in the English and Hawaiian, and any language—and especially to study military and other lessons.

And we wish, furthermore, to make known to you that we depend upon your kingdom to make known to us the expense and cost of this education.

And we assure you that the friendly consultation that has been carried on by my predecessor with Your Majesty's Commissioner is confirmed by us with aloha.

(Signed) NABAKATOKIA,
King of Makins.

NAN TIATA, Prince and Heir Apparent.

AS BAD AS CHOLERA.

The Terrible Visitation of Southwestern and Eastern Kentucky.

Charleston, W. Va., November 20th.—Information from Perrysville, McDowell county, in this State, near the Virginia border, gives a frightful account of the ravages of the so-called cholera in the extreme southwestern counties of Virginia and the adjoining territory in Kentucky. Making every allowance for exaggeration, the loss of life already has been appalling, while the condition of the survivors is terrible in the extreme. No real has fallen in the Cum-