



THE "TUSCARORA'S" MISSION TO SAMOA.

DURING General Grant's Administration attention was called to the necessity of the United States having coaling stations or places of call for its cruisers in case of war. During the cruise of the Confederate steamer *Shenandoah* in the South Pacific, where she destroyed our whalers, our vessels sent in pursuit were unable to get coal or to go anywhere for repairs. The President, seeing that it was desirable that we should have some point in the South Pacific where our navy in time of need could find shelter and a depot for supplies, and our mercantile marine a place for trade with the surrounding groups of islands, sent Colonel A. B. Steinberger to the Samoan Islands in 1873.¹ Steinberger remained among them long enough to make a thorough investigation bearing upon the commercial value of the islands, their harbors, and the facilities for coaling stations for our cruisers. He made his report, which was sent to Congress by President Grant April 21, 1874. The Samoans addressed a letter to President Grant asking that we would aid them in forming a government, praying for our support, and offering annexation to the United States. The President sent Steinberger back to Samoa as American commissioner. He took passage from San Francisco in the flag-ship *Pensacola* to Honolulu, where he was transferred to the United States ship *Tuscarora*, Commander Henry Erben. A large quantity of freight in shape of arms, some of the very newest pattern, was also taken on board the *Tuscarora*. Commander Erben was ordered by the Navy Department under date of 11th January, 1875, to receive Colonel Steinberger, with his clerk, and convey him in the *Tuscarora* to Samoa, and "to extend to him any facility that you can for the execution of his mission." In March, 1875, the *Tuscarora* arrived at Apia. Commander Erben informed the chiefs of his arrival, also the object of the visit of Colonel Steinberger, also that he was the bearer of a letter from President Grant to the chiefs. The chiefs appointed April 1 for receiving the United States commissioner. They asked that time be given them to get the petty chiefs together and properly to receive President Grant's sealed letter. Twenty-two days were needed. Before the council adjourned a present was made to the *Tuscarora* of 450 chickens, 17 pigs, and about a ton of yams

¹ While President Grant was looking for a naval station in the South Pacific, he at the same time was having the harbor of Pearl River, near Honolulu, Sandwich Islands, in the North Pacific, examined or surveyed by a commission composed of Major-General J. M. Scho-

and potatoes. The schooner *Peerless* arrived at Apia from San Francisco shortly after the *Tuscarora*. She had been purchased by Steinberger in San Francisco for his personal use, and a battery of one twenty-four pounder put aboard of her, with the usual number of small-arms. She was sent to the islands of the group to bring up the chiefs to be present at the *fono*, or reception, on the 22d of April; she also did surveying work about the other harbors of the group.

The days before the *fono* were spent in daily conventions explaining to the chiefs in council the Constitution; every article was gone over, and they thoroughly understood each. The Samoans are a superior race of aborigines, intelligent, all having been taught by the missionaries to read and write their own language. The Government was based upon the Taimua, seven chiefs chosen by the other chiefs to serve for one year each. A king was elected, Malietoa. This was not done hastily by any means, but mature deliberation was given, and each candidate's fitness fully considered. On the 22d of April Commander Erben with the officers of the *Tuscarora* attended the council. The sealed letter from President Grant was delivered to King Malietoa, who handed it to Commander Erben to read. A translation was also read by Dr. George A. Turner of the London Missionary Society medical mission. The greatest enthusiasm was manifested. Colonel Steinberger explained to the people the importance of the occasion and the meaning of the articles of the Constitution. The new flag brought out in the *Tuscarora* was shown, and he proposed that it be adopted as a national emblem. The flag consists of seven stripes, red and white, each representing an island, and a white star in a blue ground, representing the Government island of Upolu. It was adopted by the Government, hoisted in the square, and saluted with twenty-one guns by the ship, and the foreign officials were notified of the adoption of both Constitution and flag. The parade that day was a grand and picturesque affair. Fully eight thousand persons were in line, all dressed in fancy costumes, marching splendidly, each village by itself, preceded by beautiful village maidens dressed in their prettiest feather robes of all colors. The men performed athletic feats and feats of arms, showing their war ma-

field, United States Army, Major Alexander, United States Engineers, and a naval officer, with the view of our obtaining possession of it and using it as a naval station, with dry dock, etc. [This is the harbor recently ceded to us for such use by treaty with Hawaii.]

nœuvres as they advanced. The Samoans are a fine-looking race, and different from any of the other Pacific islanders. This parade will never be forgotten by those who viewed it. As they passed by, presents to the *Tuscarora* were deposited before Commander Erben and officers; these, when received on board, amounted to 700 chickens, 70 hogs, and tons of yams and coconuts. The coconuts were necessary to feed the chickens and hogs, as the chickens would not eat corn. The coconut-fed hog furnished a delicate pork for the table. After the parade and ceremonies the foreign consuls and missionaries called on Commander Erben and promised their aid in giving strength to the newly formed Government. In this way the Government of Samoa was inaugurated. The great chiefs remained at Apia for some little time, until a code of laws was made. These were simple in their nature, relating to murder, assault, theft, perjury, revenue and trading, and trespass. The laws regarding liquor selling were well defined, the restrictions being regarded by the liquor sellers as very arbitrary. The *Tuscarora* remained at Samoa long enough to see everything working smoothly and then sailed for Honolulu. Before leaving, the Taimua of Samoa addressed a letter to Captain Erben and to Colonel Steinberger, and a letter was sent at the same time to President Grant.

In this connection I may state that Mr. William H. Webb, the eminent ship-builder of New York, in 1870 established a line of steamers from San Francisco, via Honolulu, to Australia. Looking about for a place in the South Pacific where his vessels could stop and take coal, he, after a personal inspection, selected the Samoan group as the one offering the best facilities and being nearer the route followed by his ships. He made arrangements with the petty chiefs for a spot to establish a depot and fly the American flag, Pago-Pago being the port selected. Our Government never appreciated the work of Mr. Webb, and that it failed to take advantage of the opportunity of opening up a trade with the South Pacific there is no doubt, but the names of the gentlemen engaged in the enterprise show that the company was formed of San Francisco's most respectable men. That their business would be carried on with greater security and their capital better protected under a settled and recognized Government was a fact well recognized by them.

The following letters are given here because they do not appear in the printed Government records.

TRANSLATION BY GEORGE A. TURNER, M. D.

HOUSE OF THE TAIMUA OF SAMOA,
MULINUU, May 12, 1875.

TO ULYSSES S. GRANT,
The President of the United States of America.

GREAT AND EXCELLENTLY GOOD SIR: We have received from Colonel A. B. Steinberger your very excellent letter, which was written on the 11th December, 1874.

Our joy is very great, and our thankfulness to your Excellency, in that you have been pleased to regard us, and accept our letter and our petition, which was sent to you.

That was indeed a red letter day for us, and all the people of Samoa, on which Colonel Steinberger first gave us your letter and we perused it; and we also again looked upon the person of Colonel Steinberger, who had returned to Samoa then. Thus was our thanks-

giving, "the will of God is good"; it is he who has enabled you to regard us, and to appoint him to Samoa to become a source of light in all matters which will give right and solidity to our Government and the laws which have been set up in Samoa. You are aware our weakness and ignorance is very great; our land has not been accustomed to these affairs; it is, as it were, a new thing to us.

Our anxiety was very great during the time that we had not received an answer whether you would accept our wish or not, as also from false stories of vagrants in Samoa. But now these stories are things of the past; we have no longer any doubts; our thoughts are only those of thanks and rejoicing because of your letter and Colonel Steinberger, who is the full pledge of your kindness towards us; on account of this we are now of good courage, and have confidence and also great strength.

All the encouraging words of your letter are very good, to our thinking; we will heed them.

We are very grateful indeed for the present from your Excellency and your Government, the weapons which were brought by Colonel Steinberger to us to strengthen our Government, because, since he reached us and gave us these weapons, our Government has not been hampered in any way; no one has attempted to originate quarrels, as was our foolish custom in days gone by.

Although we are well aware that we can be of no use to you and your Government, it is right for you thus to show friendship to us; but it is on account of your free will to us and our land that you have given us these handsome presents.

We have received from Colonel Steinberger the new flag, which was made for our Government; we deliberated whether we would receive it. We have resolved to accept it gratefully, because it is a very beautiful flag, and we have now adopted it as a sign that our country is one and desirous of establishing a new government.

We are also very desirous of keeping steadfast our present prosperity, and that by God's will it may not again be interrupted. We are about to commence this year fresh plans, which we hope will give unity to our Government; we are now, in fact, beginning this with Colonel Steinberger.

His zeal is very great in helping us and showing us things that are right and useful.

We shall esteem this gentleman very highly on account of his love and humility and great forbearance, inasmuch as great is our inexperience and slowness of comprehension at present. But he is not disheartened on that account; on the contrary, it is as though our darkness and slowness are the cause of his being more zealous and energetic, by night and by day, to make things plain to us, just as is the true love of a father to his children.

Our pleasure in Colonel Steinberger is still very great, and our prayer to God is that he may be pleased that nothing in his providence may happen to cause his speedy removal from among us, but that he may remain with us in Samoa till his death. Our reason for this is that we are well aware that this gentleman is very useful indeed to our land; through him our Government is for the first time strong and able, as it were, to stand and walk about, so also with all arrangements regarding our laws.

Captain Erben, the commander of the war-ship *Tuscarora*, has also been with us for some time; the zeal of that gentleman in encouraging us was indeed great; the behavior also of the officers and all his crew were excellent before us and all the Samoan people; all that they did in Samoa was very good indeed.

The words which we have written in this letter are not many, lest you should get weary in reading it; but your letter we shall preserve, that future generations of Samoans may peruse it.

We send our best respects to your Excellency. May the ever-living God be pleased to preserve your Government forever.

| | |
|-----------|------------------|
| (Signed) | TAIMUA OF SAMOA. |
| TAGALOA. | MISA. |
| TUIA. | LETUFUGA. |
| FUATAGA. | AUFAL. |
| MATAUTIA. | TIA. |
| TAUPAU. | MATAAFA. |
| SAMOA. | ASIATA. |
| LEMANA. | LAVEA. |

Written by order of the Taimua.

(Signed) LEMAMEA.

HOUSE OF THE TAIMUA OF SAMOA,
MULINUU, May 12, 1875.

TO HENRY ERBEN,

Captain of the American war-ship "Tuscarora" :

We write this letter in reply to your address, and your encouraging words to us which were written on the 9th April, 1875, and were read in our presence at our meeting at Mulinuu on the 22d of the same month.

We are very thankful that God has been pleased to permit your present mission to be carried out so that we have met, and we once more look upon the person of Colonel Steinberger, who has returned.

We are very grateful to the President and Government of the United States of America, in that they have been pleased to reappoint Colonel Steinberger to live in Samoa, because it is true he is a gentleman who has a great deal of true love, and is very useful to our Government, and in all matters regarding our laws. Our minds are quite made up that he will dwell with us in Samoa if God wills it; only if he were to die, that is the only thing that will separate us.

All the directions given to us by Colonel Steinberger are, to our thinking, very right and useful.

Your mission also is excellent, and the behavior of all the people in your vessel before all the people of Samoa is very good indeed. Nothing whatever unseemly has been done by any of your crew since you came to Samoa. But our fear is very great lest any Samoan behave badly, and cause your displeasure and your return with bad tales to the Representatives and the President of the American Government. You are aware that the Samoans are not accustomed to foreign manners; probably they will become acquainted with them, however, ere long.

All the words of encouragement which are written in your letter, and which you spoke to us on that day, we shall never forget; we shall preserve them, and make ourselves familiar with them, and put them past that future generations of Samoans may see them.

We also pray to God that he may hasten the time when Samoa shall carry out all the directions that you have given us, and that you may hear reports some other day regarding the Government of Samoa whether the good seed which you have sown on their account bears fruit or not. All this will take place if the Lord pleases.

We are very much pleased at the present time because we have got a good flag for our Government; we are glad, and admire it because the sign of enlightened nations has been set up in this our land.

We are very much pleased and thankful for the weapons given us by the great Government of America, to make our Government respected. We are indeed strong on account of them.

Our Government and our laws were very much hindered during these years which passed since we parted with Colonel Steinberger up till the time of his return now, but all these hinderances have now passed away; no sound of quarreling or proposals for war are any longer heard, such as were the foolish customs of this our land in former days.

Now we cultivate friendship with all foreigners living with us in Samoa, provided they do what is right in accordance with the laws of our Government.

Our friendship is still great towards the great Government of the United States of America, on account of the true friendship towards us who are ignorant and weak.

With these few words we desire to reply to your address and your encouragement to us. But your letter, with all that it contains, and this, our reply to it, will be, as it were, the means of our having intercourse together in the future when we look at them.

May you have health and strength from God, and may your voyage end happily.

(Signed)

TAIMUA OF SAMOA.

| | |
|-----------|-----------|
| LETUFUGA. | LEMANA. |
| TIA. | MISA. |
| MATAAFA. | TUIA. |
| AUFAL. | SAMOA. |
| LAVEA. | FUATAGA. |
| ASIATA. | TAGALOA. |
| TAUPAU. | MATAUTIA. |

Written by order of the Taimua.

(Signed)

LEMAMEA.

HOUSE OF THE TAIMUA OF SAMOA,
MULINUU, May 13, 1875.

TO THE CHIEF COLONEL A. B. STEINBERGER,

Who is now living in Apia :

We have already written a few words in acknowledgment of the many encouraging and kind words addressed to us by Captain Erben, the commander of the war-ship *Tuscarora*, at our meeting at Mulinuu on the 22d day of April, 1875.

We have also written a letter of thanks in reply to the letter of his Excellency the President of the United States of America—thanks because he has been pleased to entertain our desires which we made known to him. We are going to preserve his letter as, in our sight, precious property, in order that we may constantly look at it, as also future generations of Samoans. We beg you to be kind enough to give our letter to Captain Erben, in order that he may take it to the President of the United States of America, if the Lord be pleased to permit his safe return.

Our joy and thankfulness is very great indeed because you have come back to Samoa, with your true love to us. On this account you have left the good and pleasant things of your own land and your family, in order to come and assist us.

Our fears were very great indeed during the time now gone by when we were far distant from one another; we thought you had forgotten Samoa. But now that we again look upon you, great are our thanks to God, and our thoughts are that our Government and our laws will now be thoroughly consolidated, because you have returned; for although the Samoans have been well trained by the missionaries in reading, and the word of God, and many other good things, with the modes of government and law-making we are not conversant.

We think that we and all the Samoan people at the present time are blessed, and are about to obtain permanent peace by legislation and through God's blessing, whereas former generations of Samoa have passed away in darkness and distress.

And now, with reference to the presents from your Government which you have given to us, our pleasure is very great indeed, and you have the thanks of all the people of Samoa, because what you said is true. Samoans can do many things for the Government, but it is impossible for any one in Samoa to manufacture guns. The Samoan Government has been greatly strengthened since you came and gave us these cannon, and the arms and clothes for the police, all which things Samoans are observing.

Samoa was on the point of again getting into trouble, if God had not been pleased to bring you quickly back to Samoa, but now there is no longer to be heard the sound of war or any other thing to cause trouble to the Government of Samoa.

A great many false stories were circulated by wanderers from other lands who are in Samoa, during the time that you were far away, and this gave rise to great concern, and some were disheartened. But notwithstanding, we waited with patience and courage, because we knew well the friendship and energy which you displayed during your first journey, and now the result is that your kind words and promises of former days have come to pass. We now therefore receive you with joy and friendship, as is your great friendship for us and all Samoans.

You spoke to us about some arrangement to allow people of your Government to bring their vessels into our harbors, and for us to respect and protect them when they come to Samoa. We are perfectly and heartily willing for this.

We also thank you for the new flag that you gave us to deliberate about; we are unanimously in favor of it; that flag is of great use as an emblem that the Government of Samoa is united and established.

On that day, the 22d of April, 1875, that we were all together at Mulinuu, and that you gave us the letter from his Excellency the President of the United States of America, and that we also listened to your encouraging words and those of Captain Erben, the commander of the war-ship *Tuscarora*, the hearts of all the people of Samoa were filled with great joy, because we thought that for the first time our Government was established holding sway over all the different lands of Samoa.

You have given us some account of the Sandwich Islands, referring to the happiness they possess, and

their Government being thoroughly established and respected by all the great nations; with this in view, it is right for us all to work hard at the present time, and pray that God may be pleased to hasten the time when Samoa also may have the same blessedness.

You have also told us of some gentlemen who came with you to assist us; we are very thankful and glad that there are other useful men to direct the Samoans. Our desire is very strong that they should still remain in Samoa, and not be soon disheartened on account of the ignorance and slowness to learn of the Samoans.

As to your many encouraging words and useful directions given to us on that day at Mulinuu, we think them very good indeed. We wish also to attend to all good advices which you may give us from day to day, because we know well it is your desire to do what is right and what will be best to consolidate and thoroughly establish our Government and laws.

With these words, we desire that God may be pleased to hasten the time when all these desires of ours shall come to pass.

We hope that for many days and years we may live together and labor together for the good of the Government of Samoa.

May the Lord give you life and health.

(Signed)

TAIMUA OF SAMOAA.

| | |
|-----------|-----------|
| FUATAGA. | TAUPAU. |
| TAGALOA. | LETUFUGA. |
| MATAUTIA. | TIA. |
| TUIA. | AUFAL. |
| SAMOA. | LAVEA. |
| LEMANA. | ASIATA. |
| MISA. | MATAAFA. |

Written by order of the Taimua.

(Signed)

LEMAMEA.

Henry Erben.



ROBY'S CHRISTIAN CHARITY.



LD Jonathan Roby had been a crusty, crotchety, close-fisted bachelor, who had, penny by penny and dollar by dollar, scraped together a small fortune in a long life of hard work and shrewd dealing, and who kept tight hold of all his gains. When he died, his will was a surprise to his neighbors. He bequeathed all his money to three trustees, who were to invest it until it increased to a certain sum, and it was then to be administered for the benefit of the deserving poor of the town.

The three trustees named in the will were to be replaced, one at a time, by an annual election by the legal voters of the village; and the Board of Control, as the trustees were styled, was to be perpetuated in this way. It was directed that the fund should be called "Roby's Christian Charity."

When the money became available the trustees began to use it by the easy and simple

method of distributing to nearly all applicants orders for fire-wood, clothing, food, and medicine, by the terms of the will their discretion in administering the trust being almost unlimited.

This simple management of the Charity was soon hotly attacked from two sides. Jonas Rand, editor of the local "Plaindealer," set up the socialistic argument that the greater part of the fund being interest, and largely accrued after Roby's death, it never rightfully belonged to him, but to the people at large; and it should be immediately returned to those needing it, in the form of loans without interest. Then Stanton Roby, a nephew of old Jonathan, took up the cudgels and made active warfare through another local paper, both upon Rand's theory and upon the actual management of the trustees. He criticized the existing plan as simply a premium upon idleness and incompetence, and advocated a scheme of enlightened philanthropy based upon experience and guided by economic principles.