

Polynesia and its Stamps.

By PHINEAS SCRATCH.

1.— Samoa.

The Samoan or Navigator Islands are situated in the South Pacific ocean north east of the Fiji Is. and north west of the Society Group. The area of the islands is about 1,125 square miles and the population is about 36000

Apia, the chief town and seat of government, is a town, situated on the Island of Upolu, of 1,500 inhabitants. It is the official residence of the various consuls. It is here also that the successors of the great mercantile firm Goddetroy & Co., have their head quarters, these people control most of the business of the kingdom.

The government is a limited monarchy presided over by a king and a vice-king supported by a parliament of chiefs called the Malo.

The climate is very equable the Mercury never falling below 70° nor rising above 88° there is abundant rain fall and destructive storms are very infrequent.

The productions of the country are cocoanut, yam, lemon, guava, cotton, lime fruit, some tobacco, sugar etc.

The principal exports are coppa (the dried meat of the cocoanut from which oil is made) breadfruit and cotton in small quantities.

The chief articles of home consumption are maize, sugar and coffee.

There are thirteen islands in all; nine of which are inhabited. On the largest islands there are great mountains most of which are extinct volcanoes, Pango-Pango Pago-Pago on the island

of Tutuila has one of the best and safest harbors on the Pacific. Apia also has also a good harbor.

The islands were discovered by Bouganville in 1768. Since 1868 numerous petty wars have disturbed the people and caused the native population to decrease from about 40,000 in 1868 to 30,000 in 1880. In 1873 Malietoa Laupepa and Tapua (the two greatest chiefs) with the aid of the foreign residents succeeded in forming a government under their joint reign which lasted for two years when Malietoa, instigated by a secret agent of a german company made war upon Tapua and succeeded in dethroning him. Thereby making himself sole king. He chose Steinburg, the German company's secret agent, as his prime minister but on it being discovered that he had evil designs against the king, he was banished.

The Germans then swerved to the side of Tapua but failed to accomplish anything, as most of the people were loyal to the established king.

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An English dealer says one collector has bought \$200,000 worth of stamps from him in twenty years.

The average sale of postage stamps at the Philadelphia Post Office is \$9,000 a day.