

FIJI AND SAMOA.

We are in receipt of files of the *Fiji Times* to the 14th ult., from which we extract the following news —

Statistical returns published in the *Royal Gazette* state that the revenue for 1878 was £61,021, and the expenditure £95,296; the total value of imports for 1878, £136,607; the exports of produce raised in the colony, £146,845; the duty collected at the Custom-house during 1878 was £19,827.

The island of Yanucolailai has been temporarily appointed a quarantine station, and the Indian immigrants and others on board the ship *Leonidas*, now in quarantine, have been removed there.

The Uniform Date Ordinance, 1879, has been submitted to the Legislative Council. The following message explains its objects — "The colony of Fiji being crossed by the meridian of 180deg, reckoned from the meridian of Greenwich, that part of it lying to the west of this line is, according to the ordinary rule of noting time, nearly 24 hours in advance of that lying to the east—so that, for instance, when at the town of Vuna, in the Island of Tavuni, it was noon on the first day of January, 1879, it was, properly speaking, only a few seconds after noon of the 31st December, 1878, at Naiselesele, situate only a few miles distant in the same island. The custom which has obviated this inconvenience by adopting for the whole colony the date which according to the ordinary rule is correct only in the western portion has besides uniformity the additional advantage that the date in question is the correct date in all the other Australian colonies, and is in use even in islands lying to the eastward, where communications are principally with those colonies. The Ordinance in question, by legalising this custom, will remove all doubts on the subject for the future, doubts which, as the affairs of the colony increase in number and importance, might otherwise be productive of much inconvenience."

The news from Samoa that the country is again in a state of internecine war is very much to be regretted, and will no doubt be deplored by those nationalities whose interests are bound up with that state. By the *Samoa Times* of May 31 we learn that the King party had ordered the Government party to quit Mulinu Point (the seat of government); and that the latter, deeming discretion to be the better part of valour, had retired to Leulumoega, and sent war messengers to their allies at Atua, Aana, and Savali, that they may obtain troops to wipe out the insult offered to them. It would thus appear that nothing but anarchy may be expected for the next twelve months. We are further informed that the Government party had interviewed the Foreign Consuls with the view of defining, according to Samoan custom, what should be considered neutral ground. From private advices to June 5 we learn that the neutral ground had been decided upon by the consuls, the King party, and so-called Government, and the agreement that it shall be considered as such has been duly signed and attested. Again, that both parties are arming as fast as they can, are killing and selling off their pigs and poultry, and selling and mortgaging their lands, in order to furnish the sinews of war; and that should the war not be averted it is expected that it will be one of the bloodiest which Samoa has ever known. The King party numbers some 14,000 adherents, while the Government have some 7,000 followers, and there are some 7,000 neutrals. Such is the substance of the news to hand. While much will depend as to immediate war on the 7,000 neutrals, the Government party may yet consider themselves sufficiently organised to risk an encounter with that of the King, and while the white residents at present en-

joy the presence of the German ship of war *Bismarck*, still it would be only politic that protection should be assured to the property of British residents.

The *Samoa Times* says that General Bartlett, an American citizen, has declared his intention, in the event of a fight, of leading a division of the "Government" party.

A case of some importance was called on for hearing in the High Commissioner's Court, Samoa, on May 28, before Mr. R. S. Swanston, deputy-commissioner, in which Alfred S. Smalley, landlord of the Eagle-house, Matafele, was the plaintiff, and two British half-castes, named respectively Edwin and Edward Hunt, were the defendants. The defendants were charged with riotous and disorderly conduct. Mr. Smalley is an American citizen, and on the parties appearing before the Court, the deputy-commissioner addressed the plaintiff, and expressed his regret that owing to a letter he had that morning received from the American Consul he was not in a position to try the case. The following is a copy of the letter:—"Apia, May 27, 1879. My dear Sir,—In reply to your request of this date I must say that I am not clear in my own mind about the right of any one government to establish an independent judiciary within the territory of any other free and independent government without some treaty stipulation to that effect. I should not like to give my official consent to any legal proceedings within courts so established without first submitting the question to the approval of my Government, which I will do at the earliest opportunity. In the meantime I very much regret it if any inconvenience shall arise to any one.—Yours very truly, THOMAS M. DAWSON, United States Consul." The deputy commissioner said that as the plaintiff's consul thus declined to admit the legality of the High Commissioner's Court, he could not get any redress as against British subjects. He much regretted it, especially as he was aware that the half-caste boys were in the habit of annoying both residents and strangers, but as the American consul had declined to acknowledge his (the deputy commissioner's) right to deal in the matter, he could simply dismiss the case. The plaintiff, through his counsel, asked the deputy commissioner if he could not postpone the case. The deputy commissioner replied that he sympathised with the plaintiff, but that in consequence of the opinion held by plaintiff's consul he could not do anything in the matter, and so long as the American consul declined to admit the legality of the High Commissioner's Court he could not entertain any complaint made by an American citizen against a British subject, no matter how serious or of what nature was the offence.

On April 23 several trials were made of Smith's vacuum brake on a special train of the Great Northern Railway between King's-cross and Cambridge. The train consisted of 10 carriages and two brake vans, and the whole weight was 180 tons. The trials were made to prove that these brakes have the most simple automatic arrangement, and to show that an ordinary vacuum brake can be easily converted into an automatic one, at a comparatively small cost. The first stoppage was made at Wood-green. Here there is a gradient of one in 200 up. The train was travelling at the rate of 53 miles an hour, and was stopped in 15 seconds in 148 yards. The next stoppage was at Hatfield, where there is a gradient of 1 in 200 down. Here the speed was 58 miles an hour, and the train was stopped in 21 seconds in 264 yards. At Langley, where the gradient is 1 in 300 up, the train, travelling at the rate of 63 miles an hour, was stopped in 23½ seconds in 392 yards. Passing Hitchin, where the gradient is 1 in 200 down, the speed was

seconds in 392 yards. Passing Hitchin, where the gradient is 1 in 200 down, the speed was 65 miles an hour, and the train was stopped in 30 seconds in 414 yards. The train, travelling 58 miles an hour, was next stopped in 19 seconds in 296 yards at Baldock station, where the gradient is level. On an electric stop from the carriage on a gradient of 1 in 345 up, the train, which was going at the rate of 50 miles an hour, was stopped in 17 seconds in 220 yards. The last stoppage was made after passing Meldreth station, where there is a gradient of 1 in 345 down. The train was travelling 63 miles an hour, and was stopped in 19 seconds in 236 yards. The report of the trial states that the rails throughout were very greasy.