

been given, was one of these. He assumed the attributes not only of a king, but of a god, and after conquering a rival district on Savaii, he took, as has been stated, the name, "O le Tupu o Savaii"—the King of Savaii. After he was killed, Malietoa succeeded to the same title; but it now confers no power, and is considered merely as complimentary.

Each district and town has its own government. An elderly chief generally presides, or is considered as the head of the village, town, or district. In these primary fonos or meetings, the affairs are generally discussed by the alii (chiefs) and tulafales (landholders), and what they determine on is usually followed. The great fono, or general assembly, is seldom called, except on matters affecting the whole of the island or district. The subject is calmly debated, and most thoroughly discussed; the final decision, however, is not by vote, but is adopted after consultation, and is governed by the opinions of the most influential chiefs. It thus appears that these assemblies have little influence upon the course the chiefs may have determined to pursue, and serve chiefly to insure the united action of the district in carrying the designs of the chiefs into effect. The tulu-fano or decree, promulgated by the council, is to be obeyed, and those who fail are punished by the Malo, being plundered by them of their lands, &c.

In the descent of the office of chief, the rule of primogeniture is not strictly followed, but the authority and title always remain in the same family.

It is the custom at the fonos to compliment the head chiefs, and invoke blessings on them in prayers, that their lives may be prolonged and prosperous. I was informed that these assemblies were conducted with much ceremony, but I was much disappointed in the one I witnessed. The forms of proceeding may, however, be different when strangers are not present. The fonos generally begin at an early hour in the morning, and last until late in the afternoon. One of the most pleasing of the ceremonies is that in which the chiefs are supplied with food during the time the meeting is in session. After the food is prepared and dished in fresh banana-leaves, the wives and daughters of the chiefs attire themselves in their best dresses. They then enter the fale-tele, and approach their fathers, husbands, and brothers, &c., before whom they stop, awaiting their instructions as to whom they shall hand the viands. When they have obeyed their directions, they retire. The whole duty is conducted with the utmost decorum, and while it is going on, no conversation is permitted except in a low voice. I learned from the missionaries who had attended some of their meetings, that the