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THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS AND THEIR ANNEXATION.

Some two thousand miles from San Francisco in a southeasterly direction lies the group of the Hawaiian Islands, which have been the scene of the late revolution. The country is now in the hands of a provisional government who have deposed the queen, and the future disposal of the government is the question of the hour. Some advocate annexation to the United States. Great Britain would be hardly true to her nature did she not contemplate taking possession of the islands, so as to have one more stepping stone for the sun, which always shines on some part of her dominions. Germany's interest in the islands has not yet developed to any great extent.

About the year 1527 one or two Spanish ships were wrecked upon the islands, and the few survivors intermarried with the natives. Their descendants are identified to the present day by their light skin, liability to freckle, and by their facial contour, which is Caucasian. They are termed Kekea. The true discovery of the islands was effected in 1542 by Gaetano, a Spanish navigator, and in 1567 Mendana, another Spaniard, determined the true position of one of the islands, Kauai. In the beginning of 1778 Captain Cook visited the islands, whence his countrymen assign to him the honor of discovery. He left them and returned toward the end of the year. He excited the hostility of the natives and on February 14, 1779, was killed by them on the shores of Kealakeakua Bay, on the island of Hawaii. He was endeavoring to recover a stolen boat when killed. The name Sandwich Islands is derived from Lord Sandwich, of England, and was given by Captain Cook. Fortunately the beautiful native name, Hawaii, is now in the ascendancy and will, it is to be hoped, remain so.

A very elaborate system of feudal government originally obtained there, five or six independent monarchs holding sway. Wars were frequent. In one of them, in 1790, King Kamehameha was attacked by another king, and defeated the aggressor. He pursued his conquest and thirty years later was sole monarch of the

features. Capt. Cook's death is believed to have been precipitated by his own cruelty and hypocrisy. The American whalers used to recruit their crews with Kanakas, as the natives were called, and tribute to their amiable qualities is easily found.

On April 4, 1820, seven American missionaries reached the island. Shortly before this time the natives had destroyed all their idols, and the missionaries found a nation without any religion. In 1825 the ten commandments were adopted as law by the government. The first missionaries reduced the language to a written form, with an alphabet of twelve letters a, e, i, o, u, h, k, l, m, n, p, w. Whether the limited alphabet has anything to do with it may be a matter of surmise, but the population is said to be on the average less illiterate than that of New York City or Pennsylvania. It is claimed that they have a well settled American society, comparable to anything in the States. The general feeling on the island is said to be opposed to Great Britain.

Last autumn the San Francisco Examiner had a poll taken of the Hawaiian parliament on the subject of annexation. The sentiment then was strongly in favor of independence. The queen's leaning toward absolutism is largely responsible for the revolution and presumable change of views of the leading men on annexation. Probably the sugar question is one of the factors at the bottom of it. At one time the sugar plantations paid a return of some fifty per cent on the investment. This state of things has been done away with by free West India sugar, so that a far smaller profit is made. The hopes of a bounty per ton of sugar is one element making the sugar planters anxious for annexation.

Practically Hawaii draws upon San Francisco for her supplies. In 1891 the tonnage of American ships entering the harbor of Honolulu was over three times that of English ships, or 173,891 tons. American imports aggregated \$5,924,277, as against \$1,201,329 of British imports. The sugar production is now 300,000,000 pounds per annum.

The leper colony on the island of Molokai, the scene of the heroic exertions of Father Damien, casts a shadow over a picture where there is so much that is fair. But Canada and Louisiana both have had lepers for many years; so in leprosy we would have no new acquaintance. Some thousands of miles to the south and east of Hawaii, Robert Louis Stevenson has established himself. But his lovely Samoa hardly yields to the charms of the more northerly group of Hawaii. The varied climate enables any form of vegetation to be raised that can be grown in a temperate or tropical climate. The establishment of a botanical garden, absolutely unique in the world's history, would be an interesting possibility. The islands are but six days from San Francisco, and by fast steamers could be brought much closer. Under proper conditions, they might attract and should attract many tourists. The fact that America is by far the nearest mainland seems to bring the islands within the operation of the Monroe doctrine, and goes to forbid the establishment there of a European power. The purchase of Alaska, under the advice of Seward, when United States Secretary of State, has proved an excellent operation for this government. The annexation of Hawaii, it may be believed, would prove in its degree equally good for us, and, it is to be hoped, would be good for the inhabitants also. As a touching point for ships, its value cannot be overestimated. In war the importance it would acquire, as a strategical point, and as a depot for coal and supplies for war ships, is obvious. We already possess by treaty, rights in a species of harbor or coral lagoon, Pearl Harbor by name, which requires dredging before it will be available for ships of war. The bay of Honolulu, on the island of Oahu, is the principal harbor. It has 22 1/2 feet of water. Good harbors among the islands are very few.

The islands now have a debt of \$3,000,000. The necessary assumption of this debt is one of the principal reasons cited against annexation. It would virtually represent a price paid for the islands.

THE EDISON INCANDESCENT LAMP PATENT ATTACKED.

History repeats itself. Some years ago the great Bell telephone patent had arrayed against it a host of witnesses and able legal and expert talent. In the depths of Pennsylvania had been discovered an inventor who, it was held, had invented and had in operation a telephone and microphone antedating Bell and Hughes by many years. The case went to trial and one of the largest records ever produced in a lawsuit accumulated, and was produced before the Circuit Court in this city. The usual course was taken after an adverse decision in the lower court, but the appeal was without result. It was chiefly remarkable for the division of opinion of the United States Supreme Court. The Drawbaugh case to which we allude is a thing of the past. The expiration of the Bell patent in any case would relegate it to obscurity. Now the electric light has found its Drawbaugh. Heinrich Goebel, born near Hanover in Germany, is the inventor cited to destroy the recently affirmed



islands. The dynasty thus founded lasted until December 11, 1872. A chief, Lunalilo, was elected to succeed this house. On February 12, 1874, Kalakaua was elected king. He died in 1891, while visiting this country. His sister, the recent queen, Lilioukalani, the widow of John O. Dominis, the latter of American origin, succeeded him. She is the deposed ruler. Undoubtedly no native dynasty will again hold sway.

In the history of the country, which history is one tale of revolutions, some facts bearing on annexation may be noted. In 1810 Kamehameha I. wrote to George III. of England, desiring formally to acknowledge the British king as his sovereign and to place the islands under his protection. The offer, it is said, was accepted. Again, in 1843, a provisional cession of the islands to Great Britain is recorded, which was abrogated a few months later. By special treaty of 1899 the control of foreign relations was given to the United States.

The islands are twelve in number, with an area of 6,400 square miles, over three times that of the State of Delaware, or about four-fifths of that of the State of Massachusetts. One island, Hawaii, contains 4,000 square miles. Most of the rock formation is volcanic. On Hawaii are two active volcanoes—Kilauea and Mauna Loa. Between the effects of eruptions and accompanying earthquakes a number of lives have been lost. The highest point in the islands is Mauna Kea, on Hawaii, which rises to an elevation of 13,805 feet above the sea.

With such an immense range of altitudes, a great variety of climate can be secured. It varies from cool, frosty weather to very warm weather throughout the year. Sea breezes and northeast trade winds do much to temper excessive heat. In the winter heavy rainstorms occur, lasting sometimes for weeks.

The natives are supposed to be of the Malay race. At the time of Capt. Cook it is thought that the population was about 300,000. War and disease, the concomitants of civilization, have reduced the population, until the census of 1890 showed a total of 89,990, of which but 34,436 were of the aboriginal race. It is believed that they were originally cannibals. Except for this feature, they seem to have had many excellent