Our battle for religious liberty, a free press, popular education and civil liberty has been lost. The liberties of our dear native land are crushed before the juggernaut car of the advancing coolie trade, the greed of gain which has established the large plantation system, and a corrupt government of a usurping despot-king and his minions from America and England, aided by some renegade missionaries, and lucre loving missionaries children.¹

—Orramel Hinckley Gulick (1870)

When visitors to the Hawaiian Islands discover that native Hawaiians only make up a small fraction of the Islands’ population, they often ask how the Hawaiians lost control of their land. In response to this question, tour guides routinely explain that American sugar planters, many of them the descendents of missionaries, dispossessed native Hawaiians of their land in the 19th-century. Opposed to this dispossession, say the tour guides, was the native Hawaiian monarchy. Portrayed in most tourist literature as a praiseworthy institution, the monarchy undoubtedly was a cause for native Hawaiian pride. But not every Hawaiian monarch always acted in ways that benefited his

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exclusiveness," he decided to leave his family behind in Hawai‘i and go alone to the U.S., where he embarked upon an extensive lecture tour that lasted from 1862 to 1863.  

While Luther Gulick toured America, his brother Orramel moved in 1862 to the remote mission station at Wai‘ohinu, Ka‘u, on the island of Hawai‘i. Moving to Ka‘u was a significant career change for Orramel, who had not always planned on becoming a missionary. Instead of taking up missionary work after his graduation in the late 1840s from Punahou, the mission children’s school, Orramel opened up an import firm in downtown Honolulu with Alvah Clark, who like Orramel was the son of ABCFM missionaries. Alvah and Orramel initially achieved some stature as businessmen, and this stature enabled Orramel in 1853 to become a primary founder of Fort Street (now Central Union) Church, the church of choice for Honolulu’s white merchant families. After helping to found Fort Street Church, Orramel got married in 1855 to his business partner’s sister, Ann Eliza Clark, a graduate of Punahou and Mt. Holyoke College.

Ann and Orramel Gulick may well have hoped for a lifetime of economic security. Their hopes were dashed, however, when Orramel’s business failed circa 1856. To repay the debts he had incurred during the waning days of his business, Orramel held on to his job with the Hawaiian House of Representatives, where he worked as clerk and interpreter from 1850 to 1860. In addition to working for the House, Orramel took to the sea in the late 1850s, sailing as an officer on various Hawaiian trading vessels and on the legendary Morning Star, which supplied and transported ABCFM missionaries in the Pacific. Sailing had its pleasures for Orramel, but he viewed most sailors as terribly lustful and profane. He was glad, therefore, to leave his seafaring life behind when the ABCFM missionaries in Hawai‘i, citing Orramel’s proven piety and fluency in Hawaiian, chose him to fill a vacant post in Ka‘u.

While stationed at Ka‘u, the Gulicks founded a boarding school for native Hawaiian girls in 1863. One of the first girls’ boarding schools in Oceania, the Ka‘u School was visited in its first year by Rufus Anderson, the Boston-based official who directed ABCFM operations worldwide from 1832 to 1866. Described by Orramel Gulick as a man “of great simplicity and frankness of manner and kindness of feeling,” Anderson was warmly welcomed by native Hawaiians. “The people
Throughout the islands are pleased by him,” Orramel wrote. “His venerable form and kind dignity of manner are very impressive on native minds.”

Native Hawaiians might have enjoyed seeing Anderson in 1863, but white missionaries had reason to view his visit to Hawai‘i with some trepidation. They knew he was unhappy with their mission’s ability to achieve the ABCFM’s much-vaunted goal of the “three selfs”: self-support, self-governance, and self-propagation. To make “three selfhood” a reality for the Hawaiian mission—whose official name was the Sandwich Island Mission—Anderson had worked since 1848 to increase native Hawaiian involvement in the governance of the mission, and to make the mission independent of ABCFM headquarters in Boston. As a result of his efforts, the Hawaiian Mission Society (HMS) was created in 1851 to evangelize the Pacific, and the Sandwich Island Mission was renamed the Hawaiian Evangelical Association (HEA) in 1854. These changes, however, failed to satisfy Anderson, who observed in 1863 that the HEA was too elderly and not native enough. Of its ministers, all but four were over 50, and all but four were white. Whites alone enjoyed full membership in the HEA, and they dominated its board of governors, which included 12 whites and six Hawaiians. As for the HEA’s sister organization, the HMS, its officers were all whites, its membership was mostly white, and its meetings were conducted exclusively in English.

White dominance of the HMS and HEA was justified by many missionaries, who argued that Hawaiians were not ready for religious self-governance. This argument, however, failed to sway the head of the ABCFM. “Dr. Anderson,” wrote Orramel Gulick, “is not certain but that some means that would drive off or remove every foreign missionary from the Hawaiian islands, would be a blessing to the Hawaiian churches.” Of course, the churches would also benefit from less drastic measures, thought Anderson, who told the HEA at its annual meeting in June 1863 that the Hawaiian mission had to be thoroughly reorganized. Using the prospect of increased ABCFM funding as leverage, Anderson persuaded the HEA to take over the HMS, to grant full membership to Hawaiians, and to work on ordaining more Hawaiian pastors. He also got the HEA to elect Luther Gulick as its first full-time administrative head.

The election of Luther Gulick was an important victory for Rufus
Anderson. He wanted the HEA shaken up, and he knew that Luther was courageous enough to do the shaking. As a missionary in Micronesia, Luther had not hesitated to attack the powerful whaling industry and its support of prostitution. He also believed in the importance of creating a native pastorate. By asserting that native pastors ought to be made “more independent and self-controlling,” Luther found himself on the same side as Dr. Anderson, who remarked, “Dr. Gulick has better views of the working of missions than any young man I have ever met.”

Encouraged by Anderson’s support, Luther Gulick agreed to head the HEA, and to return from the U.S. to Hawai‘i, which he reached in January 1864. Following his arrival, he reconnected with his family and set up an office in Honolulu. From here, he embarked upon numerous trips around the Islands in order to “indigenize” the mission by disconnecting outlying churches from central churches. Central churches for the most part were to remain under white missionary control, whereas the outlying churches would get native pastors. “It will be hard work for the older missionaries to resign their complete control of their several dioceses,” confessed Luther. “There will still remain much lingering distrust of natives as pastors. And considering the frailty of the native character, it is but proper we should advance cautiously. But we must definitely press toward this native pastorate or soon our churches will be sadly decaying or passing over to Reformed Catholicism [Anglicanism].”

In the course of his campaign to create a native pastorate, Luther Gulick traveled to the island of Kaua‘i, where he met with the Reverends Daniel Dole, Abner Wilcox, and George Rowell in the spring of 1864. These meetings did not go well. Dole and Wilcox, Luther wrote, tried to “hoodwink” him, while Rowell, whose church had virtually disbanded, seemed poised on the brink of insanity. Rowell and the others were also guilty of “covetousness,” thought Luther, who wrote, “The more I learn of foreign missionaries and their irregularities, the less I fear any irregularity of a native ministry. It will not be worse.”

Having determined from his visit to Kaua‘i that too many white missionaries were incompetent, Luther Gulick redoubled his efforts to ease them into retirement. He also redoubled his efforts to recruit native pastors by making Hawaiians welcome at the HEA. Thanks to Luther’s initiative, the HEA conducted its business in Hawaiian from
1864 to 1878. As a result, native participation increased, enabling the *Friend* to announce in 1868 that “Hawaiian pastors and delegates now much out-number the foreign members” at HEA meetings. Hawaiians not only outnumbered foreigners at HEA meetings, they also outnumbered foreigners in mission pulpits, where the number of Hawaiians rose from four in 1863 to 44 (36 ordained clergy and eight licentiates) in 1869. One year later, there were only eight white pastors at HEA mission churches.

The changes that Luther Gulick made within the HEA clearly benefited native Hawaiians. Many whites, however, did not benefit from the emergence of a native pastorate. Some white parishioners complained that they were not adequately served by native pastors, while the missionaries’ sons discovered that the HEA under Luther offered them few opportunities for advancement in ministry. As for their fathers, the veteran missionaries, they had good reason to feel slighted by Luther, since he privately referred to many of them as “old fogies,” and since he obviously wanted them to retire.

In response to Luther Gulick’s calls for change, many veteran missionaries in the HEA expressed their opposition to him. Also opposed to Luther was Bishop Thomas Staley, the head of Hawaii’s Reformed Catholic Church (RCC). Founded by Staley in 1862, the RCC promoted a liturgically rich, high church form of Anglicanism, which in Staley’s opinion was bound to delight native Hawaiians. “[T]hose laughing children of the sun” were entirely unsuited for the austere “Puritanism” of the HEA, wrote Staley, who tried to lessen the influence that the HEA exerted as the largest religious body in Hawai‘i.

In the course of his anti-HEA battle, he naturally clashed swords with Luther and Orramel Gulick, both of whom loathed Reformed Catholicism. According to the Gulicks, Reformed Catholics were not only “Deformed Catholics,” they were also moral degenerates. “Their smoking gave the natives who saw them, a correct idea of what they are,” averred Orramel.

In addition to faulting Reformed Catholics for their personal habits, the Gulicks charged them with planning to take over HEA properties such as the spacious Kawaiaha‘o Church in Honolulu. The charge sounds outrageous, but it may in fact have been warranted, since the RCC enjoyed the full support of Hawai‘i’s powerful ruler, Kamehameha IV. Despite having been educated by ABCFM missionaries, the king wanted to curtail the power of the ABCFM and its
satellite body, the HEA, in Hawai‘i. In his opinion, there would not be much room for a strong, pleasure-loving, hereditary monarch such as himself in the abstemious Hawaiian republic that the American missionaries seemed bent on creating. To ensure that this republic did not get formed, the king endeavored to weaken Hawai‘i’s ties to republican America. He also endeavored to strengthen his nation’s relationship with monarchical Great Britain, which gladly sent Bishop Staley to assist in the king’s Anglicizing campaign.24

When Kamehameha IV died in 1863, the campaign to Anglicize Hawai‘i was continued by his successor, Kamehameha V. Convinced that a strong native monarchy with ties to Great Britain was needed for Hawaiian independence, Kamehameha V refused upon assuming his throne to uphold the Constitution of 1852. A politically liberal document that enjoyed American missionary support, the Constitution of 1852 provided for universal suffrage, which the king abhorred. “It is clear to me,” he wrote, “if universal suffrage is permitted, this Government will soon lose its Monarchical character.”25 That, of course, would be a disaster, thought Bishop Staley, who ridiculed American missionary efforts to acquaint Hawaiians with democracy. “[A] more preposterous system for a people just emerged from barbarism could not have been devised,” he concluded.26

To save Hawai‘i from a democratic system that he viewed as alien, Kamehameha V arranged for the Constitution of 1852 to be replaced at a constitutional convention in the summer of 1864. Delegates to the convention were deliberately scheduled by the king to be elected during the HEA’s annual June meeting in Honolulu, but a “wide awake” Luther Gulick thwarted the king by postponing the HEA’s meeting, thereby enabling HEA pastors to stay at home and campaign in their districts. One pastor whom Luther enabled to stay at home was his brother Orramel, who tried to get Luther elected as a convention delegate from Ka‘ū, Hawai‘i. When that failed, Orramel managed with help from missionary friends to get himself elected as a delegate from South Kona, Hawai‘i. This victory pleased him, though he feared that his fellow delegates, most of whom were native Hawaiians, would be overawed at the convention by their “wicked king.”27

Despite his pessimistic outlook on the constitutional convention, Orramel Gulick dutifully traveled to Honolulu, where the convention
began in the Kawaiaha‘o Church on July 7, 1864. One week later, Orramel, who was clerk of the convention, proposed a resolution that denied the authority of the convention to pass a new constitution. When this resolution was defeated after much debate, Orramel and Henry Parker, the minister of the Kawaiaha‘o Church, resigned in protest from the convention on July 22. In their resignation letter, they declared that the king was a constitutional monarch, and that he was bound to observe the existing constitution.28

After the resignation of Orramel Gulick and Henry Parker from the convention, the remaining delegates acceded to most of the king’s anti-democratic proposals for a new constitution. This frustrated but did not surprise Luther Gulick, who noted that commoners were made to sit together with chiefs at the convention, and that this arrangement tended to reinforce traditional undemocratic patterns of deference. “[I]n the presence of hereditary chiefs scarce a native can assert anything contrary to their known or supposed wish or thought,” wrote Luther, who lamented that “[t]he poor kanaka [Hawaiian commoner] is ever kicked, and is now being employed to kick himself back into some approximation to their political estate under Kamehameha I.”29

The prospect of a return to what Luther Gulick considered feudalism dismayed him, because like most missionaries he was definitely not a cultural relativist. Rather than tolerating the traditional emphasis in Hawai‘i on obedience to hereditary authority, he believed in the universal superiority of the democratic ideals that emanated from the European Enlightenment. As a result, he rejoiced when delegates at the 1864 Convention stopped just short of giving the king a new constitution because they objected to his insistence that a property requirement be instituted for voters. Passage of such a requirement would mean that “many of our good natives will be excluded” from voting, wrote Luther, who applauded delegates for stonewalling the king on the voting issue.30 “While the king and chiefs in convention are saying,” he wrote, “that voting is not a right the people can claim —only a privilege that Kamehameha III foolishly gave them—the populace are whispering, and muttering, and even in convention through their delegates boldly claiming it as a right which cannot be taken from them.”31

The Hawaiian people’s foray into political subversion delighted
Luther Gulick, who congratulated himself and other missionaries for making that foray possible. “As an Englishman expressed it the other day,” he wrote, “the American missionaries had certainly taught the natives to think, but they had learned to think a little too much.”

They certainly had learned to think too much for Kamehameha V, who was so disgusted by the constitutional convention’s refusal to institute property requirements for voters that he dismissed the convention and imposed his own constitution on Hawai‘i. Under the king’s constitution, which went into effect on August 20, 1864, the powers and prerogatives of the king were greatly expanded, commoners had to sit with nobles in a unicameral legislature, press freedom was curtailed, the secret ballot was eliminated, judicial independence was weakened, and property requirements were established to keep poor people from voting or serving in the legislature.

The autocratic nature of Kamehameha V’s government outraged Luther Gulick. It also outraged his friend Henry Whitney. A son like Luther of ABCFM missionaries, Whitney was the founder in 1856 of the Pacific Commercial Advertiser, Hawai‘i’s first commercially successful English language newspaper. Five years after founding the Advertiser and giving it an anti-government editorial stance, Whitney started Ka Nupepa Kuokoa (Independent Newspaper). In publication from 1861 to 1927, Kuokoa was, in one historian’s words, “the longest-running and most successful Hawaiian language journal.” Its first editor, William Ragsdale, was half-Hawaiian. He was also Roman Catholic, a fact that led Luther Gulick to charge that Kuokoa under Ragsdale’s editorship catered primarily to Roman Catholics and Episcopalians.

To ensure that native Hawaiian Congregationalists had a newspaper more favorable to them than Kuokoa, Luther Gulick agreed early in 1864 to edit Ka Hoku Loa (Morning Star). Founded by Luther’s friend Henry Parker in 1859, Ka Hoku Loa was only edited briefly by Luther, who laid down the paper in December 1864. One month later, he assumed editorship of Kuokoa, whose publisher, Henry Whitney, needed to replace Kuokoa’s old editor, William Ragsdale, probably because Ragsdale had contracted leprosy. As a replacement for Ragsdale, Whitney chose Luther, who halfheartedly admired his publisher. “Mr. Whitney is not as sharp as he might be—but is plucky,” wrote Luther, who believed that “There will be much interest taken in the paper by the missionaries and by the new native preachers—
which last are of course my personal friends, feeling to me and Henry Parker a special brotherhood.”

Native Hawaiians may or may not have liked Luther Gulick as much as he thought they did, but they certainly had—and still have—reason to credit him with preserving much of their ancestral culture. Though hardly a proponent of that culture, Luther was an enthusiastic and rather gifted ethnologist. In the 1850s, he wrote extensively about Micronesian customs and persuaded his siblings to collect Hawaiian artifacts for what would have been the first museum in Oceania. The museum project came to naught when Luther’s father condemned it as unmissionary, but Luther retained his interest in aboriginal customs. When he became editor of *Kuokoa*, he decided to publish material that would “be of high value to the Antiquarian.” As a result, the issues of *Kuokoa* that were published during Luther’s editorship are highly prized by modern-day historians, who scour those issues for descriptions of ancient Hawaiian customs, Hawaiian genealogies, tales of Hawaiian gods and goddesses, and articles by pioneer Hawaiian historians such as John Papa Ii and Samuel M. Kamakau.

The historical articles in *Kuokoa* evidently brought readers to the paper, since its subscription list during Luther Gulick’s editorship increased in number from around 1,800 in 1865, to 2,200 in 1870. During this same five-year period, *Kuokoa* went from being financially dependent on the HEA to being nearly self-supporting. As *Kuokoa* grew in size and strength en route to becoming “the beau ideal of a Hawaiian newspaper,” Luther confessed that its success was due not only to his own efforts but also to the efforts of his many editorial assistants. These included Hawaiians such as Joseph Kawainui and whites such as Orramel Gulick. The latter not only wrote articles for *Kuokoa*; he also edited a children’s paper called *Ke Alaula* (Dayspring), which he founded in 1866 with financial assistance from the HEA.

In addition to editing *Alaula*, Orramel Gulick continued to teach native Hawaiian girls. His boarding school for girls, however, was no longer located in the rustic province of Ka‘u, which his students viewed as an unlikely source of suitable husbands. To improve the matrimonial prospects of his students, many of whom were the daughters of Hawaiian pastors and missionaries, Orramel moved his school
from Ka'ū to the comparatively cosmopolitan site of Waialua, O'ahu, where he started teaching 50 students on October 1, 1865. During that same year, Orramel's sister-in-law Louisa Gulick, Luther's wife, started a small school for Hawaiian and part-Hawaiian girls at her home in Honolulu. This school soon evolved into the Kawaiaha'o Female Seminary, which is now a part of the Mid-Pacific Institute in Honolulu.

While the educational advances made by Orramel and Louisa Gulick undoubtedly encouraged people in the American missionary community, those people had a good reason to view the 1860s as a bad time for Hawaiian schools, especially those within the public school system. Created by American missionaries in the 1820s, the public school system in Hawai'i was basically run by the missionaries until the reign of Kamehameha V, who opposed American missionary influence within the public schools. To lessen that influence, the king appointed non-Americans such as Bishop Staley and the Frenchman Charles de Varigny to sit on the Board of Education. As a result, the Board of Education, which controlled public education in Hawai'i, acquired a membership in 1865 that was predominately Anglican.

In response to the king's efforts to Anglicize the public school system and other areas of the government in Hawai'i, Orramel Gulick complained that "Americans are being carefully and thoroughly weeded out of the Government and their places are being filled by English men. A drunken or whoring English/man or even a French/man is preferable to the best of Americans," added Orramel, who bitterly concluded:

The last, most decided, and open act of hostility to all American missionary influence is the appointment of [Charles Gordon] Hopkins and De Varigny upon the Board of Education. Every force that the government can command is turned against the best friends the government or people ever found. It is war to the knife now and no mistake about it. If it were possible to accomplish it, every American missionary and missionaries child, would today be banished [from] the kingdom, and tomorrow a suppliant people would kiss the king's feet that they might enjoy the blessing of being trod upon.

The prospect of Hawaiians being oppressed by a despotic king and his cadre of anti-evangelical white advisers not only dismayed Orramel
Gulick, it also dismayed his brother Luther, who resolved to stand up for “liberty and progress” and to claim “for our darker skinned fellow citizens what has been ruthlessly filched from them by the help of foreign talent and foreign wickedness.”

“[T]o one of my comprehension of duty,” explained Luther to his employers at the ABCFM, “so long as I remain in this land, I should no more think of remaining quiet under this tyranny—(and that not for my own sake, but for the outraged Hawaiian)—than the earnest ministers of New England did during the ‘Revolution’ and during the ‘Rebellion.’”

Unlike those ministers, however, Luther did not fulminate mainly from behind a pulpit. Instead he used his newspaper, *Kuokoa*, to attack the government of Kamehameha V on everything from its educational policy to its treatment of lepers. “Kuokoa strikes right and left,” exulted Luther, who added with regard to the paper, “It is well to keep the iron hot—so hot that the cowards who rule shall fear to touch it.”

By relentlessly attacking the government in *Kuokoa*, Luther Gulick roused the ire of various government ministers. One of them spoke of “the damned Gulicks,” while another said of Luther, “damn his name!” Such imprecations against Luther were not only made privately; they were also made in government-sponsored newspapers. One of these, *Ke Au Okoa* (New Era) was founded in 1865 to draw Hawaiian readers away from *Kuokoa*. Another pro-government paper, the *Hawaiian Gazette*, accused Luther and his publisher, Henry Whitney, of being “agitators,” and of engaging in “meaningless opposition and fault finding.” “[T]his constant pecking at Government officials is disgusting to not a few good men and true,” opined the *Gazette*, which humorously referred to Whitney as “Noodle” and to Orramel Gulick as “the younger Scriblerius.” As for Luther Gulick, the older “Scriblerius,” the *Gazette* pretended to praise him. “[H]is tongue and pen are as fiery as the old German Reformer, whose name he bears, and whose fame he expects to rival,” averred the *Gazette*, which sarcastically congratulated Luther for “displacing those old fossils [the ABCFM missionaries], whose usefulness in the work to which their lives have been devoted is, in his opinion, about gone.”

In addition to attacking Luther Gulick with sarcasm, the government attacked him with a much more powerful weapon from its arsenal. That weapon was the king’s 1864 Constitution, Article 52 of
which provided for the imprisonment of anyone who was “guilty of disrespect to the Assembly” or who “shall publish any false report of its proceedings.” Designed to restrict press freedom, Article 52 was used to prosecute Luther Gulick when he used the term “parasites” in *Kuokoa* to describe legislators who refused to reduce the horse tax. A regressive tax that enriched government office holders at the expense of impoverished native Hawaiians, the horse tax enjoyed the support of numerous pro-government legislators, who objected to Luther’s description of them as parasites. As a result, they had him arrested on May 17, 1866. The next day, the House debated Luther’s guilt and released him with only a reprimand.48

During Luther Gulick’s trial for literary malfeasance, his wife gratefully noted that Hawai‘i’s American “community in general sides with him, against the Government attack.” This support greatly pleased Luther, who admitted, “It is a queer thing to find myself on the popular side.”49 As evidence of his growing popularity within the American community, Luther cited invitations he had received in Honolulu to preach before whalers at the Seamen’s Bethel and before merchant families at Fort Street Church. In the past, American merchants and whalers had often excoriated Luther for his moralistic crusade against whalers in Micronesia. By the mid 1860s, however, whalers and merchants were attracted to Luther not by his moralizing but by his political opposition to Kamehameha V, whose pro-English and anti-democratic policies led Americans in Hawai‘i to close ranks in defense of their liberties and livelihoods. “A change is coming over Honolulu and Sandwich Islands community,” observed Luther in 1864. “The American interests are drawing together instinctively, to counteract the English. The anti-missionary feeling is subsiding. It is now British and American. Even such a pariah as I have been, is gaining favor, because American and outspoken.”50

Luther Gulick’s 1864 assessment of the political situation in Hawai‘i was accurate. Americans on the Islands did in fact feel threatened by Kamehameha V’s pro-English policies. These policies, however, were largely abandoned after the American Civil War. During that war, the U.S. was too preoccupied to worry much about Hawaiian affairs. Instead of punishing the Hawaiian monarchy for its drift toward England, the U.S. greatly enriched the monarchy by buying Hawaiian sugar. As the U.S. bought Hawaiian sugar to replace sugar
formerly supplied by the South, Hawaiian exports rose from 2,256,498 pounds of sugar in 1861 to 15,318,097 pounds of sugar in 1865. “By the close of the Civil War,” wrote the historian Ralph Kuykendall, “sugar had definitely replaced whaling as the mainstay of island economy.”51

The wartime sugar boom in Hawai‘i was impressive, but it did not last. When the Civil War ended in 1865, the United States regained access to Southern sugar and subsequently cut down on imports of Hawaiian sugar. As a result, the Hawaiian economy slid into a severe depression that began in the latter part of 1866. To end this depression, Kamehameha V sought help from his principal adviser, Charles Coffin Harris. A shrewd wheeler-dealer from New Hampshire whom Orramel Gulick described as the “arch enemy” of everything good in Hawai‘i, Harris thought that Hawai‘i badly needed a reciprocity treaty that would reduce or remove the American tariff on Hawaiian sugar.52

To get a reciprocity treaty with the United States, Charles Harris traveled to America in the spring of 1867. For the next few months, he talked about the advantages of reciprocity with many influential Americans. One of those Americans, ABCFM head Nathaniel Clark, received Harris coolly, largely because he and his predecessor, Rufus Anderson, had gotten bad field reports about Harris from Luther Gulick. These reports not only denigrated Harris, they also raised an alarm about the ascension to power of Bishop Staley, whose presence in Hawai‘i prompted Anderson to complain to U.S. government officials about Hawai‘i’s tilt toward Great Britain. Anderson’s complaints were not dealt with during the Civil War, but as soon as the war was over the U.S. hastened to send a warship, the USS Lancaster, to check out the political situation in Hawai‘i.53

The launch of the Lancaster indicated that Americans were upset with the Anglicizing of Hawai‘i. Another indication of their displeasure was their lack of support for Charles Harris and his proposed reciprocity treaty. When that treaty stalled in the U.S. Congress in 1868, Harris returned to Hawai‘i, where he worked on behalf of reciprocity by strengthening Hawai‘i’s ties to the U.S. As part of his campaign to improve U.S.-Hawaiian relations, Harris evidently undermined the king’s pro-English chaplain, Bishop Staley, who was forced to leave Hawai‘i in 1870. In response to Staley’s sudden downfall, Luther
Gulick gleefully announced that the Reformed Catholic Church was a “poor dead dog” and its “Ritualism is to be dethroned.”

In addition to abandoning Bishop Staley’s church, Charles Harris sought to improve U.S.-Hawaiian relations by placating American missionaries—especially the old ones. Despite his long history of conflict with the missionaries, Harris began taking “extra pains to be very complaisant and friendly” toward them. “Since Harris returned from the States he has gone on a new tack entirely,” observed Orramel Gulick’s wife Ann. In fact, she added, “he seems to have concluded that the Reformed Catholic Mission was not going to succeed, and the best way for him to do to increase his power and influence was to curry favor with the old missionaries and try to create division among the Evangelical party.”

Elderly ABCFM missionaries may have been flattered by Harris, but this flattery did not enable him at this point to achieve his ultimate goal: passage of the reciprocity treaty. In the absence of this treaty (which was rejected by the U.S. in 1870), many white planters in Hawai‘i proposed annexation as another way of avoiding the U.S. tariff on foreign sugar. Whether the annexation of Hawai‘i by the U.S. made sense was a big issue in 1868. It was debated at length in the Hawaiian press by writers such as Luther Gulick, whose father Peter had long been an outspoken opponent of annexation. In 1853, in the Polynesian, Peter condemned annexation. Nineteen years later, he condemned annexation again. “It would doubtless enrich sugar growers and land holders, in general,” he concluded. “But whether that would benefit, the aborigines, is I think doubtful.”

Doubts about annexation not only emanated from Peter Gulick; they also emanated from his son Luther. In an 1864 Thanksgiving sermon, Luther seemingly downplayed annexation when he averred that “the most consistent supporters of the Hawaiian throne” were sitting in his audience at Fort Street Church. The church’s minister, Eli Corwin, was an ardent annexationist, but Luther distanced himself politically from Corwin. “He might easily compromise me with the annexation party—as one of them—which I am not,” explained Luther, whose doubts about annexation did not stop him from sounding a lot like an annexationist during the annexation debates of 1868. During those debates, Luther declared, “The time will come when we shall be ready for absorption by the Great Republic if they
desire it. At present we are not ready, but these discussions are preparing the way.\textsuperscript{60}

The possibility of annexation might have pleased Luther Gulick, but it outraged Kamehameha V, who described the proponents of annexation as “hellish conspirators.”\textsuperscript{61} To stop these conspirators from succeeding, the king and his administration evidently made an alliance with white sugar planters, offering them full governmental support in exchange for their loyalty. In response to this offer, the planters not only toned down their calls for annexation; they also stopped complaining about the autocratic Constitution of 1864, which, wrote Luther, was now used for their benefit.\textsuperscript{62} One former opponent of the constitution went so far as to write, “Much of what had been distrusted during the trying days of the Constitutional Convention of 1864, time has proved were plans laid more wisely than the actors knew, for the strengthening and centralizing of the authority of this Government, so essential to the security of life, liberty, and prosperity of this land.”\textsuperscript{63}

As the Hawaiian government and the sugar planters coalesced in the late 1860s, Luther Gulick grew increasingly alarmed. “[T]he Sugar Planting interest, now the ruling power... is more and more linking itself with the absolutism of the Government,” he observed.\textsuperscript{64} As a result of “this complete centralization of all power,” Hawai’i in Luther’s opinion had become a “Landed and Commercial Aristocracy,” where a dwindling number of native chiefs and a growing number of white sugar planters were united in their oppression of “the poorer classes.”\textsuperscript{65} These “laboring classes, of small means, whether foreigners or natives, are more and more disadvantaged,” wrote Luther, who almost sounded like a Marxist when he declared, “The laws of the land are increasingly in the interest of Capital and Power, rather than of the laboring yeomanry.”\textsuperscript{66}

An especially odious law in the eyes of free workers was the Masters and Servants Act. Passed by the Hawaiian Legislature in 1850, the act paved the way for the importation of foreign contract workers (also known as coolies), who began arriving from China in 1852. Twelve years later, the Hawaiian government created the Bureau of Immigration to speed up the importation of contract workers, who in the opinion of the newly formed Planters’ Society were needed to offset a steady decline in the native population. This decline concerned
Kamehameha V, who wanted to supplement the Hawaiian workforce with an ethnically similar workforce gathered from other Polynesian islands. When these islands failed to supply enough workers to meet the planters' needs, however, the king agreed to expand the search for cheap labor to Japan, which began supplying Hawai'i with foreign contract workers in 1868.  

As the number of foreign contract workers in Hawai'i increased, a white legislator, Joseph Carter, told Orramel Gulick that Kamehameha V would probably live to regret his support for bonded labor and the planters. "I think," wrote Carter, "that in fostering the planting interest he will find that he has warmed a viper into life and action only to have it turn upon him." The king might not have agreed with Carter, but working-class whites and Hawaiians evidently did, since they met in large numbers during the fall of 1869 to protest against the importation of Asian workers. During one of these protest meetings, Charles Harris explained the government's immigration policy to a group of native Hawaiians, who shouted him down. Undeterred by this negative response, Harris went on to talk about the need for Asian workers with a group of white laborers. "Harris said that laborers from Europe would be too expensive to board," reported Orramel Gulick. "A German speaker replied yes, they would not eat such stinking salmon as he gave to his Kaneohe coolies to eat. It stank so that he smelt it at the pali."  

To avoid competition with immigrants desperate enough to endure horrendous working conditions, Hawaiian workers repeatedly petitioned their legislature in 1869 and 1870 to stop the importation of bonded laborers. These working-class petitions, however, led nowhere, mainly because the legislature was not very responsive to the working-class, which had essentially lost the vote in 1864. The fact that Hawaiian workers were unable to make themselves heard troubled Ann Gulick, who tried to convince her skeptical sisters and parents that the outspoken Gulick family into which she had married was right to campaign forcibly on behalf of native and coolie workers. In their fight for workers' rights, the Gulicks resolved to expose the inequities of the foreign contract labor system in print. "We must begin to let the natives see that it is contrary to their interests to allow the importation of 'bonded' laborers," wrote Luther Gulick, whose Kuokoa contained many editorials against bonded labor in the late
1860s. In one of those editorials, Luther simply declared, “the Coolie system should be abolished, and forgotten, the sooner the better.”

The abolition of the coolie system was not only sought by Luther Gulick, it was also sought by his brother Orramel, who claimed to have visited “nearly all” the sugar plantations in Hawai‘i, and to have met with “many hundreds of those who have labored upon the plantations.” Drawing upon this experience, Orramel explained in detail how the coolie system ensnared and exploited Asian workers. Those workers were given cash advances to sign multi-year contracts, he wrote, and they were promised wages that sounded good. When they arrived in Hawai‘i, however, they discovered that everything there cost more than it did in China or Japan; hence their wages barely covered their expenses. As a result, contract workers frequently ended up having to take out loans from their employers, and these loans could only be paid back through an extension of the debtors’ labor contracts, which could not be broken under any circumstance. “Having once signed a contract there is no escape,” averred Orramel, who wrote of the laborer:

He must work out his time on the plantation or serve his time in prison. Whatever the treatment he may receive or amount of food that may be granted him, whatever the character of the lodging assigned him, there is practically no redress for him—no hope of escape but in the expiration of the term for which he enlisted, and often not even then will he be freed.

Adding to the hopelessness of Asian contract workers, wrote Orramel Gulick, was the fact that they could expect no justice in the law courts of Kamehameha V, “the ruler under whose fostering favor the [contract labor] system has developed its present character and proportions.” In the king’s court system, explained Orramel, the Supreme Court was made up mostly of white sugar planters, while native Hawaiian judges, who headed a majority of the district courts, were often deferential toward planters and biased against Asians. Given this legal setup, court cases involving labor disputes on plantations were almost always decided in favor of the planter, who often used Hawaiian labor law to send a rebellious worker to prison “until such time as he becomes docile and tractable.”

The imprisonment of contract workers led Orramel Gulick to
depict Hawai‘i as a dictatorship where individual rights were routinely trampled upon by Kamehameha V and his white planter allies. These men formed “the Junta that now holds sway in this heaven curst land,” wrote Orramel, who accused the junta of not caring about the welfare of ordinary Hawaiians. Unlike the typical missionary, he averred, the typical planter whom the junta represented was uninterested in educating and improving people. He did not want to employ a pious, literate, self-directed, “liberty loving” field hand. Instead, “The Hawaiian planter—or more accurately the foreign planter upon the soil of Hawaii wants a machine that will handle a hoe at a small cost and be content—only this and nothing more.”

If plantation workers were as dehumanized as Orramel Gulick thought they were, then their plight ought to have concerned the ABCFM missionaries in Hawai‘i and their children, who were collectively known as the “cousins.” Most cousins and their parents, however, appeared in the eyes of Luther Gulick to have lost interest in uplifting the downtrodden. “We are not ready to take up crosses,” wrote Luther, because “We are too respectable, too refined,” and because “We are in a dreadfully worldly condition.” As evidence of this worldliness among the missionary community, Luther cited cousins who wore fancy clothes, cousins who traveled on the Sabbath, and cousins who dishonored their Puritan heritage by celebrating Christmas. “Before many years Good Easter Sabbath will be observed by us!” exclaimed a disapproving Luther, who prayed for “financial reverses and agricultural disasters to drive the worldly sons and daughters of missionaries to some spiritual sense, and to work for Christ.”

Unhappily for Luther Gulick, the economic tribulations of the 1860s in Hawai‘i were not terrible enough to check the surge of prosperity that engulfed the cousins. Many of them went into business and sugar planting, occupations from which they derived considerable wealth. This wealth, wrote Luther, made the cousins “all-fired proud and Fort St. Church-ish.” It also alienated them “from the interests of the Hawaiian race,” added Orramel Gulick, who observed that as the missionary children evolved into “unmissionary missionary children,” their missionary organization, the Hawaiian Mission Children’s Society, evolved, too. In its early years, it was an aggressive missionary body, but in 1867 it was described by Luther as “essentially a ‘moonlight’ association of tropical sentimentality with a slight
tincture of the missionary—as much as parishioners of Mr. Corwin can sustain!”

Luther Gulick was right to intimate that a lot of missionary children were worldly congregants of a wealthy church in Honolulu. Not all of the “cousins,” however, fit that description. Many like the Gulicks went into low-paying jobs such as teaching, although even these altruists were not always immune to the allure of government jobs and government contracts. These plums began to be handed out liberally in the late 1860s by Charles Harris, who evidently believed that patronage was the best way of silencing the government’s enemies. “It is Harris’ policy now,” wrote Ann Gulick,

to get into petty offices like school teachers and under Government pay, as many as he can of the good folks, and so give a semblance of goodness to the Government, while at the same time it keeps them from acting against it, while the worst kind of men are put into the posts of real power and influence.

As a result of the Hawaiian government’s patronage system, the missionary community in Ann Gulick’s opinion was fast becoming corrupted. Missionary families such as the Greens and Parkers had once staunchly opposed Southern slavery, she wrote, but now “They are under Government pay and not a word have they to say” against “the coolie system a modified form of slavery.” Their silence disappointed Ann, who was glad that at least one missionary family, the Gulicks, were still speaking out “on the side of liberty and justice.” “If the powers that be could shut up the mouths of the Gulicks by the payment of a good salary they would be only too happy to do it, and consider it money well spent,” she explained. “But they live for principle not money and are not willing to put themselves in a position where their liberty of speech would be curtailed.”

According to Ann Gulick, the Gulicks were heroes for steadfastly opposing the Hawaiian government and the coolie labor system. Other people in the missionary community, however, viewed the Gulicks not as heroes but as obstructionists. Representative of this negative view was Samuel Castle. A former ABCFM missionary who co-founded the highly successful firm of Castle and Cooke in 1851, Castle butted heads repeatedly with Luther Gulick. Luther was a radical Republican, whereas Castle was a conservative Whig who tempo-
rarily quit the HEA, evidently in protest over its funding of Luther’s radical newspaper, *Kuokoa*. Kuokoa’s editorials against the government and coolie labor irritated Castle. He publicly supported the coolie system, and he had a seat on the king’s privy council, a position that prompted Luther to call him “the dupe and tool of the present ministry.”

In addition to criticizing Samuel Castle’s performance on the privy council, Luther Gulick criticized his performance on the board of trustees for O‘ahu College, another name for Punahou School. The college trustees not only included Castle, they also included Luther, who fought bitterly with Castle in 1869 over the king’s nomination of Charles Harris for a lifetime seat on the Punahou Board of Trustees. To keep Harris off the board, Luther argued that the man’s “leprous touch” would defile Punahou. This argument worked at first, but in the end Harris succeeded with Castle’s help in getting onto the Punahou Board, an outcome that prompted Luther to lament his waning influence in Hawaiian affairs. “[T]he battle is lost for the present,” he wrote, adding that Harris’ victory at Punahou made it “an open question how long Orramel and I can hold on here.”

Luther Gulick had good reasons for worrying about the security of his position, since there were many people who, in his words, wanted “to procure my ejection from the secretarship of the Hawaiian Board.” Those eager to get rid of Luther included planters and government officials such as Charles Harris. Their enmity did not bother Luther, but he was disheartened by “the rising tide of opposition” that he faced from fellow missionaries. “[T]here were those,” wrote Luther’s daughter Frances Jewett, “who felt that, as secretary of the Hawaiian Board, he should be less pronounced in his politics, less radical in his demands, more conservative, more silent.”

Among the missionaries who opposed Luther Gulick were Henry Parker and Sereno Bishop. Both men were longtime friends of Luther, but they drew apart from him in protest over his outspokenness on controversial issues such as the coolie system. That system was not as heinous as Luther thought it was, wrote Bishop, who argued that the “pugnacity” with which Luther attacked the Hawaiian government was not suitable for a clergyman. This argument failed to sway Luther, although he did concede that his views on coolie labor were in the minority. “The mass of the white missionary community
and their children are on the governmental side, along with the majority of the moneyed classes," he wrote, "and I am not at all certain that it is a waste of time and strength to pull against the current." 92

In spite of the opposition that Luther Gulick faced in Hawai‘i, he was able to retain his job as HEA secretary with help from the ABCFM, which supplied the HEA with almost all of its money. The ABCFM, however, experienced a change of leadership in 1866 that was not beneficial to Luther, since it deprived him of his longtime supporter, the old ABCFM head Rufus Anderson. Anderson liked Luther’s combative style, but the new ABCFM head, Nathaniel Clark, was troubled by complaints about Luther from Hawai‘i, and he reprimanded Luther for his involvement in politics and his “bitterness of personal feeling.” 93 In response to Clark’s reprimand, Luther resigned from the HEA on January 27, 1870. “Rather than be a firebrand in the missionary ranks, producing discord and mischief,” he told Clark, “I am willing to step [to] one side and leave the responsibility of my present office to some other man.” 94

After resigning from the HEA, Luther Gulick left Hawai‘i in February 1870. He went on to do missionary work in Spain, Italy, China, and Japan. This last country not only became a field for Luther, it also became a field for his brother Orramel, who resigned in June 1869 as the head of the Waialua Girls’ School. Facing severe cutbacks in funding from the ABCFM, Orramel’s school needed money from the Hawaiian government to survive, but Orramel was unwilling to accept government funding, and to abide by the government’s requirement that English be taught rather than Hawaiian. 95 As a result of this unwillingness to accept government money and regulation, Orramel and Ann Gulick felt obliged to move from Hawai‘i to an ABCFM station in Osaka, Japan. “To stay and speak out,” explained Ann, “will involve persecution or something similar to it not only from the Government from enemies, but also from those who have been friends the missionaries and their families.” 96

To avoid persecution in Hawai‘i, the Gulicks could have kept quiet. That would have meant abandoning their principles, however, which they were unwilling to do. Their commitment to principle was costly for them, but it might not impress modern readers. Some of these will doubtless point out that the Gulicks, despite their obvious courage,
were judgmental, puritanical, self-righteous, and intolerant of cultural diversity. These are damning traits in the modern academy, but they ought not to obscure the fact that the Gulicks were political liberals. Their goals for Hawai‘i included women’s education, economic parity, racial equality, freedom of the press, and universal male—maybe even female—suffrage. These goals might be thoroughly “Western” and hence un-Hawaiian in some people’s eyes, but they are no more Western than the plutocratic plantation system fostered by King Kamehameha V, who helped his white planter allies to make Hawai‘i partially resemble the antebellum South.

NOTES

KEY TO ENDNOTES: LG = Luther Gulick. OG = Orramel Gulick. HMCS = Hawaiian Mission Children’s Society. GP = Gulick Papers. The Gulick Papers are in the Houghton Rare Book Library at Harvard University, and publication is by permission of the Houghton Library, Harvard University.

1 OG to John Gulick, Apr. 29, 1870, GP, *65M-183(6).
3 The term “sugar nabobs” comes from OG to LG, May 2, 1874, GP, *65M-183(7).
5 Ibid. 29–30.
6 LG to Julia Gulick, Jan. 20, 1862, GP, *65M-183(5).
8 OG to LG, Apr. 15, 1863, GP, *65M-183(5).
12 OG to William Gulick, Apr. 21, 1863, GP, *65M-183(5).
14 LG, “Fight of the Missionaries in the South Seas against the Whalers,” Sailors Magazine (May 1859) 276.
16 LG to Hiram Bingham, Jr., Nov. 19, 1863, GP, *65M-183(5).
17 LG to Louisa Gulick, May 2, 1864, GP, *65M-183(5).
18 “Hawaiian Evangelical Association,” F, 25:6 (June 1, 1868) 41.
19 Harris, Nothing But Christ 157.
22 See LG to Thomas Gulick, July 11, 1867, GP, *65M-183(6); and OG to LG, Apr. 15, 1863, GP, *65M-183(5).
24 Semes, “Hawai‘i’s Holy War” 115.
26 Semes, “Hawai‘i’s Holy War” 130.
27 OG to William Gulick, June 3, 1864, GP, *65M-183(5).
29 See Jewett, Luther Halsey Gulick, 225; and LG to [Rufus Anderson], Aug. 8, 1864, GP, *65M-183(5). The kanaka remark comes from the second source.
30 OG to [Rufus Anderson], Aug. 8, 1864, GP, *65M-183(5).
31 LG to Rufus Anderson, Aug. 12, 1864, ABCFM-Hawaii Papers, HMCS.
32 Ibid.
33 LG to brothers, Aug. [21], 1864, GP, *65M-183(5).
34 Helen Chapin, Shaping History: The Role of Newspapers in Hawai‘i (Honolulu: U of Hawai‘i P, 1996) 54. Kuokoa was the first weekly paper to be printed in Hawaiian.
36 See LG to OG, Jan. 4, 1869, GP, *65M-183(6); and LG to William Gulick, Nov. 27, 1864, GP, *65M-183(5). The reference to Whitney comes from the first letter. The reference to Kuokoa comes from the second letter.
38 LG to the Board of the HEA, Jan. 27, 1870, GP, *65M-183(6).
39 LG to OG, March 8, 1867, GP, *65M-183(6).
40 LG to OG, March 7, 1865, GP, *65M-183(5).
42 OG to Thomas Gulick, June 22, 1864, GP, *65M-183(5).
43 See [LG], “The Newspaper Kuokoa,” Kuokoa [1870], English column, GP, *65M-183(6); and Jewett, Luther Halsey Gulick 237.
44 LG to Nathaniel Clark, May 8, 1869, GP, *65M-183(6).
See LG to OG, Dec. 22, 1869, GP, *65M-183(6); and LG to OG, July 17, 1869, GP, *65M-183(6). The government minister who damned the Gulick name was Dr. Ferdinand W. Hutchison.

See “Editorial,” HG (Sept. 8, 1869), GP, *65M-183(6); and “Correspondence,” HG (Sept. or Oct. 8, 1869), GP, *65M-183(6). The quoted words from “Noodle” onward come from the second article.

See Jewett, Luther Halsey Gulick 231–232; and Osorio, Dismembering Lahui 141.


LG to William Gulick, Nov. 27, 1864, GP, *65M-183(5).


See LG to Nathaniel Clark, Dec. 6, 1869, GP, *65M-183(6); and LG to OG, Dec. 23, 1869, GP, *65M-183(6). The reference to ritual comes from the second letter.

LG to OG, Apr. 15, 1869, GP, *65M-183(6).

Ann Gulick to her sister, Sarah Kittredge, Nov. 3, 1869, Children of the Mission Collection, HMCS.

See P (Sept. 10, 1853); and Peter Gulick to OG, Dec. 27, 1872, GP, *65M-183(7).

LG, “A Thanksgiving Sermon,” Nov. 24, 1865, Gulick family folder, HMCS.

LG to OG, Dec. 27, 1867, GP, *65M-183(6).

Jewett, Luther Halsey Gulick 237.


Harris, “Charles Coffin Harris: An Uncommon Life in the Law” 157. The praise for the constitution comes from an 1881 elegy for Harris by Judge Albert Francis Judd.

LG to Nathaniel Clark, May 8, 1869, GP, *65M-183(6).


OG to LG, Oct. 25, 1869, GP, *65M-183(6).

Ann Gulick to her sister, Lucinda Severance, July 23, [1870], Children of the Mission Collection, HMCS.

See LG to OG, Mar. 27, 1869, GP, *65M-183(6); and Kuykendall, The Hawaiian Kingdom, Vol. 2, 188.


OG to LG, Sept. 19, 1864, GP, *65M-183(5).


See LG to OG, Jan. 9, 1869, GP, *65M-183(6); and LG to William Gulick, Nov. 27, 1864, GP, *65M-183(5). The remark about worldliness comes from the second letter.

See LG to OG, Dec. 27, 1867, GP, *65M-183(6); and LG to William Gulick, Nov. 27, 1864, GP, *65M-183(5). The prayer for disaster comes from the second letter.

LG to OG, May 14, 1868, GP, *65M-183(6).

See OG to LG, May 2, 1874, GP, *65M-183(7); and LG to OG, Aug. 22, 1869, GP, *65M-183(6).

LG to Thomas Gulick, July 11, 1867, GP, *65M-183(6).

Ann Gulick to her sister, Lucinda Severance, July 23, [1870], Children of the Mission Collection, HMCS.

Ann Gulick to her sister, Sarah Kittredge, Nov. 3, 1869, Children of the Mission Collection, HMCS.

LG to OG, June 12, 1869, GP, *65M-183(6).

LG to OG, April 15, 1869, GP, *65M-183(6).

Ibid.

LG to Louisa Gulick, Nov. 15, 1869, GP, *65M-183(6).

LG to Nathaniel Clark, Sept. 10, 1869, GP, *65M-183(6).

See LG to OG, Aug. 24, 1869, GP, *65M-183(6); and Jewett, Luther Halsey Gulick 242.

See LG to OG, Sept. 27, 1869, GP, *65M-183(6); and LG to OG, n.d. [1865–1869], GP, *65M-183(5).

LG to Louisa Gulick, Nov. 15, 1869, GP, *65M-183(6).


LG to OG, June 14, 1869, GP, *65M-183(6).

Ann Gulick to her sister, Sarah Kittredge, Nov. 3, 1869, Children of the Mission Collection, HMCS.