











# Maui Plantations Models In Caring For Laborers

By LOUISE MACMILLAN COOKE

Lovely in every aspect is the island of Maui, typically Hawaiian in its curving shore lines, its halfmoons of pale yellow sand, its steep-sided mountains and remote inaccessible canyons, and its miles of sugar cane bowing and swaying in the breeze. It has the fascination and delight of the vivid tropics, even to one long an island dweller, combined with a very solid background of agricultural life and a decidedly progressive community consciousness. Physically and spiritually, its characteristics satisfy and enthral.

True to a long established reputation for progressiveness and thoroughness, Maui is carrying out on the plantations of its smiling terrain a well-planned and comprehensive campaign of improvement in living conditions and general surroundings. Each plantation manager is the source and responsible head of the work done on his own broad acres, but so well do they keep together that the effect is that of unified effort toward a single end.

### Half Million for Welfare

Well over half a million dollars have been spent within the last two years by the Maui plantations in their improvement programs. They have torn down whole camps, building in their stead attractive villages with broad, straight streets, planted to many varieties of trees and flowers, and frequently lit by electricity; they have constructed and put into operation restaurants, clubhouses, bathhouses, day nurseries and the most complete and sanitary of dairies; they have developed industrial service programs which cover all athletic and recreational activities and looked after the health and well being of the laborer; and they have done all this in the face of constantly increasing labor costs, labor scarcity and recently of a drop which knocked the bottom out of sugar and made all the plantations poor.

All this work is not the result of the last two years by any means, for welfare work for the laborers has been a feature of plantation management, especially on Maui, for many years past; but the last two years have seen a marked expansion and development in the field covered by industrial service and a concerted effort to make plantation conditions as ideal as is humanly possible for the men who do the work, and for their families.

### No More Laborers' Barracks

After many years of sovereignty, cane has had to give place in importance to the man who plants and harvests it. Cane is being rooted out by half-acres and acres on some Maui plantations to make room for village additions or new villages, baseball

diamonds or recreation fields. Labor now comes first and cane second, and this new precedence will undoubtedly endure.

The most extensive and costly improvements has been in the living quarters of the workers. There used to be a type of building called a "barrack house"—a long building one room deep and six or eight rooms long, with a window and a door, perhaps, for openings in each room. The barracks was usually whitewashed annually and between times rain and sun peeled off the whitewash in strips. Single men usually lived in such houses, but families also were often quartered in them—their only means of cooking a smoky little outhouse in the yard; the sanitary facilities, very poor and inadequate, being shared with all the other barracks dwellers. It was a crowded, uncomfortable way to live and led to frequent epidemics of contagious diseases and much dissatisfaction.

### Rents Are Reasonable

Picture such crazy old buildings, usually placed on the poorest and most worthless land on the plantation in order to save the better soil for the cane, and then bring to the mind's eye neat four or five room bungalows each with a large yard of its own, fronting on a wide street, grass and flowers around it, a chicken house in the rear, and its own laundry and bathhouse.

There you have the old life of 20 years ago and the new conditions of today side by side. Laborers on many plantations, notably those on Maui, have today homes that are more attractive and better built than those for which a number of Honolulu people are paying profiteering rents 12 months out of the year.

Maui favors very strongly the community center plan of village construction, and hardly a new or rehabilitated village exists without its central park-like space, with a clubhouse, branch store, restaurant or movie house, or several of these to form the nucleus of village interest.

### What Paia Plans

Paia the principal settlement of the Maui Agricultural Company, has the most ambitious of the new community center projects well launched. Its situation is remarkable for natural beauty, lying as it does on the broad slope at the foot of Haleakala, while the panorama ever spread before it of the blue water of Kahului bay, the verdant green of Wailuku's rolling fields, and the dark gorges beneath the cloud-trailing summits of West Maui.

On this far-viewing plain has been placed the first of the civic center buildings, the amusement hall and

movie theater. Beside it the space for the ball park has been cleared. An acre of cane has been ruthlessly rooted out of the deep soft red earth that it may be packed down and grassed over for the field sports of the plantation laborers. In front of it is a wide oval, to be planted with blossoming trees and many-flowered shrubs in the grassy spaces, and found which the numerous other buildings planned for the civic center will find place.

Paia has also completed part of the village development adjacent to the civic center by the creation of a large number of new houses for the several classes of workers. Next to the center is a street lined on both sides with roomy bungalows for the skilled men, then some slightly less pretensions for the semi-skilled and beyond these a large number of single-family bungalows and U-type bachelor houses for the unskilled labor.

### Ways and Means

All of them are fully screened with metal and lit by electricity and each has its own yard, with plenty of room for chickens, a garden, lawn and flowers. The carpenters are still working on the small bungalows. When they have finished, the ground will be neatly fenced, and the occupants will be furnished from the plantation plant nursery with whatever trees and shrubs they wish to plant. Broad streets run through the new village, some straight and some following the curve of the civic center circle.

By arrangement, all welfare or industrial service work on the sugar estates of Maui is carried out cooperatively between the plantations, the settlement and the Industrial Service Bureau of the Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association. The extent and nature of the work on each plantation is decided by the manager; the ways are then worked out between the

three cooperating agencies, and the means are furnished by the plantation.

### Milk for the Babies

One of the notable features of the Hawaiian Commercial & Sugar Company's work at Paunene is the dairy. Milk-producers of aristocratic lineage are housed in a concrete structure of the most modern type, open to sun and wind, with every contrivance to add to sanitary perfection.

Milk from these cows is furnished to the laborers at a price lower than any commercial dairy, and barely covering the cost of production to the plantation. It is of the highest grade and is intended mainly for the use of families having children.

Wailuku also has a concrete dairy with cows of a very high grade. Half-pint bottles of milk are sent daily to the public school for the children's mid-morning lunch, and this daily cup of milk has been a valuable factor in building up many under-nourished children whose home diet was incorrect.

Kamehameha Prince, the herd bull at Wailuku, is a reserve grand champion and half-brother of a champion and there is also a pretty little black calf with a heart-shaped white mark that is a great-grandson of Thillie Alcarta, famed as a blue-ribbon winner. In time Wailuku will have one of the best dairy herds in the Islands.

Paunene sets a pace with day nurseries which others follow as fast as may be. There are 12 nurseries in the plantation camps, with an attendance varying from about 70 to 120.

Each nursery is visited twice weekly and a clinic held by the visiting nurse. Simple treatments are given and the cases needing greater care sent to the doctor or the hospital. The nurse also holds meetings for

the women of different nationalities to teach them how to feed their children and how to care for slight illnesses in the family.

### Mothers Welcome Instruction

Many plantation mothers are pitifully ignorant of the food suitable for a growing child. Nearly all are glad to learn more on the subject, the Koreans and Filipinos being particularly eager to improve their knowledge for the benefit of their children, according to the nurse. The work

has to be done through an interpreter, and demonstrations are given whenever possible.

A little Korean school girl has translated some simple pamphlets on child feeding into Korean and the translations have been distributed among the mothers, who are very appreciative.

Meetings have been held on Sunday afternoons and at other times for the mothers and have had a growth.

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