







**THE HAWAIIAN STAR**  
DAILY AND SEMI-WEEKLY.  
Published every afternoon (except Sunday) by The Hawaiian Star Newspaper Association, Ltd.  
FRANK L. HOOGS, Manager.  
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 1901.

**WATER.**

The irrigation of our lands, and the storing and saving of our water are problems which we have to consider very carefully. As the law of the United States stands now it does not allow the sale of a privilege of water, without the sale of the whole land to which that water belongs. This is what caused the Department of Interior to interfere in the Kohala water privilege scheme. The United States government did not consider the persons who were attempting to get that scheme through, it merely considered the legal aspect in its broad lines. The opposition to the Kohala scheme from this end was that the persons applying would not, or could not show where the backing was to carry the scheme through, and thus caused many people, justly, to consider that it was an effort to obtain a franchise, which, as Mr. Swanzey pointed out, might be hawked round in money markets to the highest bidder. That is a matter of the past, however.

The United States law does not fairly cover our conditions and the Interior Department and the Agricultural Department are now well aware of the fact. It is the intention of the secretaries to send out men to examine into the question so that a report can be made to the present Congress with the object of modifying the United States law as far as the Territory is concerned. A thoroughly competent hydraulic engineer is either now on his way, or will be shortly, who will look into our water supplies most thoroughly, and report upon them, while an expert forester from Secretary Wilson will follow, as soon as the right man can be found.

While some of our lands are dry and arid, in other portions of the Islands, water goes to waste by the million gallons a day. The immense areas of cane growing lands at Spreckelsville and Hailu are fertilized by water brought from distant points. When those plantations were established it was in the power of the government to grant such water privileges, and they have shown the utility of these privileges. Were it not for the water which comes from the Koolau district of Maui, and from the ample supplies at Waihee, the lower slopes of Haleakala would be as barren as they were a quarter of a century ago. What is now glowing with the emerald of cane, was then but a dusty mountain side, with a few scanty weeds striving for a precarious existence.

We have by no means exhausted our water supplies. There is the Kohala water shed, about which mention has already been made. That water ought to be utilized, the only point being whether it should be utilized to benefit the pockets of private parties or whether it would not be more advantageous to benefit the pockets of the Territory.

There is also a very large shed lying between Keanae and Nahiku on Maui. There are probably six streams thundering down deep ravines and pouring untold gallons of water into the sea. This water could be amply and most advantageously used at spots of fertile land many miles distant. At the present that water is going absolutely to waste. There is another broken area, above Keanae and Honomanu, Maui, of similar character, and the water roars down in useless though picturesque cataracts. For both of these watersheds application has been made, but until the Washington Government chooses to act, the water must continue to flow to the sea.

In the northern part of Kauai there is an enormous body of water that goes to waste. Between Hanalei and Haena there are three considerable rivers, not mere mountain streams like we have on this island, but sizable rivers which at the best of times it is difficult to ford. The principal of these is the Wainiha, and several lives have been lost in crossing its treacherous and shifting bed. All this water pours into the sea, doing no good save to a few scattered taro patches. There has never been any practical suggestion of utilizing this water, but it could be utilized to great advantage.

Wherever water exists in such quantities it means two things, power and fertility, and it does not mean power and fertility upon the mere spot where it may be, but both power and fertility can be carried miles away. The arrival of a thoroughly experienced hydraulic engineer who will examine our local water supplies, and who will be able to give thoroughly unbiased advice will be of immense value to the Territory. These are stored riches which are the inheritance of all. What we want to know is how to develop them best, and further we want Federal legislation to enable us to do something better than sell them outright to the highest bidder.

**MEDITATION.**

The Board of Health has been for some little while past giving the public the communications from various physicians in its employ, relative to the district gentlemen may happen to be in. This is an unsatisfactory plan which was employed twenty or twenty-five years ago. There is only one way in which a true knowledge of the health of any section of any community can be

reached, and that is by statistics. The generalities dealt in by the Board of Health physicians, and gravely published would make a cat laugh. It is so easy to write vague generalities.

Anyone who knows something about the outer districts of the Islands knows well that very few, even including the district physicians, know much about the general health of their community however small. There are of course government physicians who do their duty, but there are many who do not. Some of the men employed in this service only regard their position as a rung on a ladder of prosperity, and practically break it, as they step upward. That there are not good and conscientious physicians under the Board of Health, the Star does not charge, but it does charge that men who have repeatedly shown that they were unfit for their positions, either because they were callous to non-paying patients or for some other cause, have been retained in the service.

One can quite appreciate the position of the Board of Health. It does not like to hear strictures upon men of its own profession, the doctors certainly having the whip hand of the lay members. Medical delinquencies are easily cloaked up under learned names. But if the Board of Health ever intends to get in touch with the people, it must throw its professional aglets away. It must shelter itself under no Minerva's shield. It had better come out into the open and fight out its cause.

The truth of the matter is that the Board of Health, like any aggregation of so called scientific men is suspected. It is not regarded as absolutely straight, and it is sad to say that this has been the experience in the past, though it is by no means necessarily so in the present. There are reasons for straightforwardness just now.

If the Board of Health wants to re-establish its prestige, or rather to begin its prestige, it will institute a thorough statistical system. This might have been so organized that in spite of lack of funds, it could have been carried on. But some of the officials of the Board of Health hate statistics. Statistics would show too many facts, it is much better to go on with vague generalities from physicians some of whom depend for their information either upon Roman Catholic priests, Protestant parsons, or the very ordinary traveller. Upon the information of such men, a portion of a district may be reported healthy or not. Now this is not satisfactory.

Credit must be given to Dr. Pratt for improving the statistics of Honolulu, and making an effort to get statistics from some of the districts. What the Star criticizes, however, is that this collection of statistics is not made an imperative duty of every district physician. There is nothing derogatory in keeping the figures of births and deaths. In large districts where there is only one physician, the law allows the Board to call upon the deputy sheriffs as collectors of statistics, and these can call upon their policemen. There will be very few deaths and very few births which will escape a net work such as this.

The machinery for collecting vital statistics has long ago been supplied by the law, and unlike some of our laws there is a strong penalty attached for violation of these very statistical matters. It is the fault of the central body that full statistics are not kept and made available to any student upon such matters. That individual members of the Board of Health are alive to such matters is true, that individual officials are alive to such matters is true, but on the other hand there is a sort of "vis inertia," a power of not doing which it is hard for these individuals to overcome.

However much the desire of individuals may be it takes some time to leaven a whole mass, and perhaps we must not ask for too much reform too quickly, but vague generalities about general health are frequently misleading even when stated in the best of faith.

One piece of policy Delegate Wilcox is firm about, and that is to get the Ney mythic millions. That is something that distinctly appeals to the Home Rulers.

The gentle Filipino tried to give another breakfast entertainment to our soldiers, but the tables were reversed on this occasion. It was the gentle Filipino who got cut up. They certainly are a peace loving race these Filipinos.

The detail of the accident to the transport Warren show that that vessel had a very narrow escape from a very serious disaster. But for the fact of her having a double bottom she might have gone down with all hands on board, and very little chance of saving more than a tithe of passengers and crew.

Nobody can say that the Islands are not prolific. Jose da Costa and wife have done their duty towards populating the country. Twins five years running is a record-breaker, and there are mighty few places on the mainland which can do as well. But large families are by no means so exceptional, even among native Hawaiians. There are Hawaiian families which number twelve and sixteen and even more. In the maternity statistics for 1896, the average number of children per Hawaiian mother was 4.82, second in rank to the Portuguese, but the number of surviving children was small, only 59.59 per cent, while the Portuguese had 71.67 per cent survivors. There is, however, considerable hope for the Territory in its own fecundity.

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