

Honolulu Star-Bulletin

RILEY H. ALLEN - - - - - EDITOR

TUESDAY MAY 13, 1913

The eyes believe themselves, the ears other people.—German.

A CIVIC COMMISSION AND CIVIC PROGRESS

The billboard controversy draws attention to the need here for some permanent body to which could be referred this and a thousand other questions dealing with the City Beautiful.

The Oahu Central Improvement Club has its useful sphere, the Outdoor Circle is active and effective, various committees of the commercial bodies deal with promotion, downtown streets, trade and finance and subjects more or less closely related to city improvement. But there is no body, no committee, no group of men and women delegated with the direct duty of planning a greater and more beautiful Honolulu, planning, that is, on a scale commensurate with the kind of a Honolulu we expect to live in not many years from now.

City growth proceeds in a haphazard fashion; city building is left to a medley of tastes and the result is a medley of styles; we have ragtime instead of classic architecture on too many buildings.

There is no group of men and women with the taste and authority to pass upon matters of boulevards, billboards, public structures, parks and the like. And yet the Honolulu of the future will be measured not only in terms of sugar output, of tourist-patronage, of banks or trust companies or hardware stores, but also in terms of civic buildings, of driveways, of vistas,—in terms of beauty and aesthetic progress.

There is, so far as we know, no official provision for such a group, for a Civic Commission, or whatever it might be called. But an unofficial commission, made up of citizens imbued with the love of their city and a desire to see it progress along all lines, would wield a mighty power for good here. To them could be referred this troublesome billboard controversy and they could pass readily upon its merits. They could settle upon a business district within which the billboard would be regarded as legitimate; outside of which the billboard would be recognized as encroaching upon beauty and taste. Neither the man in the billboard business nor the people now waging a campaign against poster advertising could object to the formation of such a commission, and they could hardly fail to accept its recommendations.

The present controversy is bitter, needlessly personal, needlessly wasteful of energy and good temper, not to speak of money. In every deadlocked controversy, the natural, the logical resort is to the established principle of arbitration. And such a commission could perform this function of arbitrating the difficulties now emphasized. The community would welcome any move by representative citizens, by the Merchants' Association, for instance, looking toward a committee or commission formed with the primary purpose of planning a City Beautiful and compromising this quarrel that is absolutely inimical to civic progress.

CALIFORNIA, NOT THE UNITED STATES

No matter what the outcome of the difficult and delicate California alien-land embroglio, we believe that the Japanese generally will recognize, as they have recognized in the past, that California's action is not the action of the people of the United States.

There may be many in Hawaii who agree with California's ultra-radical attitude; there may be many in various states of the union that applaud the firmness amounting to obstinacy that Johnson and his political followers have shown; and yet it cannot be questioned that the great majority of the people of the United States are utterly against the spirit that the California legislature is manifesting. It is a spirit that ignores a dangerous situation of its own creating.

A sentiment squarely against merely hostile legislation prevails in Hawaii. And we feel confident that the Japanese traveling to the United States and the Japanese here realize this fact. "Peace if possible" is not a fair estimate of local feeling. "There must be peace—there shall be peace; California's action is not the action of the United States"—that is a more accurate gauge of opinion here.

A WET WEATHER TIP

Honolulu is enjoying a downpour of rain. There is plenty of water,—plenty for irrigation,

plenty for domestic purposes, plenty to sell for commercial purposes.

So temporarily our old friend the water question is quiescent. But just as soon as the weather gets a little dry and the level falls in Nuuanu dam and people begin using the hose and sprinkler on their lawns, the water question will move in and make itself at home.

What steps are being taken to insure for Honolulu a permanent supply—an ample supply?

This community needs the services of an expert water supply engineer—a man big enough and forceful enough to give weight to his recommendations. Honolulu has the habit of calling loudly for recommendations and then failing to act on them.

It is a matter the commercial bodies could well take up.

SHOULD SUGAR BE TAXED?

The Review of Reviews, in a temperate and thoughtful editorial, comes to the conclusion that the tariff on sugar should not be removed. The Review of Reviews says:

"While it remains, of course, a question of judgment to be solved in the light of full experience, there is much reason to believe that the farmer, as well as the ordinary citizen of towns, will be better off with free wool and a thorough revision of Schedule K. When it comes to the question of free sugar, however, the factors in the case are quite different. The tariff on sugar, while incidentally protecting the cane-growers of Louisiana and the beet industry of the west, is to be regarded chiefly as a matter of public revenue. In our opinion the sugar tax is a good thing, and might well be maintained as a convenient way of giving the government a large and constant source of income. It ought not, of course, to be a heavy impost. The bill as introduced keeps a moderate tariff on sugar for three years, and then abolishes it. This would seem a good compromise to make at the present time, since it leaves ample opportunity for the next congress to decide, in the light of revenue experience, whether the three-year period should be further extended or not. The beet sugar men of the west say that if only the tariff can be kept up a little longer they will be able to supply this country with all the sugar it needs, at rates lower than those for which cane sugar can now be produced in the West Indies. But they have already had a considerable period in which to demonstrate this, and it would seem as if the beet-sugar culture of America ought not to be so perilously dependent upon a protective tariff. Going back over a long period of years, the sugar interests have not made a very favorable impression upon the country by the arguments and methods they have used at Washington. Undoubtedly our western farmers need the sugar beet to add to the variety of their crops; and it is to be hoped that the beet-sugar industry can be maintained and further developed in this country."

POINTED

One of the most pointed comments on the Democratic tariff plan that we have seen is the following, reprinted from the Wall Street Journal's account of an interview with Herman Sieleken, the German capitalist. Said Mr. Sieleken:

"There is a tariff for revenue, a tariff for protection, and a tariff for politics. That is all the kinds of tariff you have got. Now what kind is this? It isn't a tariff for revenue, it reduces the revenue. It isn't a tariff for protection, because you disavow that. There is only one other kind there. It is a political tariff, for the benefit of the masses to be paid by the classes."

The promotion committee ought to send some literature to Cleveland. Three deaths from heat occurred there on May 5, and the weather for the month so far has been hotter than at any time for forty-two years previous. Meanwhile, cool breezes and soft showers lave the Paradise of the Pacific.

Although the American diplomats stoutly protest against knee-breeches and lackeys at the embassies, nobody objects to the Page at the Court of St. James.

Most of the European war experts who counseled Czar Nicholas to hold on to Scutari were carefully situated a thousand miles or so from the firing-line.

President Wilson's tariff game will make the sugar-producer sweeten the pot.

Little Girl Gives Graphic Description Of Ohio Floods

Graphic and minute is the description of the recent floods suffering in the stricken Ohio district, as chronicled by a 12-year-old girl in a letter from Fremont, Ohio, to her uncle, F. S. Hatford, of Ewa. The letter, in full, follows:

Fremont, O., Friday Evening, April 25, 1913.—Dear Uncle Ferris: I can not find your last letter just now but will try to answer all the questions I can think of.

Easter Sunday we started to church, but without Easter clothes, lucky for us, because it began raining before we got there. It was just pouring down as if it never would stop, after Sunday school and church were over, but we had to go up to grandma's to get Easter eggs. I did all the running back and forth in the rain from the buggy to the house, as I had nothing on that would hurt. As it was raining as if it never would stop, I thought I would stay down till morning because I knew that if I went home I would not get back in the evening for the Easter exercises, and as I couldn't be absent because our class had part in the program. At the last minute in the evening they postponed it and a few minutes after they did it, it stopped raining for the night.

The next morning papa came after me with a horse (beginning of Easter vacation) as it was very muddy. We drove around back of Uncle Frank's place (the old Moore place) to see the sea wall. There was a watchman all the time there measuring. It was within two feet of going over it then and I can tell you it was awfully deep. People were afraid it would break.

Tuesday morning papa and Mr. Wilson, his hired man, went to town as usual. Put first, early in the morning, about 5 o'clock, Aunt Minnie (Uncle Frank's wife) phoned up and told mamma that the water in had awakened them and told them to get ready, because they thought the wall would break any minute and it would probably sweep the house and everything right away. Mamma told papa that he ought to go down and help them save things. He fooled around awhile but finally went. He drove a horse, which women folks can't drive and the single buggy. He tied near the bridge on the other side. He and Mr. Wilson went right up to Uncle Frank's and did all they could putting things out of the way of the water, such as putting the chickens and geese and plenty of food to last a long time in the barn. Fixing things in the house, they were just going back to untie the horse and go on to town when the wall gave away at about 10 a. m. Their first thought was of Aunt Minnie and Uncle Frank, because they knew they were in the house. John Swint was down by Uncle Frank's barn, and you know how short and fat he is; I need not tell you about that. Papa said that he never saw anyone do so much sprinting in his life.

Aunt Minnie and Uncle Frank were in the house when the wall gave away but they didn't stay there very long. Doctor Thomas had brought Uncle Frank up in his buggy from the drug store about five minutes before and Aunt Minnie came ever from one of the neighbors, where she had been staying because it wasn't safe to stay in the house. Uncle Frank was in the summer kitchen putting a lamp under

his incubator in hopes of saving the eggs. (He's in the chicken business, you know.) Aunt Minnie was in the dining room and had all her silverware in a gummy sack, and was just going to tie it up when the wall broke. Aunt Minnie called to Uncle Frank and said, "Run, Frank, run!" He wanted her to go upstairs but she did not want to go, so he had to follow her. She still had hold of the sack of silverware. They had to go out of the south door and then clear around to the north. Aunt Minnie said as she turned the corner that she glanced back to see if Uncle Frank was coming and she said that she saw a house coming toward her and it made her run all the faster. Uncle Frank had boots on, and was about three feet behind her. The water caught up with him. When Aunt Minnie got to the church and up on high ground she fainted.

Put Doctor Thomas, who had brought Uncle Frank up from the store, and had tied his horse at the hitching rail, was just coming around the house to untie. He rushed up, untied the horse, and turned his head in the direction of safety, but the sudden rush of water confused the horse and it backed up and was drowned. In the meantime, Doctor Thomas had grabbed the hitching railing, excepting every minute to hear it go. The first rush of water went above his waist. He stood there about fifteen or twenty minutes until the water had gone down to his knees. Then he carefully made his way around to a bush and then, step by step, he reached the house. He hunted around the house trying to find some dry clothes to put on. Finally a man with a rope around his waist got to the house with dry clothes for him.

Later the railing which he had held onto, washed away leaving a hole ten feet deep.

Ballyville bridge is being fixed and we will be able to drive across in a week.

Mamma told everything else and things that I wrote, too, but I just had to write something. We had two weeks of vacation instead of one, so by that time the water had gone down. When school began Miss Treat was very sick, and Mrs. Edith Sandwich was our substitute for two weeks. This is the first week Miss Treat has been back. I have to walk almost every night now and at least part of the way sometimes in the morning. You can't imagine how much I want a bicycle, especially in the afternoons, because I don't feel so fresh as I do in the morning. Down town the relief committee has thousands of dollars and still want more. Mamma said she thought some would be richer than they were before, and I begin to think so myself.

I think something must be the matter with me, because I usually write one little page to you, but today I wrote five times that many. I think I will have to stop as I have said enough to last until I see you.

Goodby, from

EVA HAFFORD.

LETTERS ON TIMELY TOPICS

[The Star-Bulletin invites free and frank discussion in this column on all legitimate subjects of current interest. Communications are constantly received to which no signature is attached. This paper will treat as confidential signatures to letters if the writers so desire, but cannot give space to anonymous communications.]

Editor Honolulu Star-Bulletin.

Sir: I am glad to say that Prof. W. A. Bryan of the College of Hawaii, one of the greatest authorities on birds in America, is in favor of an aviary.

Indeed, Mr. Bryan claims that with but a little more expense our fields and forests could be made bright with the plumage and our woods made to resound with the songs of a great variety of birds, and which would not only add beauty and charm to the scene, but these birds would prove of great value in destroying the many injurious insects.

It is claimed that hundreds of thousands of dollars each year could be saved in this way if it were done. It is also suggested that this aviary be placed in charge of the College of Hawaii, as they have men who understand the nature and the insectivorous food habits of birds, and therefore could select only such birds as would eat the injurious insects.

and not those that are brought here for killing off pests of various kinds.

In regard to the "utility of birds," it is declared that each "species performs certain services in the economy of nature which cannot be performed so well by other species." Among the Hawaiian birds there is said to be but one insect-eating species; the others, with few exceptions, are of the nectar-feeding species, and as these birds are very difficult to catch, hard to raise, and almost impossible to feed (excepting the fish feeders) it is not thought that many of them would be found to live long in confinement. Among those birds that could be introduced with profit are said to be the California blackbird, the house wren, the mocking bird; there is also an African bird that is said to "live around animals picking off flies" and other insect pests. Among those most useful birds that have already been introduced is said to be the Chinese thrush.

But to return to the aviary, almost every one is of the opinion that there should be one, and if there were left any more such men as Mr. C. M. Cooke, who gave the city the Aquarium, or even such men as Mr. H. P. Baldwin, we would hope to get one without much delay; and even as it is, we do not consider the case hopeless. For it is hoped that many others will

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get interested in this subject, and will devote some of their leisure time to promote it, for the children's sake.

It is not thought that the aviary cannot be built on a small scale, as that would mean almost certain failure for birds will get sick, and some die off, and will have to be replaced; besides, new kinds of birds will also be wanted. It will also need an experienced aviaryist to look out for the birds, and not only to attend to their wants, but capable of doctoring them in case of need. But as they have an ornithologist here, there would probably be no difficulty on that score.

Yours very truly,
GEO. OSBORNE.

LOCAL AND GENERAL

There will be a meeting of the merchants' association on Thursday afternoon.

Judge Whitney today granted a divorce to Paula Dregoff, from Simon Dregoff, whom she accused of non-support.

"A Garden of Japan," a cantata, will be given at the Kamehameha School for Girls on Saturday evening, May 17, at 8:30. Tickets for sale at Thrums.

News was brought from the Big Island this morning that the Pahala sugar mill began grinding again yesterday, after three months' inaction enforced by lack of water for fluming purposes. It was also reported that the entire Hamakua coast experienced a heavy rainfall yesterday afternoon and evening.

The hearing of Manuel Ferreira's case before the United States commissioner, which was set for today, has been continued to next Saturday. Ferreira is accused of assisting in the smuggling of opium, a case growing out of the discovery of a cache of the contraband drug on Vineyard street last week.

LITTLE INTERVIEWS

TOM MERLE—The show at the Bijou is certainly the best that ever hit these shores, and Manager McGreer is right when he says that it clearly shows the difference between talking "artists" that are sent to you, and going to the coast and picking out to suit yourself.

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