

THE GARDEN ISLAND

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Pinkham's Land Policy

It is to be hoped that Governor Pinkham has been misquoted in regard to his attitude on the important question of lands leased to the plantations of the Territory, the tenure of which will shortly expire. The statement is made that the new executive will not countenance the renewal of leases in such cases, and, to the contrary, will insist upon these leased lands being thrown open for homesteading purposes.

The value and importance of manning the land has been so thoroughly drilled into the public mind in the past few years that homesteading in the islands in the natural course of events will proceed with marked rapidity. But the best schemes may be overdone and a movement of this sort, backed by a more or less reckless public impulse, may easily lead into channels altogether unanticipated at the start. It may lead, in other words, in the case under discussion, to an exchange of the bird in the hand for the one in the bush.

When we come right down to facts, there has not been the wild scramble for homesteads that some people imagine. Right here on Kauai the public lands department has found difficulty in obtaining bona fide homesteaders on tracts of land already opened. Within a short ride of Lihue there are today several choice allotments in a particularly fine tract that remain untaken. The land is there, the water is there, the roads are there, other facilities are there, but the homesteaders are not there.

This is no fault of the land department. That department has turned heaven and earth to procure desirable settlers. It is simply a case of lack of demand, a condition to which governmental as well as commercial enterprises must bow.

There are in the Islands sufficient areas of desirable public lands to meet the requirements of the homesteading program, (as that demand now appears on the horizon) for several years, without drawing upon and seriously crippling established industries. This being the case, a conservative policy, rather than a scheme of wholesale homesteading, should commend itself to Hawaii's new chief executive.

In place of abruptly ending the system of leases of lands to the larger estates, engaged in the principal industry of the country, would it not be the sounder policy to negotiate shorter term leases with the present holders, to have continuance to a period when, on a careful estimate, it might reasonably be figured that the land may be required for homesteading purposes? A policy of this sort would not obstruct, nor even delay, the campaign of legitimate homesteading; and at the same time, the country's chief industry would be, temporarily at least, relieved from an unnecessary peril. Let common business sense govern in the matter and the "go slow" policy suggested will be found to be the best in both the short and the long run.

KAUAI is to have a most beautiful float in the floral parade at Honolulu. Mr. H. Rohrig, Rev. J. M. Lydgate and the others who have worked so hard on this project deserve the thanks of the entire island and congratulations on what they have already accomplished.

THE Republican precinct clubs of Kauai should see to it that the best material they have is selected on February 2 to attend the convention in Honolulu. That convention will be a very important one, and Kauai should be represented in it by her strongest men.

The Public Schools.

H. H. BRODIE, supervising principal of the Kauai public schools, has submitted to the Department of Public Instruction a report of more than ordinary interest on the subject of education and the progress of school work on this island. In the report comparisons are made in the number of pupils in each grade in the schools for the five years from 1908 to 1913, inclusive; and a most striking showing is in the reduction of the number of pupils in the first grade and a very large increase in num-

Year	Total Pupils	Percent in Grade I
1908	2588	36.5
1909	2588	36.5
1910	2588	36.5
1911	2588	36.5
1912	2588	36.5
1913	2588	36.5

bers in the higher grades. The whole matter is illustrated in the following table:

One conclusion is at once justified by these figures, and that is: A vast improvement in the work of the public schools of Kauai in the past five years. Five years ago, the number of pupils in the first grade was abnormally large; last year the showing was very creditable. This steady improvement each year, for five years, indicates the persistent application of efficient system. Also, if you please, an improvement in the efficiency of the teachers themselves.

Continuing his comparisons, Mr. Brodie says: "If our schools were in the same condition today as in 1908, with 53.9 per cent in the first grade, we would have 1650 pupils in that grade in place of 114. This would mean an excess of 873, which, with an average of forty pupils each, would mean twenty more teachers. This, in turn, means a saving of \$12,000 a year, or thereabouts, in salaries, etc."

The showing as a whole is most gratifying, and speaks well for the work of the Department, its representatives on this island and the teachers in the public schools.

Editorial Notes.

THE Ilima Club, at Makaweli, did itself proud in its New Year dance, and the young society folk of all the country round were given a royal good time. Occasions of this sort are excellent gloom-dispersers, and it is to be hoped that the successful entertainment just held may be duplicated soon and often.

CANNOT something be done that will permit homesteaders on new tracts to build their homes together, in a sort of village, rather than scattered over separate holdings? From a social standpoint, it would be far more satisfactory, to say nothing of a reduction in the cost of water and a dozen other things.

It is most deplorable that Kauai will not be represented in the great interisland baseball series at Honolulu Carnival Week. As a sporting proposition, the chance was the one of the year, and should have been grasped, at any effort or cost. For the sake of sport, and for the island of Kauai, let us be ready the next time such a fine opportunity comes along.

THE police department is to be complimented on its efficient work in handling the series of murder cases and unusual occurrences New Year's week. Better could probably not have been done anywhere.

REALLY, how much nicer it would be if the Kinau should leave here at 8 o'clock in the evening and arrive in Honolulu at daylight, in place of 2 o'clock in the morning!

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