

THE HAWAIIAN STAR

DAILY AND SEMI-WEEKLY.

Published every afternoon (except Sunday) by The Hawaiian Star Newspaper Association, Ltd.

ALATAU T. ATKINSON.....Editor
FRANK L. HOOGS, Business Manager

SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

Per Year (in advance).....\$ 8.00
Three Months (in advance)..... 2.00
Per Month (in advance)..... .75
Foreign (per year, in advance).... 12.00

SPECIAL ADVERTISING AGENTS:
Chicago—James E. Colby, 309 Stock Exchange Building.
San Francisco—Drake's Advertising Agency, 64 Merchants' Exchange.

SEMI-WEEKLY SUBSCRIPTION:
Local Subscribers, per annum.... \$2.00
Foreign Subscribers, per annum.... 3.00
(Strictly in Advance.)

FRIDAY, APRIL 6, 1900.

Some one has come forward who professes to be an experienced rat catcher. Should his experiment work prove satisfactory we may have a properly organized campaign against the rats organized at last. At all events the rat catcher will have a try.

Kalihi is out with a league for public improvement. The idea is a good one and is taken from similar organizations on the Mainland. If other sections of the city join in the whole will be able to have considerable influence on legislation.

The British war loan of £30,000,000 with interest at 2 1/2 per cent, was subscribed ten times over. The redemption takes place in 1910. With the application for subscription, 3 per cent had to be paid, 5 1/2 per cent was paid March 26, 15 per cent is due on the 9th of this month, and the remainder in monthly instalments up to November 8. There is no lack of money to carry on a war.

The necessity for a new building for the Royal School is really a crying need. It has been for many years. In the early nineties the Board of Education had a scheme for building a handsome schoolhouse on the historic lot, but the needs of the outer districts were very great, and schoolhouses were needed in all directions, so that the Royal School had to wait. The Council of State seems disposed to consider the item, and it is to be hoped will pass it. What is needed is a fine central school with a large assembly hall, at which the massed schools of the city might occasionally meet, or at least, certain massed classes might be brought together.

NOT SATISFIED.

The Japanese do not appear to be any more satisfied with the Court of Claims than the Chamber of Commerce and the entire mercantile class. It is very unfortunate when a court is created which does not command the confidence of the litigants. Some modification of the court will have to be made in deference to public opinion, that is evident.

If the claimants have no confidence in the court, the creation of that court does not bar them necessarily from their constitutional right of bringing their cases in other courts. The petition for filling claims in its first section provides that the petitioner "has not commenced any suit, process, plea or petition for the enforcement of this claim, or in relation thereto, in any other court, or before any department in Washington, before the Congress of the United States, or the Legislature of Hawaii.

When once the petitioner has filed his claim in the Court of Claims he evidently bars himself from any other court, but he is perfectly free to bring his claim in the way suggested by the first section, should he elect to do so before he signed and should he think that he had a good chance of obtaining a hearing.

It is very unfortunate that this matter should have happened as it will not have a good effect upon the lower classes of the population to whom it is not so easy to explain the motives of the Executive in making the appointments. They will only look at the action of the Chamber of Commerce and the committee of the Council of State and argue that if the Court of Claims is unsatisfactory to those bodies it will be unsatisfactory to themselves. They don't stop to think about the necessity of merchants being in the commission or not. They will simply have no confidence and think they are imposed upon.

A PROPER LESSON.

The court put a heavy sentence upon the mate and second-mate of the ship Hilston. The men perfectly deserved their sentence, and the court is doing its duty in making it unwise for men to walk around town with a revolver in their pockets, or any concealed weapon. When a man carries a weapon he "ipse facto" intends to use it. The means to do ill deeds is at hand, and the ill deeds naturally follow.

The fact that the two mates had armed themselves when starting out on their outing showed that they expected a tough time. There might have been some misunderstanding and then a revolver would have been drawn and some one either severely wounded or killed, with the result of a trial for murder.

This was the case with Downey. He started out to see the sights and have adventures. He put a knife in his pocket as a precaution from his point of view. It was a very sorry precaution, for there was a misunderstanding, there was a fight; three men were stabbed, and the result is a charge of murder,

which may or may not be proved when the trial comes on.

The carrying of weapons involves a serious responsibility and the law, with proper foresight makes it an offense to carry concealed weapons. The law, when properly administered, makes it an unpleasant thing to carry concealed weapons, and fortunately it is properly administered here.

In former days when every gentleman carried a sword, street brawls ending in death, were of daily and almost of hourly occurrence. They are far less frequent now because people have not the temptation to draw over any cause of offense. What a community wants is peace. Concealed weapons menace peace.

CEMETERIES.

The burial committee has made its report to the Board of Health, and though unable to give advice as to the proper location for new burial grounds, strongly protests against any further burials within the city limits. The committee's report has much information upon the unsanitary condition caused by burial grounds within city limits. But knowledge on this is now widespread and by the mass of the people is taken for granted.

The easiest solution is cremation. It is the most sanitary and the most cleanly method of disposing of the dead. But cremation cannot be made obligatory, though the time will come when public opinion will be such that it can be enforced. Till that time comes there must be opportunity for burials. The great desideratum must be cheapness. The poor cannot afford much for funerals, and the poor have the first right of consideration. For them it is hard enough to live; it must not be made too hard to die.

A LITTLE FIGURING.

Minds sometimes run in the same channels. A. V. Gear was figuring out the cost of the Court of Claims a little after the same calculation was made in the office of The Star. Mr. Gear's results were given in the meeting of the Executive Council yesterday afternoon. The Star's results are given here:

The original request of the Executive for means for the Court of Claims was \$20,000. The committee of the Council cut this down to about half the sum. It is quite interesting to figure upon what the proposed Court of Claims would do, and how near \$20,000 would come to paying expenses, and how far short \$10,000 would be.

How many claims are there likely to be which require adjudication? Opinions upon the point are various. They range from 4,000 to 10,000, and the probability is that 5,000 will be a safe estimate. Therefore, for purposes of argument, let us allow 5,000 cases. The court is to sit four hours a day. Each case will have to be recorded, questions will have to be asked, witnesses will have to be examined. The commissioners will have to consult one another and the counsel for the petitioner and for the defendant Government will have to be heard.

The estimate of what number of cases can be handled in four hours differs as much as the estimate upon the total differs. It will be interesting to figure on maximum and minimum. A gentleman acquainted with the probate court of Cook county, Chicago, says 16 cases a day. A gentleman of great experience in Hawaiian courts, and knowing Hawaiian methods, says not more than 5 cases a day.

Let us take the Chicago man's estimate first. Five thousand cases at the rate of 16 cases a day would require 312 days to complete. Taking the figures proposed by the Executive for pay of commissioners, five men at \$10 per day, would amount to \$50. If the commission sat for 312 days the salary roll for them alone, would amount to \$15,600. But it was also proposed to defend the cases, at the rate of \$7 a case. Were this carried out, over 5,000 cases, the attorney for the defence could carry off \$35,000, upon which he would be able to buy real estate, Olan stocks, take a trip abroad, or build a Roman mansion. At that calculation the lawyers connected with the Court of Claims would pocket amongst them \$50,600. And this has nothing to say of stenographers, clerks, interpreters and such small fry, whose pay would amount to several thousand dollars more.

But these figures pale before the results if only five cases were adjudicated upon on the average. Five thousand cases at 5 cases a day, would take just 1,000 days, or about three years, seeing that Sundays and legal holidays are not counted. A court at \$50 per day would cost exactly \$50,000. The fees for defending cases would amount to \$35,000, and the interpreters, etc., could easily get away with \$15,000 in three years, making a total of \$100,000. And this, simply to examine the claims, but not to give an authoritative answer as to whether they will be paid or not. After we had paid up the \$100,000, we would still have to be scratching around to find some means to pay the claims, and then have to wait till the Legislature or the Council of State should meet and approve the bills.

Figuring in this way the numbers look large, but they are not nearly as much as would be the case if all the claimants' fees were taken into consideration. It would be a sum well on to a quarter of a million. Of course, this would be a very comfortable little spoil to go into the pockets of the legal fraternity. It would, indeed, be getting a very fat oyster, which would make the bar fat and well liking, but how very thin the shell which the claimants would get, would be. But who did the figuring which brought forth \$20,000, or was any figuring done at all. One is inclined to think that it was like one of Rowell's estimates—haphazard.

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