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The Wide Waikiki Road

E. H. Harriman's remark that there had been a waste of money in making the Waikiki road too wide recalls a discussion that took place when the widening was done and serves to show how in a more or less careless and sleepy community enterprises of great moment lose the name of action because they are forgotten or because no one comes forward to take the lead. Perhaps if Harriman spent a few nights here and observed the speeding of automobiles along the road, he would change his mind about the width matter,—perhaps if he should happen to occupy a hack or a buggy and see the machines go by he might favor more widening, but this is a matter on which there is room for difference of opinion.

When the Waikiki road was widened,—it was years ago, when James H. Boyd was Superintendent of Public Works, curves were cut out and beautiful palm trees fell under the blows of axes. Even the lily pond now abloom was threatened for a time, and there was a loud local protest against the destruction of landscape beauty. There was no criticism then of the width,—it was calculated with a view to accommodating rapid street cars and numerous vehicles of all kinds, and the width is probably a good thing. As to the destruction of beauty, the public was told that the new improved road was going to far transcend the old one. Glowing word pictures were drawn of an avenue lined with palms, and of a row of palms down the center of the very broad thoroughfares. It seemed like a really fine idea, and many people looked forward to a day when the new Waikiki road would be a source of pride. But it seems to have been all a dream. Some fine road-laying was done, and the road is now an excellent one "such as one sees in Omaha," but that is all. In the years that have been lost the trees would have made a sufficient start so that they would today make the drive a doubly beautiful one and clearly show its promise for the future. A start, however, remains yet to be made and no one is moving to make it.

Such things are neglected here because of the lack of any public organization to take them up. Other communities have local improvement clubs, good government clubs and all sorts of organizations of citizens of different localities, who take the lead in forcing public improvements. Why should not the Civic Federation take up such matters here?

Conger And The Boycott

In an editorial regarding Ambassador Conger, the Star yesterday expressed the belief that his resignation as Ambassador to Mexico was simply the final chapter in his retirement from the diplomatic service of his country. But news received in today's files of the San Francisco papers puts an altogether different light on the matter, and indicates that his resignation may have been so that he could accept an appointment as a special commissioner to China to solve the problems forced on the administration by the Chinese boycott, and the Hankow Railroad concession. Instead of being the end of an honorable diplomatic career, Ambassador Conger's resignation may mean the beginning of diplomatic work which will bring more fadeless laurels to his brow than any he has yet gathered.

The news account of the new situation,—the one he may be sent to meet—is thus given in the dispatches from Oyster Bay.

As a result of today's conference with the President at Sagamore Hill, Edwin H. Conger, Ambassador to Mexico and former Minister to China, will probably return to China as a special commissioner to solve the serious problem which the boycott and Hankow railroad concession has created.

This appointment of a special commissioner may be taken as an answer to important dispatches recently received from Minister Rockwell and not made public. There is not the slightest doubt that the administration feels that not only Chinese officials, but Japanese influence is behind the astounding anti-American conditions that have suddenly arisen.

For the first time in history Chinese of different provinces are acting together. Japan has a vital interest in the Canton-Hankow railway. She holds a concession for a railway from Swatow to a point in the interior, which will be extended to meet the Canton-Hankow Railway when that road passes out of American hands.

Conger would not disclose his plans after his visit to the President, and would neither deny nor confirm the well grounded report that he was to return to Peking. In reply to a question as to whether he believed Japan was behind the offer of \$7,000,000 to J. P. Morgan for the Hankow concession he answered: "I don't know, though I suppose they needed their millions at home just now."

Conger expressed belief that the sale of the Hankow railway would be unquestionably a fatal setback.

Great Britain And Tonga

The purposes of the British Government in its late dealings with Tonga have been somewhat of an enigma, though important enough to attract the attention of the whole world. It will be remembered that in December last the Governor of Fiji, who is also the British High Commissioner for the Western Pacific, swooped down on the little Polynesian Government, arrested and forcibly deported King George II's Prime Minister and his Minister of Police, turned the other members of the cabinet out of office and installed others in their places, reorganized the entire Togan administration, paid off the floating debt, and put the finances of the kingdom on a sound basis. The King, on January 18, was made to agree that he would undertake no important matter in administration without first consulting the British resident representative, and would not undertake any governmental policy of which the British resident did not approve.

At the time dispatches giving the most radical and revolutionary aspect to this action were sent to all parts of the world and created much interest. By many it was taken to mean that Great Britain would very shortly annex Tonga to the Empire. By others it was thought that Great Britain would not annex during the lifetime of the present king, but that he would be allowed to remain a figurehead during his lifetime.

The King and those who opposed the action of the British High Commission maintained that this action was in violation of the treaty between Great Britain and Tonga, and the King acting under the advice of some of these, went to Auckland, whence he wrote a letter to King Edward setting out this view.

Dr. W. D. Alexander, in a paper read before the Hawaiian Historical

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Society a short time ago, intimated that what the High Commissioner had done had been planned and approved of beforehand. Now comes information by the Aorangi yesterday, not only verifying Dr. Alexander's surmise, but very clearly setting forth the intentions of the British Government regarding Tonga. It is clear that Great Britain proposes now to control the domestic administration of Tonga to the extent of insuring good government, honest administration of the finances, and fair treatment of foreign residents. The King is to govern according to the advice of the British resident representative, and failing this, he is plainly told he will be deported.

The news that Governor Carter is a changed man will be entirely displeasing to many of his perfervid admirers. They liked him just as he was before he got changed.
The cable says that the Czar has accepted Boulligan's resignation. No doubt that is very important, but who on earth is Boulligan anyway?
When Carter gets back, Jack Atkinson will also become a "changed man." He will just be Secretary again.
Berger and the Band seem to be making a hit in San Francisco.
The old Alameda can be relied on to bring the mail.
There will be a general feeling of relief now that it is known that the schooner Charles Levi Woodbury, with all hands, is safe.
After reading some of the press notices of the Hawaiian Band which appear in the San Francisco papers, the wonder grows, who is Joe Cohen's press agent?
It is to be hoped that Admiral Rojensky's trip from Japan to Russia will be quieter and less eventful than was his recent trip from Russia to Japan.
Perhaps the steamship magnates have been reading some of the Promo-

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tion Committee literature about Hawaii and are attracted hither. E. H. Harriman and R. P. Schwerin were here only a few days ago. John D. Spreckels arrived this morning, and representatives of J. J. Hill's northern line were here only a few months ago.
It now turns out that there were 154 voters in Norway who opposed dissolution with Sweden. It might as well be called unanimous, for "de minimis non curat lex" is a maxim of the law.
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