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STRANGLING HANDS UPON A NATION'S THROAT

ON BOARD STEAMSHIP AUSTRALIA,
Sept. 22.

Now that the Australia has sailed away out of the harbor of Honolulu, that wonderfully deep rainbow-colored curve of sea and shore and sky—and all that one can see on the horizon is a dim, low cloud, which grows dimmer and dimmer—the memory of the islands is like a dream.

Those great mountains, veiled in tenderest green from cloud-tipped summit to the ocean's emerald edge below, the silver waterfalls tumbling from on high down into the dark blue of the deeper sea, that extravagance of foliage and of flowers, the glory of sunshine on the lava-created hills and the benediction of shade in the dusky, wide ravines, beyond which rises mountain after mountain—it is all like a wonderful transformation scene, where splendor follows splendor till one is satiated with loveliness.

Where every prospect pleases
And only man is vile,
Quoted the distinguished Congressman who stood beside me on the Australia's deck.

I don't know that the honorable gentleman alluded particularly to the Hawaiian Islander, or that mentally he made any distinction between white man and brown. But his quotation is particularly apt in the present instance. For here in Hawaii, the best beloved, the most richly endowed of all Mother Nature's beautiful family, the old, old struggle for Anglo-Saxon supremacy is going on.

The centuries-old tragedy is being repeated upon a stage small comparatively, but with a perfection of gorgeous setting and characters whose classical simplicity gives strength to the impersonation. The only new phase in the old drama is that this time a republic is masquerading in the despot's role. The United States, founded upon the belief that a just government can exist only by the consent of the governed, is calmly making up for the bloody fifth act—preparing to take a nation's life with all the complacent assurance of an old-time stage villain.

For Hawaii has not asked for annexation. There are 100,000 people on the islands. Of these not 3 per cent have declared for annexation. To the natives the loss of nationality is hateful, abhorrent.

It is the old battle—the white man against the brown; might against right; strength against weakness; power and intellect and art against docility, inertia and simplicity.

And the result?
"I tell the natives that work for me," said a man suffering from an acute attack of annexation mania to me, "you might as well walk out into the sea and attempt to push back the oncoming waves with your two uplifted hands as to try to prevent what's coming."

"It's a question of conquest, I admit," he went on. "We are stronger and we'll win. It's a survival of the fittest."

The strongest memory I have of the islands is connected with the hall of the Salvation Army at Hilo, on the island of Hawaii. It's a crude little place, which holds about 300 people, I should think. The rough, uncovered rafters show above, and the bare walls are relieved only by Scriptural admonitions in English and Hawaiian:

"Boast not thyself of to-morrow."
"Without Christ there is no salvation."

As I entered, the bell on the foreign church, up on one of the beautiful Hilo hills, was striking ten. The place was packed with natives, and outside stood a patient crowd unable to enter. It was a women's meeting, but there were many men present. The women were dressed in Mother Hubbards of calico or cloth and wore sailor hats—white or black. The men were in coats and trousers of American make.

Presently the crowd parted and two women walked in, both very tall, dressed in handsome free-flowing train-d gowns of black crepe, braided in black. They wore black kid gloves and large hats of black straw with black feathers. The taller of the two—a very queen in dignity and repose—wore nodding red roses in her hat, and about her neck and falling to the waist a long, thick necklace of closely strung, deep-red, coral-like flowers, with delicate fern interspersed.

This was Mrs. Kuaiahelani Campbell, the president of the Women's Hawaiian Patriotic League. Her companion was the secretary of the branch at Hilo.

It was almost pitiful to note the reception of these two leaders—the dumb, almost adoring fondness in the women's eyes; the absorbed, close interest in the men's dark heavy faces.

After the enthusiasm had subsided the minister of the Hawaiian church arose. He is tall, blonde, fair faced, three-quarters white, as they say here. Clapping his hands in front and looking down over the bowed dark heads before him he made the short opening prayer. He held himself well, his sentences were short and his manner was simple.

There is something wonderfully effective in earnest prayer delivered in an ancient language with which one is unfamiliar. One hears not words, but tones. His feelings, not his reason, are appealed to. Freed of the limiting effects of stereotyped phrases the imagination supplies the sense. Like the Hebrew and the Latin the Hawaiian tongue seems to touch the primitive sources of one's nature, to strip away the complicated armor with which civilization and worldliness have clothed us and to leave the emotions bare for that wonderful instrument, a man's deep voice, to play upon.

The minister closed and a deep murmuring "Amen" from the people followed.

I watched Mrs. Emma Nawahi curiously as she rose to address the people. I have never heard two women talk in public in quite the same way. Would this Hawaiian woman be embarrassed or timid, or self-conscious or assertive?

No; any of these. Her manner had the simple directness that made Charlotte Perkins Stetson, two years ago, the most interesting speaker of the Woman's Congress. But Mrs. Stetson's pose is the most artistic of poses—a pretense of simplicity. This Hawaiian woman's thoughts were of her subject, not of herself. There was an interesting impersonality about her delivery that kept my eyes fastened upon her while the interpreter at my side whispered

Many Thousands of Native Hawaiians Sign a Protest to the United States Government Against Annexation.

Will the Great American Republic Aid in Consummating the Infamy Projected by the Dole Government?—Miriam Michelson Pens a Stirring Appeal on Behalf of the Islanders.

his translation in short, detached phrases, hesitating now and then for a word, sometimes completing the thought with a gesture.

"We are weak people, we Hawaiians, and have no power unless we stand together," read Mrs. Nawahi, frequently raising her eyes from her paper and at times altogether forgetting it.

"The United States is just—a land of liberty. The people there are the friends, the great friends of the weak. Let us tell them—let us show them that as they love their country and would suffer much before giving it up, so do we love our country, our Hawaii, and pray that they do not take it from us.

"Our one hope is in standing firm—shoulder to shoulder, heart to heart. The voice of the people is the voice of God. Surely that great country across the ocean must hear our cry. By uniting our voices the sound will be carried on so they must hear us.

"In this petition, which we offer for your signature to-day, you, women of Hawaii, have a chance to speak your mind. The men's petition will be sent on by the men's club as soon as the loyal men of Honolulu have signed it.

patience. Our time will come. Sign this petition—those of you who love Hawaii. How many—how many will sign?"

She held up a gloved hand as she spoke, and in a moment the palms of hundreds of hands were turned toward her.

They were eloquent, those deep lined, broad, dark hands, with their short fingers and worn nails. They told of poverty, of work, of contact with the soil they claim. The woman who presided had said a few words to the people, when all at once I saw a thousand curious eyes turned upon me.

"What is it?" I asked the interpreter. "What did she say?" He laughed. "A reporter is here," she says. She says to the people, 'Tell how you feel. Then the Americans will know. Then they may listen.'

A remarkable scene followed. One by one men and women rose and in a sentence or two in the rolling, broad-voiced Hawaiian made a fervent profession of faith.

"My feeling," declared a tall, broad-shouldered man, whose dark eyes were alight with

"If the great nations would be fair they would not take away our country. Never will I consent to annexation!"

"Tell America I don't want annexation. I want my Queen," said the gentle voice of a woman.

"That speaker is such a good woman," murmured the interpreter. "A good Christian, honest, kind and charitable."

"I am against annexation—myself and all my family."

"I speak for those behind me," shouted a voice from far in the rear. "They cannot come in—they cannot speak. They tell me to say, 'No annexation. Never.'"

"I am Kauihi of Kalaoa. We call it Middle Hilo. Our club has 300 members. They have sent me here. We are all opposed to annexation—all—all!"

He was a young man. His open coat showed his loose dark shirt; his muscular body swayed with excitement. He wore boots that came above his knees. There was a large white handkerchief knotted about his brown

sober, brown faces were all aglow with excited interest.

I sat and watched and listened. At Honolulu I had asked a prominent white man to give me some idea of the native Hawaiian's character.

"They won't resent anything," he said, contemptuously. "They haven't a grain of ambition. They can't feel even envy. They care for nothing but easy and extremely simple living. They have no perseverance, no backbone. They're unfit."

Yet surely here was no evidence of apathy, of stupid forbearance, of characterless cringing. These men and women rose quickly one after another, one interrupting the other at times, and then standing expectantly waiting his turn—too simple, too sincere, it seemed to me, to feel self-conscious or to study for a moment about the manner of his speech, so vital was the matter to be delivered.

They stood as all other Hawaiians stand—with straight shoulders splendidly thrown back and head proudly poised. Some held their

A girl stood beside my chair, her gentle face with its dark liquid eyes smiling down upon me. She had slipped a rope—a lei, she called it—of gorgeous red and yellow flowers, strung thick and close, over my head.

"But," I protested, "I don't see why. I can't do anything, you know, except repeat what you say."

"It—it is that." She hesitated, and then plunged bravely on with her broken English, she continued: "No one comes to—ask us. No one listens. No one cares. Your paper will speak for us—us Hawaiians. Our voice will be heard, too. We are poor—you 'unstan? And we cannot talk your language ver' well. The white men have ever'thing on their side. Eut we are right and they are wrong."

"They are not heathens—not cannibals, you see," said a voice behind me as I stepped out upon the veranda of the pretty new hotel at Hilo.

It was Henry West, a half-white, whom I had seen at the meeting. "Of course not," I answered. "Who said they were?"

"Why, a Boston paper—just lately said so. Have you met Mr. Keakolo?"

David Keakolo and I exchanged bows. He is very dark and his hair and mustache are gray. He has a prominent nose and large, dark, expressive eyes. I had noted him particularly at the meeting, for he was the one man present in a dress suit and he spoke often and animatedly. He smiled now, and said, with a profusion of gestures:

"I—am so sorry. I—cannot speak Ingli'.

I can 'unstan'?" "Yes," went on Mr. West. "They call us savages—all kinds of names. We are not. We read and write. Yes, more of us—comparing, you know—read and write than in Senator Morgan's own birth State—Alabama, is it? I am so sorry Senator Morgan did not come to Hilo with your party. If he would come here as a judge—if he would hear both sides—we would benefit from it. Your country has wronged us cruelly. Cleveland himself said so. What could we do when the United States soldiers were landed in our streets four years ago? Let the United States right the wrong now—let her not do more wrong."

"Would you prefer the present government to annexation?" I asked. "The present government cannot last. They know that themselves."

"But in time, supposing the islands are not annexed, don't you think that the natives will become reconciled and—and take the oath of—"

"Never."

And a quick-spoken Hawaiian word and a glance from Keakolo's black eyes emphasized the negative. They turned to leave.

"We are sorry that you are going back so soon," Mr. West said with pathetic courtesy. "We should like to show you the country."

I looked after the two men as they walked down the tree-bordered path with an aching sort of sympathy. They are so weak; their opponents are so strong.

I had to wait a short time in Mrs. Nawahi's little drawing-room, where I had gone to see Mrs. Campbell. The president of the Women's League, by the way, is the wife of that James Campbell, the wealthy Honolulu planter, who was kidnaped by Oliver Winthrop (now in San Quentin) and held for ransom in San Francisco last year.

Every door and window of the room where I sat was curtained freshly in white. The matting floor was brightened by a large square of a checkered pattern, with broad shining plaits. And this is really all I noticed, for Mrs. Campbell entered, and I cared to look at nothing else.

Imagine a very tall woman, a full commanding figure dressed in the sheerest of lace-trimmed white lawn. The wreath of orange-flowers on her black hair and the orange lei about her neck were exquisitely becoming, and the loose gown's graceful flow and full train gave a charming feminine touch to this woman whose sympathies have placed her in so unconventional a position. But Mrs. Campbell is anything but a new woman.

"Do you women expect," I asked her, "to be rewarded for all your work? Do you look forward to being permitted to vote?"

The president of the Women's Patriotic League laughed outright.

"Why, we never thought of that. I am working for my people. That is all. When they are righted, when they are content, I shall be satisfied. You were at the meeting to-day. Did it not interest you? There are such meetings all over the islands. The natives are far apart. It is hard for them to get together. But they all think alike."

Her voice is exquisitely low and full and lazily deep. She speaks slowly, but without a trace of accent. Her manner is gracious and her face is soft, creamy, brown-tinted, with proud lips and languid eyes. She looks Hawaiian, but hers is an idealized type.

"Tell me, does your husband approve of your work?" "Oh," she answered, smiling, "I could—I would do nothing without his approval."

"Are all families—native families—united on this annexation question?"

"Yes; I think so. Nearly all."

"Suppose a Hawaiian woman's husband in favor of annexation—"

"It is unlikely."

"Well, if it were so, would she continue to work in your league? Could she oppose annexation openly and actively?"

"Oh!" Mrs. Campbell leaned her head upon her large, shapely hand, upon which the diamonds glistened. "Oh, that would be very hard. But—if I were the woman—yes, I should work for my people anyway," said Mrs. Campbell, decidedly and with pretty inconsistency.

"You see, they are so poor, so helpless. They need help so badly."

"And are there no native Hawaiians in favor of annexation?"

She shook her head slowly.

"I met a woman at Hana, on the island of Maui. She was."

"Wasn't she in the Government's employ?"

Mrs. Campbell spoke quickly for the first time.



The Voice of the Native—What are you going to do with ME?

There is nothing underhand, nothing deceitful in our way—our only way—of fighting. Everybody may see and may know of our petition. We have nothing to conceal. We have right on our side. This land is ours—our Hawaii. Say, shall we lose our nationality? Shall we be annexed to the United States?

"Aole loa. Aole loa."

It didn't require the interpreter's word to make me understand the response. One could read negation, determination in every intent, dark face.

"Never!" they say," the man beside me muttered. "Never!" they say. 'No! No! They say—'

But the presiding officer, a woman, was introducing Mrs. Campbell to the people. Her large mouth parted in a pleased smile as the men and women stamped and shouted. She spoke only a few words, good-naturedly, hopefully. Once it seemed as though she were taking them all in her confidence, so sincere and soft was her voice as she leaned forward.

"Stand firm, my friends. Love of country means more to you and to me than anything else. Be brave; be strong. Have courage and

enthusiasm. "This is my feeling: I love my country and I want to be independent—now and forever."

"And my feeling is the same," cried a stout, bold-faced woman, rising in the middle of the hall. "I love this land. I don't want to be annexed."

"This birthplace of mine I love as the American loves his. Would he wish to be annexed to another, great-er land?"

"I am strongly opposed to annexation. How dare the people of the United States rob a people of their independence?"

"I want the American Government to do justice. America helped to dethrone Liliuokalani. She must be restored. Never shall we consent to annexation!"

"My father is American; my mother is pure Hawaiian. It is my mother's land I love. The American nation has been unjust. How could we ever love America?"

"Let them see their injustice and restore the monarchy!" cried an old, old woman, whose dark face framed in its white hair was working pathetically.

throat, and his fine head, with its intelligent eyes, rose from his shoulders with a grace that would have been deerlike were it not for its splendid strength.

"I love my country and oppose annexation," said a heavy-set, gray-haired man with a good, clear profile. "We look to America as our friend. Let her not be our enemy!"

"Hekipi, a delegate from Molokai to the league, writes: 'I honestly assert that the great majority of Hawaiians on Molokai are opposed to annexation. They fear that if they become annexed to the United States they will lose their lands. The foreigners will reap all the benefit and the Hawaiians will be placed in a worse position than they are to-day.'"

"I am a mail-carrier. Come with me to my district." A man who was sitting in the first row rose and stretched out an appealing hand. "Come to my district. I will show you 2000 Hawaiians against annexation."

"I stand—we all stand to testify to our love of our country. No flag but the Hawaiian flag. Never the American!"

There was cheering at this, and the heavy,

roughened, patient hands clasped, some bent and looked toward me, as though I were a sort of magical human telephone and phonograph combined.

I might misunderstand a word or two of the interpreted message, but there was no mistaking those earnest, brown faces and beseeching dark eyes, which seemed to try to bridge the distance my ignorance of their language and their slight acquaintance with mine created between us.

I verily believe that even the most virulent of annexationists would have thought these Hawaiians human; almost worthy of consideration.

The people rose now and sang the majestic Hawaiian National Hymn. It was sung fervently, a full, deep chorus of hundreds of voices. The music is beautifully characteristic, with its strong, deep bass chords to which the women's plaintive, uncultivated voices answer. Then there was a benediction, and the people passed out into the muddy street.

As I sat watching them, suddenly I heard a timid voice murmur: "You will tek this from me?"