

The Hawaiian Star

DAILY AND SEMI-WEEKLY.

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Letters to THE HAWAIIAN STAR should not be addressed to any individual connected with the office, but simply to THE HAWAIIAN STAR, or to the Editorial or Business Departments, according to tenor or purpose.

GEORGE F. HENSHALLMANAGER

WEDNESDAY.....DECEMBER 23, 1908

NEWSPAPERS AND NEWSPAPER VOTING CONTESTS.

During the past year The Star has received numerous offers of newspaper voting contest schemes. We have them in circulators before us, worked out to the small details, explaining just how to start, run and complete these "popularity" contests and practically demonstrating a guarantee of large financial returns, for, of course, in all these subscription contests the votes are simply paid for,—there is no issue of popularity, but one simply of paying up, and "working" one's friends to make them pay up. The Star has not taken up any of these schemes. Journalistic self-respect has seemed a bar. The scheme is usually on the following lines: A number of prizes are offered for the "most popular" young women; to start the contest those managing it usually select a list of candidates who seem likely to hustle, and give these candidates a few votes. As in the case of Admiral Beckley a few years ago, vanity and flattery soon begin to work, the "candidates" bite quickly, and the contest develops into a tussle between a few leaders who begin spending all they can and working their friends to the last limit to buy votes. That is how the schemes are run. "No one need know that you gave them the votes at the start," as the circulars of instructions put it. "It is up to you to make people run, and run they must. All they need is a start."

Is this sort of thing journalism? Is it exactly the right thing, to start a lot of young ladies out canvassing subscriptions and trying hard to work all their friends like political job-hustlers? We think not.

The Star, we repeat, has received all sorts of offers and pledges of profits if it would take up one of these popularity voting contest schemes. The matter was given the amount of consideration it was worth some months ago when the organization of the Alaska-Yukon exposition led various parties to suggest to The Star trips to that exposition as prizes for young women. The offers have been declined, and will always be. We don't want people to subscribe to The Star without wanting it in order to encourage some young lady who knows no better in the silly notion that getting votes in a contest of this sort proves her popularity. Nor is it at all beneficial to the young ladies themselves that they should engage in such a contest.

This much in answer to those who have proposed that The Star indulge in a voting contest. The Star will not,—not for more subscriptions than there are men, women and children in the Territory of Hawaii. As far as subscriptions are concerned, people who take The Star take it because they want it,—and read it,—and for no other reason.

MAY BE AN UGLY SCANDAL.

There are signs that the Panama canal controversy is likely to bring forth an ugly looking scandal. The charges in brief are that Charles P. Taft, brother of the president-elect and Mr. Robinson, brother-in-law of Roosevelt, were heavily interested in an American syndicate which was paid \$40,000,000 for Panama land concessions which the syndicate had acquired for only \$12,000,000. As far as the records are known and as far as President Roosevelt seems to be aware, the \$40,000,000 was paid to the French Government, and there was no American syndicate at all. But a Paris newspaper owner, commenting on the President's denial, says that while Roosevelt is sincere, he is evidently not informed:

"I am willing to repeat and can prove if necessary that the United States bought the canal from a group of its own citizens who, through clever maneuvering acquired either the canal outright or the privilege of selling it at any figure not below a certain sum. There are at least a score of persons in Paris who know this. Moreover, Mr. Roosevelt shows his lack of acquaintance with the subject in the language he uses. He speaks of a 'distribution by the French government' to certain 'individuals.'"

"All this is wrong. There was no distribution. There was a certain sum turned over to the directorate of the Panama company. There were no 'individuals' as such concerned in the matter. The official liquidator received \$40,000,000, but immediately transferred a substantial part of this sum to the American syndicate, whose energy and perseverance had made the transaction possible. The books of the Panama company would easily prove this and if congress really investigates the story it can get plenty of evidence of all kinds right here to the effect that the president is not well informed on the subject of this historic deal."

It won't look right to the American people if this story turns out to be true and if Robinson and Taft were really heavily interested in the syndicate. Both men were naturally in a position to know in advance of the administration's intention to choose the canal route that was chosen. If they made millions out of their own government by reason of their knowledge of such a secret, it was simply a bad kind of graft on a very large scale.

THE MATTER OF SIGNS.

It is not always wise to be too abrupt and sweeping in the abolition of practices of long standing which may have become objectionable, especially when nothing particularly hurtful to public interests or private morals is concerned. An instance in this connection, where thoughtfulness and discrimination are advisable, is that of the sudden campaign against projecting street signs. There are such signs and too many of them having elements of nuisance and danger which should have been altered or abolished years ago. In the objectionable category are signs with loose and frail wire hanging, which creak and mutter and are liable to come down and break heads in a wind storm.

Signs there are a many which are neat in design and artistic in inscription, with secure and shapely fastenings, against which no objection other than the esthetic one of obscuring the perspective over sidewalks can be urged. There would seem to be no immediate call for compelling owners of these not radically offensive signs to sacrifice the expense at which they were erected and their existent advertising value. If the town would look better without any projecting signs, let the movement for their abolition begin as an educative one. Probably by-and-by many of them would disappear by voluntary action of

owners as a result and the putting out of new ones stop altogether. Compulsion might be adopted indeed at the outset, that is providing public discussion proves that the community wants projecting signs eliminated, only to the extent of preventing an extension of the practice.

Probably the anti-projectionists might have the better of the argument in a discussion of the subject. They might contend that signs high enough not to menace the headwear of tall persons and irritatingly catch umbrella tips are very apt to be overlooked by pedestrians and thus fail to attract the eye. Certainly it can be argued with force that projecting signs running close together, as in many places may be seen, mutually obscure each other so as largely to nullify their intended value and effect. The inartistic ensemble of a congeries of signs of varying sizes and inscriptive treatment is a strong argument against them, and to overcome it would require a scheme of symmetry which to carry out would be as much confiscatory as abolition. Not the least of the reasons for doing away with projecting signs will be found in comparing them, both by esthetic and advertising standards, with the best types of wall and window signs. Shoppers do not have the stargazing eyes that the overhanging sign will be the first to fix. Rather have they the metropolitan faculty of seeing out of the corner of the eye without seemingly looking, and the artistically gilded trade symbol in window and enameled legend on polished brass upon window base or portal will compel their attention.

PURE FOOD ACT ON THE DEFENSIVE.

Both the fruit and the flour interests are reported to be up in arms against Dr. Wiley and the Pure Food Act. They are claiming that certain of their preserving, coloring and bleaching processes, condemned by the service, are not deleterious to the human constitution. Dr. Wiley contends to the contrary and with specifications. So far as preservatives are concerned a great economic issue is involved which should be decided against the producers only on a scientific showing that the methods are prejudicial to the public health. If the tests go adversely to their claims they should gracefully submit and seek methods that are safe. With regard to the bleaching and coloring of food staples, sensible people will not be disposed to worry over the grievances of the producers. These processes are only a catering to silly fads of consumers and, in some cases, are said to be deteriorative of the nutritive value of foods. One instance where such a practice has been condemned is that of the polishing of rice, whereby the "bloom" containing a subtle gastronomic property of relish is taken off the kernels. It is to be hoped, at all events, that Congress will not impair the effectiveness of the Pure Food Act in the interest either of profits to producers and packers or of the fads of consumers. Where the law may run to unnecessary extremes it should of course be amended, but, taking it on the whole, the Pure Food Act is one of the greatest boons the people have conferred on themselves.

President Castro is revealed as a precious scoundrel. The people of Venezuela may perhaps thank the United States, with its Monroe doctrine, for giving him so long-lived an opportunity to plunder them. But for that doctrine, it is probable that European nations would have settled with him long ago. But he shrewdly nestled under its protection, feeling safe to ignore treaties whenever it was profitable so to do, as long as the United States was pledged to see that no power made a serious attack upon him. There are a lot of reasons why the Monroe doctrine is out of date, unwise and even dangerous to American peace.

This year's holiday season far exceeds last year's in the volume of local business. Last year exceeded the year before, and the two years ago was better than three years ago,—and so on. Honolulu is growing in a substantial way. Next year will show a greater advance than any other recent year.

No one in Honolulu will have a happier Christmas than those who are responsible for the plan to fill the Bishop street park with happy children.

Talk about a Christmas day holiday. The Alameda, Siberia and Mauna Kea are due to arrive here on Friday morning, and there's a pretty good day's work in sight in the post office.

BAKERY BURGLED FOR LUTTEE LOOT

(Continued from Page One.)

detective force and has later been put on the motorcycle where he has no opportunity of doing any good.

In the lead connection, the following was sent to The Star and signed by a business man:

"I note with regret that Detective Leal will be dropped from the police force after January 4. He is certainly the best detective in the department, thoroughly acquainted with his work, speaking half a dozen languages, quick, active and capable. In view of the many robberies occurring here daily, I wish to protest against the change. I think it a case for the Merchants' Association to look into for the benefit of the community."

CAPT. GOODMAN PASSES AWAY

GOODMAN—In Berkeley, December 12: William G., beloved husband of Alice Goodman, and father of Harry Minott, Robah A. and Inez Goodman, a native of Falmouth, England. (Honolulu papers please copy.)

Friends and acquaintances are respectfully invited to attend the funeral today (Monday), at 2 o'clock p. m., from the Masonic Temple, Berkeley. Interment, private.

The above announcement appears in the San Francisco papers of December 14. Captain Goodman was very well known here, having been a regular caller for many years as a sea captain. He was very popular and his death will be greatly regretted among many old timers.

HAWAIIAN OPERA

The Hawaiian opera presented at J. W. W. BREWSTER.

the Orpheum last night was a fine success. It will be repeated Saturday evening. Nobody who takes an interest in Hawaiian history and music should miss it.

THE SPARK GREETING

On Christmas eve, tomorrow night, the long distance station at Kahuku will scatter wireless messages out over the ocean for whatever there is on the shores beyond or on the waters between, in the way of wireless, to receive.

"A Merry Christmas! Merry Christmas! Aloha!" will be sparked for mere good feeling's sake across the seas, and ships near and afar, equipped with wireless, and shore stations wherever they be, which can catch the message, will hear Hawaii flash the season's greetings.

It is a pretty idea and originated with Manager Balch of the Wireless Telegraph and Telephone Company and will help draw the attention of the world to the fact that Hawaii is as much interested in Christmas as is any other spot on the globe.

A CHRISTMAS SONG.

"Hark! the angel host in Heaven," Singing of their new born King; Christ was born to-day in Bethlehem, Let all on earth, rejoice and sing, Christ the child in lowly manger, Born a King of David's line, Sing and praise His glorious being, "Peace on earth, to all mankind."

Born a King of humble parents, In an ill kept cattle stall; Angelic hosts above proclaiming, "Unto them a King was born." Wise men bowed in adoration, Offering gifts so rich and rare; And the multitude were singing, Hymns of praise that filled the air. "Glory to our King in Heaven," Peace on earth, good will towards men, Sing and praise with humble reverence, Christ the Child of Bethlehem.

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