

THE FRIEND, OF TEMPERANCE AND SEAMEN.

Vol. II.

HONOLULU, OAHU, SANDWICH ISLANDS, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 1844.

No. XI.

For the Friend.

NOTES

On the Shipping, Trade, Agriculture, Climate, Diseases, Religious Institutions, Civil and Social Condition, Mercantile and Financial Policy of the Sandwich or Hawaiian Islands, viewed in relation to other groups of islands, and to the natural and acquired advantages of the anlwia or Hawaiian Islands. By

ROBERT CRICHTON WYLLIE, Esquire.

(Continued from No. IX., page 72.)

68. KING AND COURT.—The king and his small court, have for several years resided chiefly at Lahaina, in the island of Maui; but since the end of June, they have been living here; and I understand, this capital is to be their permanent residence. It is desirable that his majesty should not be too far removed from the seat of his government, as his absence subjects his ministers to misrepresentation, and creates delay from the necessity of consulting him on all important measures of administration. I understand that during the recent troubles of his kingdom, and till the "fiat" of her Britannic majesty's government, upon the questions referred to them, were known, it was his majesty's wish to keep himself out of the way of unnecessary intrusion, whereby the prestige of his prerogatives might be impaired. There never was, nor could be any wish on the part of his ministers to throw his majesty into the shade by studiously keeping him in retirement. In the existing state of things, it became their duty, in concurrence with the royal wish, to shield their master's prerogatives from any encroachment that could prejudice them in the eyes of his subjects. Now, his majesty appears on the arena as a member of the family of recognized independent sovereigns, and the ministers are attempting to place his court, and organize his tribunals, upon a footing suited to his altered situation. In all this they only do what is their duty to the king, and what foreign governments will expect them to do. Where every thing was to be created *de novo*, errors are but to be expected; and fault has been found with the code of court etiquette decreed, and with the etiquette observed on the late festival of the 31st of July. After the explanation rendered, I believe by authority, in the Polynesian of the 31st of July, an intention to avoid any offensive preference becomes manifest; and with a government so young and surrounded by so many embarrassments, in my opinion offence ought not to be felt, where no intention to give it can be suspected. On proper application being made previously, the representatives of foreign powers are at all times admitted to a personal interview with the king, for the purpose of submitting to his majesty any case of well founded grievance which any of their countrymen may have against the government or authorities of the country.

In speaking of the court, I cannot well omit making some allusion to the king himself. In all countries the character of the sovereign is to be approached with respect, and in this particular instance I do so in strict accordance with the feeling which I entertain towards the king of these islands. It is not a little remarkable that in a society where there are some few individuals disposed to blame, censure and find fault with every thing and every body, I have never heard a single remark unfavorable to his majesty Kamehameha III. All admit the goodness of his disposition; none profess to doubt the soundness of his intentions; none accuse him of cruelty, tyranny or oppression; and those who have familiar access to him, all concur in ascribing to his majesty much natural talent, and a good deal of acquired information. Amongst those, I am happy to quote my friend Major Low, of the Bengal army, who lately made a tour in these islands, and after presenting to the king an introductory note from H. B. M.'s consul general, experienced from his majesty the utmost kindness, rendered in the most frank, generous and gentlemanly spirit. The Major retired from these islands with the most favorable opinion of his majesty's character and talent. He expressed himself particularly struck with the king's remarks upon the native states of India and Persia, the policy of the British government of India, and the organization of the native army.

His majesty of late years has become both the patron and the example of temperance among his subjects; and no one can be more regular in his attendance at church, or more zealous in discouraging the pagan rites, ceremonies and superstitions that formerly prevailed amongst the natives.

Kamehameha III. is now about thirty two years of age, and though less robust than some of the chiefs, enjoys good health. On the 29 February 1837, he was married to *Kakama*, now aged twenty seven years, but by whom he has no offspring. In the event of his having no succession, the crown will devolve upon *Alexander Liholiho*, whom his majesty has adopted for that purpose. He is a sprightly promising youth, now in his eleventh year.

A singular feature in this monarchy is the custom of appointing a female to be premier of the kingdom. This custom seems to have originated in the will of Kamehameha I., which declared the kingdom to belong to his son Liholiho, but that Kaahumanu, (one of his queens,) should be his minister.

The present premier is *Kekauluohi*, aged forty eight, and apparently much respected by all classes. Her attributes under the constitution are to carry into execution all business which the king wishes to transact—to be his majesty's special counsellor in the great business of the kingdom—to receive reports of all government property and make it over to the king, and to concur with and approve of all important business which the king may transact in person. Whatever business in the kingdom she does, is to be considered as executed by the king's authority—but the king has a veto on her acts, while his own are not binding unless approved of by her.

The premier has one son, William Charles Lunalilo, an interesting youth, now in his tenth year, but I presume his sex disqualifies him from being her successor, as *Victoria Kamehameha*, now in her sixth year, is the reputed heir to the premiership.

I may add here that no pains are spared by Mr. and Mrs. Cook, through proper education and training, to fit these young persons, *Alexander* and *Victoria*, for the high functions which they are to be called upon to perform.

They are the children of his excellency *Kekuanaoa*, governor of Oahu, by *Kinau* or *Kaahumanu* the second premier.

69. NATIVE HABITATIONS.—In point of neatness, cleanliness and workmanship, the huts of the natives exceed those of the lower order of the Mexicans, in many parts of the republic that are reputed the most civilized. Still they are very defective in the essential points of elevation in the floor, in the roof, division of compartments, and ventilation. I do not see that, where the materials for construction are so abundant, and where the spare labor can so easily be afforded, a law requiring the natives to improve the construction of their huts, in these respects, could be considered oppressive. In most of the native huts, there is only one door, and no window. In such there can be no ventilation, and it must be extremely prejudicial to the health of the inmates, especially the children, to sleep six or eight hours in an atmosphere so heated, impure and confined. I am convinced that many diseases result from that cause alone.

70. MOLES OR WHARVES.—From what a "Resident" writes to the editor of the Polynesian, it appears that he finds fault with my omission of the wharf, in this port, which forms the frontage of the ship-building and repairing yard of Messrs. James Robinson & Co.

I do not suppose that any of the partners of that industrious, quiet and highly respectable firm, is the Resident who so complains; nor did I think that any other notice of their establishment was required, standing separate and immured as it does from the chief warehouses to which goods after being landed are conducted, than what appeared in the Friend of 1st May.

On inquiry, however, I find that they do allow vessels to land their cargoes on their wharf, on payment of one dollar per day for every schooner that lays along-side—of two dollars for every brig, and of three for every ship.

I find also, that within their capacious premises, they have stores, where they allow goods to be deposited on very reasonable terms, which though far from the most of the merchants, from their proximity to the anchorage of ships of war, are more eligible to receive their

stores, than any other in Honolulu, and also to receive goods landed here in bond, for reshipment.

As to the small wharf belonging to Mr. Reynolds, it is separated from his shop and dwelling house by a public street, and being continuous with that of Messrs. Ladd & Co., I naturally supposed that they were the proprietors of the whole.

Messrs. Ladd & Co. charge 16 cents on every ton of goods landed on or shipped from their wharf, but make no charge for a vessel lying alongside, unless for repairs, or exceeding the reasonable time for discharging and embarking cargo.

71. COURTS OF LAW.—The government has recently established a court of chancery and a court of admiralty, assisted by the law adviser of the crown, John Ricardo, Esquire. Where private parties cannot agree among themselves, it is for their advantage that courts should exist, where their differences can be heard, fairly tried and justly decided. This is more particularly the case with foreigners whose governments cannot adjudicate upon cases within the jurisdiction of this kingdom.

72. COMMUNICATION BY THE ISTHMUS OF PANAMA.—If a ship-canal, or rail-road, or train-road, or even a good common road, were made across the isthmus of Panama, connected with the Sandwich Islands by a line of steamers, doubtless it would greatly promote the prosperity of the Sandwich Islands.

But whence is the traffic to come to pay for the line of steamers? It has erroneously been supposed, both in Europe and America, that by a canal across the isthmus, we would have China, the Philippines and India, comparatively speaking, at our door. No greater fallacy ever prevailed; and the wonder is, how it came ever to be entertained.

If sailing vessels were employed, the voyage from England to Chagres would not be less, on an average, than ----- 50 days; even were a ship canal cut, we could not allow less time for a ship to cross from Chagres into the bay of Panama than ----- 2 days. The average passage of three vessels from Panama to this port has been ----- 55 days; and the passage from this port to Macao or Hong Kong, will very seldom be done in less than 30 days.

Making in all, ----- 137 days, or eighty five from Panama only.

But suppose steamers were employed from England to Chagres, considering the number of places where they call for coal, and to land mails and passengers, they would have to run about 5270 miles, and at the very least, would require an average of 30 days, to which adding 87 days to Macao or Hong Kong, the voyage from England would still be 117 days.

Again, for the sake of argument, let us suppose steamers established all the way. The time required may be calculated as follows.

From England to Chagres, ----- 50 days.
Steaming through canal, and taking in coal, say ----- 3 days.
Steaming from Panama to this port, a distance of 4505 miles, at an average of eight miles per hour, say ----- 23 days.
Stoppage at this port, taking in coals, &c., say 3 days.
Steaming from this port to Macao or Hong Kong, a distance of 5397 miles, at an average of eight miles per hour, say ----- 28 days.
Making in all, ----- 87 days, at the very shortest calculation. There are instances of fast sailing vessels doubling the cape of Good Hope having made the voyage in less time.

The overland mail from London to Hong Kong, via Suez, and conveyed from Bombay, by sailing vessels, has departed and arrived as mentioned below:

Left London.	Arrived at Hong-Kong.	Number of days.
Nov. 4, 1842	Feb. 7, 1843	95
Feb. 6, 1843	May 4, "	87
April 6, "	June 19, "	74
June 6, "	Aug. 25, "	80
July 6, "	Sept. 7, "	63
Aug. 6, "	Nov. 7, "	93
Sept. 6, "	Dec. 21, "	106
Oct. 6, "	Jan. 20, 1844	106

Average of eight arrivals, ----- 88 ds., even at the present time, before the line of steam-