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Social organization  
M. W. Beckwith collection  
of notes

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Kauwa

The kauwa were regarded as the lowest class in Hawaii and were despised by all other classes and forbidden to mingle with them. <sup>At Kauwa</sup> He must on no account set foot within the property of a commoner. Even if he wanted a potato he must ask for it from outside the enclosure and, as he was untouchable, the article must be thrown out not given to him.

The foreheads of the kauwa were tattooed in different patterns to distinguish one class from another. One class had a dot in the center between the eyes and another had half circles drawn about the outer angle of the eye. Among the slave classes were the lōpa', ma'-ka-we'-la, ku'a-pa'a, la'e-pa'a. Half of the land of Ninole in Kau was given over to <sup>the</sup> slaves. In old days victims for sacrifice at the heiau were often taken from the slave class. Gourds ~~were~~ tied about their necks marked them as victims. To prevent such from escaping, they were tied to a coconut tree with the olo left suspended about the neck. Once in Kau two such victims were awaiting their fate when a young chief pitied them and cut them loose. He as well as the two slaves fled from the district. After human sacrifice was done away with the abolition of the heiau worship, the three returned to Kau and their descendants are living today, a mixture of the highest and the lowest blood of the land, a thing that would not have been tolerated in the old days. Ua hui ka liko me ka laele,

"The young tender leaves have mixed with the old and coarse," was the old saying, and this can be said of many persons among my own acquaintances today. To call a <sup>person</sup> ~~Hawaiian~~ a kauwa who does not belong to the class is one way of making a lifelong enemy of a Hawaiian.

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An old lady in Wailuku a few years ago told Mr. Pukui what she remembered hearing about the kauwa when she was a child. They were not allowed to use the common road to the beach but went down by way of a long cave. Around their loins they wore <sup>beach</sup> morning glory vines (pohuehue) instead of the malo. Mrs. Wiggin remembers this as the custom also in Kau for the lopa class of kauwa. These were the lowest; others wore only the plainest of tapa cloth. They worked hard for themselves and for their masters, receiving no thanks but only the hard knocks. Their lives were no more their own than the chickens' in ne's backyard.