

Disaster Visits Again

WAINEE CHURCH

On Monday evening, January the 15th, a wind of hurricane proportions blew from out of the mountains of East Maui and wrought considerable destruction in Lahaina. Among other things the wind picked up the historic Wainee Church and completely reduced it to kindling wood. This disaster came as the culmination of series of similar events. Back in 1947 the Wainee Church caught fire and was partially destroyed before the blaze could be extinguished. The members of the church and their many friends throughout the territory rallied on this occasion and rebuilt the building. Not long after the rededication service a strong breeze whipped through the district knocking down one of the great trees on the church grounds and tearing some holes in the church roof. This damage was repaired and the use of the building continued. Then came the final destruction and this time it was complete.

We are told that the wind which destroyed the church is a well known wind. Not too many of the younger generation know about the wind for none of them have experienced it but some of the older people are quite familiar with it and with the traditions that center around it. The wind is called the "kauaula wind." There is reference to it in the Lahainaluna

school song. In that reference it is said that the kauaula wind cannot extinguish the light of Lahainaluna. Quite clearly, this means that although the wind may blow down the buildings of the school it cannot blow away the light of truth and freedom which the school gives to the lives of its students. The words of the song are attributed to David Malo. So that it is evident that people have known of this wind before.

Now in our time we have one more experience to add to the traditions that have grown up around the wind. As with all such winds a number of freak things happened. Some of the church leaders were walking across the open park on the makai side of the church grounds and they came upon an entire window from the church. The frame was complete and the glass was not even cracked. One will never know how the wind took that entire window and deposited it carefully on the grass without doing it any damage but there was the window.

But the immediate question is the one of plans for the future. Since the destruction of the church the various groups from the center of Maui have been over to Lahaina to help with the removal of the debris. At the time of writing this story the sight of the Wainee Church is practically clear with the salvage care-





fully piled where it can be suitably disposed of. Plans for a new church are in preparation and before long a definite proposal will be before the congregation.

This whole situation is one which challenges our entire fellowship. One member of our family has suffered a great loss. This loss has come after a series of other losses which have placed heavy burdens upon the people. This time all of us will need to share in the new burden. Only as we do can the people of Wainee Church go forward and find themselves with a new house of worship.

The Wainee Church is an old church. The land

upon which it rests is royal land. The structure which was destroyed was built in 1893 to replace a building which was at that time destroyed. The building was built with the help of Mr. H. P. Baldwin who is deeply interested in the Wainee congregation. So that the kauaula wind with one blast wiped out the structure around which so many memories have come to be intertwined. Yet even as the words of the Lahainaluna song the kauaula wind cannot wipe out the faith of the members of the Christian family who Sunday after Sunday may gather for a worship and for the teaching of their children.

