each other. A crowded condition might be conceived as possible in the future, when the thrifty and capable classes would push the inefficient and improvident classes into penury. In such case, one would think the Chinese to be the best fitted for the "struggle for existence," and the Polynesian the least fitted. The former inherits an education of hundreds of generations in living on the minimum of necessities, also an unequaled patience of industry and tactful thriftiness for procuring those necessities. The latter, thriftless and indolent in comparison, would be crowded out of the land.

No such conditions exist. There is no struggle to find subsistence. One race is as fit to survive as another, so far as obtaining a living is concerned, in a country where the wages of one day's unskilled labor will purchase all indispensable food and raiment for a whole week. Neither is the climate of Hawaii less favorable to the health of one race than to that of another. It is comparatively a perfect climate, absolutely devoid of extremes of temperature, free from humidity, swept by the ever-purging ocean airs, and seemingly incapable of long harboring malarial or zymotic diseases. Possibly an Esquimaux might not thrive here. For all other races it is an Eden in salubrity.

Yet it is the strange fact—in view of the amiable and attractive qualities of Polynesians, the distressingly sad fact that, simultaneously with the arrival of white men in these islands, the Hawaiian people began rapidly to melt away, and that this waste has continued up to the present with substantial steadiness. At the date of the discovery, Captain Cook estimated the population at 400,000. Later historians have leaned to the more moderate estimate of 250,000. My father who was one of the first party of white men to travel around Hawaii in 1824, then observed such evidences of recent extensive depopulation in all parts of that island that he very decidedly supported the estimate of Cook. There are now less than 40,000 pure Hawaiians surviving. The later counts have been taken with reasonable accuracy.

One is led to suspect that the earlier ones omitted considerable numbers, when one observes the comparative sparseness of native population in every district, as compared with the relatively dense population fifty years ago, when only 125,000 were counted, or little more than three times the present number. With the exception of the towns of Honolulu, Hilo, and Wailuku, every large and populous town in the islands has dwindled to a hamlet since my boyhood, and the then frequent and considerable hamlets scattered everywhere, have almost all disappeared. The recollections of fifty years since are of throngs and swarms of natives everywhere. Yet even then all the talk was of how the islands had become depopulated; even then, in traveling, the deserted sites of villages and hamlets with abandoned plantations were constantly pointed out. Have we now one in six of the ancient numbers of natives, or have we only one in ten. It is immaterial; the fact remains of an enormous depopulation.

And yet, in the total absence of any struggle for existence, all the more or less civilized races migrating here appear to thrive and multiply-abundantly, and the children surpass their children in health and stature. At first sight these foreigners do not average as equal to the Hawaiian. The Chinaman is vastly his inferior in strength, in stature, in symmetry, and in apparent soundness. But the Chinaman lives and propagates, while the Hawaiian dies easily, and leaves few or no offsprings. The Caucasan also comes with his family and multiplies again.

The query then is, under what peculiar disabilities does the Hawaiian labor, as to vitality and power of propagation, from which the foreign races living here are exempt? This inquiry is farther complicated by the fact that these disabilities, whatever they are, seem to have first sprung into efficiency upon contact with the white race. The coming of that race appears to have introduced new deleterious influence, and created new conditions, under which the Polynesian, somewhere weak, succumbs. We are to seek to clearly define what these unfavorable conditions are, and wherein the weakness of the native race to withstand these adverse influences consists.

I here limit our inquiry to the Hawaiians, because with this people only do we possess any intimate acquaintance. A similar state of things prevails more or less throughout Polynesia, and ultimate extinction appears to threaten the native population of most of the groups of Polynesia. We are to endeavor to define the precise causes of depopulation. We should strive to indicate exactly what adverse influences have been steadily at work for five generations to kill off the Hawaiian people. There has been a great deal of vague generalization—of indefinite talk about a weak race succumbing to the stronger. We want to quit vagueness and generalities, and find the answer to the question, "In what respects, particularly and precisely, are the Hawaiian people weaker than their white, or their Mongolid guests?" This will prepare us for the further inquiry, by what means can this weak race be so invigorated that it will again multiply? Our first effort—perchance unskilled and misdirected, is to diagnose the deadly malady which is slaying the people.