

## Correspondence.

The Work in St. Louis and the Region Round About.

St. Louis, Missouri,  
Feb. 5th, 1877.

Editor Deseret News:

This, like other large cities, has its beauties of architectural skill and artistic display, but not being an adept in the sciences I will leave others to elucidate them. Many of these noble edifices whose towering spires attract the admiration of the multitude only being nurseries, whence arise many speculative theories that have beclouded the human understanding, and almost made it impenetrable to the sunlight of heaven's divine law.

A belief in Christ and the Bible is argued philosophically by the divines of the day as a necessity of good order and self-government. If the dead letter aids, how much more good could be accomplished through the living oracles? Yet these divines declare the living oracles a nonentity, and of no worth? From their reasoning, we must assume they are not honest, other motives being at issue, instead of saving the souls of men. To read of a single pew rent reaching the enormous price of \$800 per year puts one in mind of Paul, of New Testament celebrity, prophesying that in the last days men would make merchandise of the word of God and use it to tickle the ears of their constituents. The living oracles of which we are bearers to the people (owing to priestcraft and tradition) meet with comparatively little success at the present time, but we know ultimately they will explode this corruption and conquer, proving to mankind their genuineness and worth.

President Stuart is a man of real worth. Exercising himself in a lively manner to spread the truth, he desires, through the aid of the missionaries, to give another testimony to the people of the four States over which he presides. He left this city six weeks ago. The last we heard from him he had baptized five persons, and organized a branch 300 miles from here. With him it is, "Come, boys; come, boys;" but we are minus his capacity to act.

P. S. and B. Middleton leave the north for Morgan and Green Counties, to try to open new fields of labor.

Bro. Stuart writes, "Lecture to the people of St. Louis," which I have done to the best of my ability, at times to well filled houses. One person has been added to the church by baptism since my arrival. We feel encouraged to bear testimony to the people of Zion, her prophets and the laws of God, as revealed from heaven in our day.

A. Burman, President of the branch, is active in his duties. The few Saints here are very poor. A Sabbath School has been organized. The children attending are highly gratified. Speak of Zion, and their innocent souls leap for joy. I promised to distribute some catechisms, as a present. I hope they have been forwarded.

My heart mourns the fallen condition of humanity. I have to exclaim, "O God, have mercy on them!"

E. Maycock has joined E. Hackett, preaching in Bates County and neighborhood. Elder Ricks, of Cache County, has arrived here from Staunton, Ill. He reports favorably. He leaves to-morrow, accompanied by Meolard Cummings, of your city, for his former field of labor, where he had preached several times. Having many offers of meeting-houses, I advised them to go and secure the same, and, as I expect P. Stewart here before long, I would go and assist them to declare the restoration of the everlasting Gospel.

Respectfully,

WM. WHALLEY JACKSON,

In Switzerland and Germany.

MONTEZILLON, Switzerland,  
January 15, 1877.

Dear Aunt Camilla:

My mission so far, thank God, has been unmolested, except to have the finger of scorn pointed at me and being laughed at or perhaps having some one call after me, and such like trifling yet annoying things. I am working as traveling Elder in the Bern and Jura Conference, where father has often travelled, where he is yet honored,

where his name is yet held in high esteem, having faithfully performed his duties.

Many are the times I sit and contemplate on the friends, pleasures, &c., I have left behind in the peaceful vales of Ephraim, where to a certain extent we can worship God as our consciences dictate, without reproach or molestation. Yet, on the other hand, knowing that I have been commissioned of the Almighty to proclaim his holy word to the nations, I cheerfully submit and cast my cares on him, realizing if I do my part he will perform his. Some of our people and others have an impression that it must be exceedingly enjoyable to go on a mission to preach the gospel, but if they were out here, a stranger in a strange land, how soon would they change the tenor of their views.

Visions of family and friends, of the comfortable home they had left to come here to things not as they had pictured them in the mind's eye, but quite the contrary. Those whom they left here many years ago, as relatives and old time companions, because of their belief turn up their noses and are at any time ready to politely invite them to leave their houses. This kind of circumstances suddenly change their ideas of a missionary's life. Yet all along I have enjoyed my mission. I could not say it has not done me good. In this short time I have learned many things I never should have learned at home, many a lesson have I been taught since I came here, and I feel to praise my heavenly Father that he found in me a fit subject to help roll on his mighty work in these last days.

My twelve weeks' stay in Mussen, etc., was very agreeably spent. I soon had a host of acquaintances. In one little village, Niederau, nearly every family is either named Maeser or holds some relationship. My German was very limited, and I could hardly express my wishes and desires, to say nothing of conversing with the people. Many came, anxious to hear something of Utah, "Mormonland." But when I commenced to talk faith, repentance, and baptism to them, they were in a great hurry, had to call on so and so, or go so and so. This presented no great encouragement to my first attempts. My dear old grandfather, in his 75th year, did all he could to further my comfort and felt somewhat downcast when I bid him good bye. My dear aunt Alma and her children likewise strove to make my visit as pleasant as possible. God reward them for it.

Since August 21, 1876, I have been here in Switzerland. I find the Saints everywhere very kind, always ready to do all that lies in their power to make us feel at home. They are all poor, yet kind. My advance in the language has been, as they tell me here, rapid, and I now can give vent to my feelings, to a considerable extent, much easier than at first. Switzerland is a fine country to look at, when clothed with nature's richest robe. I could not live here, however.

I am well, and have had the very best of health since I came here, and I want to keep it, that I may work and not lie dormant on the hands of the poor Saints.

Remember me kindly to all,

REINHARD MAESER.

## Palestine Re-peopling, and Signs of the End.

At a moment when all eyes are turned to the East, it cannot be unimportant to learn that, after the slumber of ages, Palestine is awakening to new life, and Israel is actually returning to its shores in such numbers, and in such a way, as they have never been known to do. While in the former instances, whether under Pagan, Christian, or Moslem masters, they were equally the subjects of extortion, oppression and contumely; now they are beginning to hold a position of comfort, independence and power. This remarkable change is in itself significant, and the whole movement should surely be watched by the student of prophecy with eager and expectant attitude.

The great importance of the day in which we live arises from the very general agreement amongst commentators who take the historical view of prophecy, that the period of 1,260 years of Papal and Mohammedan temporal power is now fast expiring. At its termination the Jews are to return, before

their conversion, to their own land, in very considerable numbers. (Dan. xii, 7; Rev. xi, 3, etc.)

It may be asked, are there any signs as yet of the commencement of this momentous event? A residence of some years in the Holy Land, and an intimate acquaintance with what is now passing there, leads me unhesitatingly to answer that such there are. The last four or five years have witnessed the return of the Jews to Palestine from all parts, but more especially from Russia, which has been altogether unprecedented. The Hebrew population of Jerusalem is now probably double what it was some ten years ago.

In 1872 and 1873 such numbers came to reside in Saphed, one of the four holy cities of the Jews in the mountains of Galilee, that there were no houses to receive them, and building was for a considerable length of time carried on all night, as well as all day—this, be it remembered, in the East, where "the night" is emphatically the time in which no man can work! Great accessions still continue daily; and whereas ten years ago the Jews were confined to their own quarter in Jerusalem, the poorest and worst, they now inhabit all parts of the city, and are always ready to rent any house that is to be let. Notwithstanding this happy change, want of accommodation still being felt, building societies have been formed, and many of their simple tenements are now rising outside the city to the north-west. Moreover, the Jews in Palestine are certainly acquiring possession of landed property in the villages and country districts. I believe the Hebrew population of Palestine proper must now be stated at 30,000, of whom more than half reside in Jerusalem. This is without reckoning the Jews of Sidon, Beyrout, and Damascus, all within the limits of the Land of Promise, probably some 7,000 or 8,000 more.

Three causes have, in the providence of God, mainly contributed to bring about this marked return to the Land of Promise: first, new land laws affecting Palestine; secondly, new laws of military service in Russia; thirdly, new civilization throughout the East.

1. As regards the new land laws in Turkey, formerly none but *royals*, or subjects of Turkey, could hold real property in any part of the Ottoman empire. Some nine years ago, however, a most important alteration took place. In June, 1867, an imperial rescript (*Hattihumaiun*) gave to all subjects of foreign powers a right to purchase landed property in their own name. It was a part of that marked improvement in the position of foreigners in Turkey which dates from the time of the Crimean war.

No sooner was the law passed than many began to purchase plots of ground for building in and around the principal towns of Palestine. At first men found it hard to believe that safe possession would be guaranteed, and that Jews, who but a few years before were greeted in the public streets with opprobrious names and shameful ill-treatment, would be allowed by the haughty Mohammedans to become in peace the lords of the soil. But as time wore on, and one villa and cottage after another arose outside the walls of Jerusalem where the owners lived in safety, new confidence was inspired, and more became desirous of possessing a portion of sacred ground. In the country districts whole villages, with lands around them to the extent of over 3,000 *dunams*, or acres, have been bought—lands which, though unmanured from year to year, unimproved in any way, and cultivated with the least possible amount of labor, are immensely productive, owing to the extraordinary fertility of the soil.

Already land in the neighborhood of several towns has enormously increased in value. To my knowledge, one plot of ground close to Jerusalem was sold three years ago for twenty times the sum which was paid for it some time previously, by the owner. This increase in value has arisen from the right of foreigners to purchase real property.

2. In the second place, new laws of military service in Russia, coming into operation shortly after the promulgation of the new real property laws in Palestine, have greatly tended to lead Israel's weary steps back to their own land. Formerly, in Russia, they were not, as a body, compelled to take arms, but were allowed, if they chose, to

pursue their usual peaceful avocations; now, however, this has all been changed. Russia has been, ever since the Crimean war, preparing for the next great struggle against Turkey, and part of that preparation has been the introduction, in 1874, of the German scheme of military service, which forces all the Jewish population in her dominions to enter the army.

All Jews throughout Russia are now required to be enrolled and drilled at the age of twenty-one. Israelites are singularly averse to the military calling. They have, therefore, taken alarm at the terms of the new system. Moreover, they are especially disinclined to fight for Russia. In that country they have suffered much—in common with all who differ from it—at the hands of the Greek Church. Many persecuting laws have been passed against them, more especially in Poland.

Now, in Palestine, they are still entirely exempt from service in the army. A trifling poll-tax, amounting, I believe, to about a *majeedy*, (four shillings) a head, is taken from Jews and Christians in Syria in lieu of their liability to conscription. They have, therefore, decided to leave Russia when and how they can. This is not easily managed, for such are the despotic laws of that State, that in many cases their preparation for departure would be ground for their imprisonment. Still, great numbers of them are now arriving in Jerusalem, and they already form a very new element of wealth and influence in the Holy City. During the years 1871 to 1874, every steamer from Russia brought her large quota of Hebrew passengers, and those whose business it was to meet travelers at Jaffa, and conduct them to Zion, marked with astonishment the great crowds that came by these ships. This state of things, it is said, still continues.

I have myself repeatedly heard from their brethren in Jerusalem, and from Turkish officials in that city, who were in a position to know, that the Russian Jews, in a body, have, ever since the adoption of the German system of military service in 1874, anxiously sought to leave Muscovite territory, and settle in the Holy Land. They cannot, if they would, escape all at once. The stream of emigration, however, is now slowly but steadily flowing towards Emmanuel's Land, and will, there is every reason to believe, continue to flow—the more speedily as the dark war clouds now impending settle down on Europe—till Russia is emptied of a Hebrew population that probably numbers one-third of the whole nation of the Jews. [The number of Jews (chiefly of the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin) scattered throughout the world is variously estimated. It is probably not less than 5,000,000, and not more than 10,000,000.]

3. But we have yet to notice the influence of this movement of a new civilization in Syria. Neither the facilities for acquiring land in Palestine, nor the dread of military service in Russia, would have been inducements strong enough to have led back European Jews to the country as it was thirty years ago, in 1847. In those days Jerusalem could not have been entered save in Eastern costume; the Jews were shut up in their own unwholesome quarter, and it would have been death to live amongst the Turks. No one could venture alone outside the walls of Jerusalem after dark, much less live in any country house. A Jew of the highest position walking through the *Suk* (bazaars) was liable to the grossest insult, for which there could be no redress.

For instance, a Turk would take off his shoe, throw it at the poor fellow, and hailing him as a dog, bid him fetch it, an indignity to which he was bound to submit. Fanaticism, violence, ignorance, and dishonesty had everything their own way. Such was the state of things in the towns. In the country districts the land was wholly uninhabitable for Europeans. There was not a single road in the country; and when it is added that the Bedouin Arabs at harvest time swept across the unprotected fords of the Jordan, to rob the threshing floors and levy black mail, we have a true outline of the terrible picture of ruin presented by Emanuel's Land some years ago. Now, the change that has taken place in all this is indeed very striking.

Other improvements have taken place. Until five years ago, the

gates of Jerusalem were all shut at sunset, and were not opened, except to the privileged possessor of a special pass, until the next day. This highly inconvenient practice came to an end some five years ago.

At Jaffa, by command of the Governor, the massive town wall, an extensive fortification, has within the last few years been pulled down, and some of the stones were bought, as building material for a new school-house in connection with Miss Walker Arnott's excellent work. Shops have of late sold European commodities; so that some of the comforts and luxuries of Western life may now be procured; and vegetables or fruits, which formerly were so scarce, are now cheap and abundant.

No less than three Building Societies have been organized among the Jews, which are rapidly erecting new houses, and of which Sir Moses Montefiore has given an excellent account. Another remarkable fact is that an Ordnance Survey Map of Palestine from Dan to Beersheba is nearly completed by the English Palestine Exploration Society, on the scale of an inch to a mile.

Now that to Turkish bankruptcy has been added an awful outbreak of Turkish barbarity, the crisis has come, and the dread settlement of the Eastern Question can, it is felt on all hands, no longer be delayed. What that settlement is in part to be, is written over and over again in the Word of God. When the "river Euphrates," the symbol of the Turkish power, is dried up, it is that "the way of" the Jews, "the kings of the East, may be prepared." Israel are to return to their own land. This event, in its incipient stage, I have shown to be now actually taking place. That which is yet to be looked for is the restoration of the Jewish nationality under the protection of some one or more of the Great Powers. And all this is preparatory to the Second Coming of Christ.—Rev. J. Neil, lately Incumbent of Christ Church, Jerusalem.

## One of the "Signs of the Times."

No doubt our readers have been interested in the article entitled "Palestine Re-peopling," in the last and present numbers of the *Star*; not that this is a new-born interest, so far as the Latter-day Saints are concerned, for the gathering of the "dispersed of Judah" may be considered as one of their fundamental ideas, and a necessary sequence to their own. Since that fated day when the cry went up from Pilate's judgment hall, "His blood be on us and our children," the history of that people has been one of disaster, their sacred places were violated, their holy city destroyed, their Temple cast down, while they themselves, and all their posterity, have been, as the Prophet said, "a nation scattered and peeled." They have been a "hiss and a byword" throughout the nations of the earth; the subjects of persecution, proscription, robbery, and death; scattered, yet distinct; used, yet despised; the subjects of the grandest historic associations of the past, and the objects of prophetic interest in the future; their lands, given to them of Jehovah, trodden under foot of the Gentiles; and they under penalties and confiscation disallowed the opportunity of owning a foot of land, in any of the countries where they have located, strangers and aliens in all; hardhearted, stiff-necked, and unbelieving, yet the delegated inheritors of the records of the Prophets, and in every contingency of wanderings and persecution, handing to our age the rites (circumcision and the passover) which originated in the morning of history; without estate, yet holding the purse strings of Christendom; without nationality, yet, under heaven, controlling (as prime ministers) the destiny of the foremost nations of the earth (England and France), with their colonial empire and dependencies planted around the globe; renowned for industry, perseverance and thrift; adapting themselves to every condition imposed upon them; in many respects giving to their oppressors an example worthy of imitation, yet everywhere, in their solemn assemblies and sacred moments, turning their faces to the Holy City, and, with a persistence suggestive of destiny, invoking the God of their Fathers to open the way for their gathering, and more than former day glory in the future; patiently waiting for the great work of the last days, when "He shall set up an ensign for the na-