

excellent singing. The natives take great delight in music. Some of them are good singers.

The spirit of gathering is strong upon the Hawaiian Saints. Many are striving hard to prepare for emigrating, and "Mauna Iohaku," Rocky Mountains, is a favorite theme with them. Some thirty native Saints will sail with the returning Elders to take up their abode in the valleys of the mountains.

The Conferences of the Relief Society and of the Mutual Improvement Association were well attended and the representatives acquitted themselves very creditably.

The exercises of the Sabbath Schools on Sunday forenoon were pleasing. A competing for prizes, by several schools, was an interesting feature. The singing, recitations, etc., showed a considerable degree of training.

Under the supervision of President Wm. King the work on the plantation has been carried on successfully. Some 170 tons of sugar is the product of the recent "run" of the sugar mill. The machinery was kept running well up to its capacity, and the average daily yield was 5300 pounds of sugar.

The outlook for the growing crop of cane is not cheering. The rainfall for the past six months has been very light. A general drouth has extended throughout the Islands. In many places the kalo patches have dried up. Proprietors of plantations have been obliged to slaughter hundreds of their cattle to save the hides and prevent losing them by starvation. If the drouth is prolonged there will be a heavy loss of live stock, and much injury to the cane crop. The cattle on this plantation have suffered but little, as there is a good supply of water here and considerable grass in the hills and mountains close at hand. All join me in sending greetings.

Your brother in the Gospel,

M. F. EAKLE.

LATE, Onahu, Hawaiian Islands,
April 9th, 1889.

LETTER FROM PALESTINE.

Having now had the pleasure of seeing some portions of this "land of promise," I thought, perhaps, it would interest your readers to have a few items concerning the present condition of Palestine, its people, and their progress.

During our round trip from Haifa, which is located nearly on the north-west point of Mount Carmel, and back to our starting point, we traveled through portions of the landmarks of Asher, Zebulun, Issachar, Ephraim, Benjamin, Judah and Dan, and enjoyed many pleasant thoughts in the contemplation that God was about to remember His covenant with the fathers, and to restore it to the rightful heirs. This land shows many signs of a once high and successful cultivation. The mountains of Samaria and Judea especially bear the marks of once being very fruitful, as one sees that every side hill, with sufficient earth for cultivation, at one time or other, has been terraced

from top to bottom. Judging these terraces from the present mode of cultivating the hills, one can imagine the whole of the mountains covered with grape vines, with olive and fig trees here and there interplanted, together with various other plants and trees which could grow on the hill-side without irrigation. These terraces are very necessary in this country, where both the early and later rains are rather copious. By these means the earth, which would otherwise be carried away by the heavy wet, is held back as well as a goodly portion of the moisture; and the rocks that are gathered out, too, are made to serve for a base wall for the terraces.

A mountain properly arranged and the blessings of God upon it was a great possession in the day when Israel flourished here. Wherefore the prophet, in looking forward in the world's history, said to Israel: "Thou shalt yet plant vines upon the mountains of Samaria; the planters shall plant, and shall eat them as common things." This was great comfort to the afflicted people, and they will yet "Come and sing in the height of Zion, and flow together to the goodness of the Lord for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd; and their souls shall be as a matured garden: and they shall not sorrow any more at all."

The country here has about the same dry season as Utah. Although it is warmer by several degrees in the summer, yet there is but little drought compared with the latter. A heavy dew falls at once after sundown which seems to keep up the moisture necessary for vegetation. The country, as a rule, is poorly supplied with flowing streams. Whole villages are supplied with rain water, which is carefully kept in large bottle-shaped cisterns hewn out of the solid rock. Many of the old cisterns are being cleaned out, and during the rainy season ditches are made to convey water to the cisterns. It need hardly be said that the water thus obtained is not very agreeable.

There is much fine land lying almost idle. In Galilee, between Nazareth and Tiberias, much excellent country can be found; the valley of Jezreel may also similarly be mentioned. But this, as in almost all cases here, is but poorly cultivated. The "fellahs" or farmers don't seem to understand how to till to advantage, and perhaps the mode of taxation, i. e., by farming the taxes, also tends to discourage the people. By this method of taxing, the tax-farmer often takes a fifth in the place of a tenth, which is his due. The farmer is in the meantime prevented from touching his crop until the taxes are collected. Then further distress is imposed by speculators purchasing large tracts of land from the government. In buying the land they get the people as a free gift, because where would they go if ejected? Hence they remain there and live in a starving condition upon what is left after the tax-farmer and the speculator have got

what they want. The Sultan has bought Jezreel and a large country around the old capital, so that his majesty seems to think the scheme a good one.

The present inhabitants are principally Arabs and Bedouins. There are a few thousand Christians and some thousand Jews; but they are far in the minority. As a rule we generally ask what are the Jews doing toward obtaining the land? The Jews, or rather the greater number of them, do not farm, but live in Jerusalem, Tiberias, Safed, and a few other places, chiefly upon the support of their richer brethren. On the southeast part of Mount Carmel the Jewish settlement of Samaria is located. It has a grand appearance in the distance, and is said to do very well.

Now there may be reasons for their not branching out. The Jews are yet hated to an unreasonable extent here by all classes. In Jerusalem they are confined to a very small quarter, and their industry is being looked upon with great suspicion because they work cheaply. Hence they are about to come into disrepute with the people in this way.

They have likewise been prevented from settling here of late years owing to the fact that, although they left other countries dissatisfied, they still kept their former citizenship for protection after settling in this place. This simply complicated the Turkish difficulties, so they were only allowed to land as pilgrims, bound to leave the country in a specified time. It is now rumored here that this difficulty is removed by the Jews paying the handsome sum of fifty million francs for the privilege of entering to settle.

Radical changes will no doubt be effected before the real gathering takes place. Something more certain and stable must replace the present doubtful state of affairs. A government opposed to all progress, and which only reaches out for prey, cannot certainly be a power to protect a downtrodden race in obtaining a foothold in the land of their promise.

The Turkish mission is moving on slowly, but we hope surely. Many of our brethren interested in its progress have perhaps wondered at its stubborn refusal to shine out brightly; but there are many reasons. Much has to be learned by the Elders formerly unacquainted with a language not easily acquired, and there are no publications for distribution to assist in combating the many wilful lies so studiously circulated by the missionaries of so-called "Christian" denominations. Still we have a membership of about twenty, with four Elders from Zion and a small local force in the field. Here in Palestine the prospects are not very good at present, but in Asia Minor they are better, the Armenians being open to conviction and willing to hear and investigate. Among that people we have already several good Saints.

F. F. HINTZE.

HAIFA, March 19th, 1889.