

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE SOCIETY ISLAND MISSION.

Messengers of the Gospel are sent to a great many lands in this latter-day dispensation, yet it is doubtful if any find their way to more secluded parts than those who are sent to the Society Island mission. Papeete, which is on the island of Tahiti, is the headquarters for this mission. Tahiti, which is near the geographical center of these groups, is in latitude 18 degrees south and 151 degrees west longitude from Paris. It lies midway between the continents of South American and Australia, a thirty days' voyage by sail from San Francisco and from a three to a five months' voyage from Europe.

This field covers a very extensive territory, including all of the French possessions in the South Pacific, taking within its range the following groups or archipelagoes: Marquisas, Tubuai, Tuamotu, Tahiti and Cook, comprising in all about 110 islands, with a population of about 35,000, including soldiers and whites. No effort has been made as yet to teach the Gospel to the foreigners, the work of proselyting and teaching being confined entirely to the natives. None of the above named groups have been thoroughly canvassed, and the inhabitants of some of them, as the Marquisas and Cook groups, have never heard the Gospel. President D. T. Miller is making strenuous efforts to have it carried to these islands, consequently an increased number of Elders is being sent to this mission.

Previous to the past two years the French government seemed to manifest a great antipathy toward the efforts of the Elders, but since that time much of the distrust has been alleviated. At present, the efforts of the Latter-day Saints are not altogether genial to the French officials and citizens, yet it is true that they do not seriously interfere with us.

The natives here have a natural sympathy for religion, and when they have not been corrupted or prejudiced by the white traders they give a willing ear to Christian missionaries. As a result of these religious tendencies among the natives, the various outside denominations have found it very profitable business to send their ambassadors here. These islands, indeed, have been green pastures for them. The Protestants were the first in the field, having come here in the latter part of the last century. They succeeded in getting a strong following. The Catholics have many followers, especially on Tahiti. It is a very easy matter to observe the teachings of these creeds, consequently they have many votaries. It is very noticeable that the Latter-day Saints among the natives are generally the more ambitious, self-sacrificing and intelligent. The Josephites and Seventh Day Adventists have a sufficient number of listeners to encourage them. The contention for religious supremacy among these islands has been a most vigorous one, fraught with many evils that in many instances have been to the detriment of the passive natives.

There are no missionaries who have succeeded so well in deceiving the natives as the Josephites, who you will remember came to these islands soon after the departure of our first Elders. For a number of years they followed the journeys of the Mormon missionaries, purporting to be Latter-day Saint Elders. By this subterfuge they succeeded in dissuading many of them from their former conversion. On the return of our Elders, the misrepresentations were exposed, and many Saints came back into the fold. A result of the conflict was a confusion to the minds of the natives, many of whom still believe them to be the same. The Elders worked and still are working to dispell the delusions thus created.

The prospects for effectual work are very favorable at present. There are seventeen branches in the mission, three of which are located at Tubuai, and the remaining fourteen on the Tuamotu group. On account of the attitude of the government and the lack of sufficient Elders, the work has been confined to these two groups.

The total enrollment of Saints in the mission is 1,056, most of whom are members of one of the seventeen branches. Of these branches all either have comfortable churches completed or in process of erection. These churches are built of stone and lumber, and the native "nian" wood. Heretofore it has seemed well nigh impossible to get an opening on Tahiti, which long has been an impregnable stronghold for other faiths. At the April conference past the good Saints of the Tuamotus donated about \$600 to be used in constructing a meeting house near Papeete, in Fautahua. A piece of land has been deeded to the Church by one of the brothers.

There are thirteen Elders laboring in the mission at present. Of this number eight are on the island of Tahiti, studying the language preparatory to departing to their respective fields. They are: President D. T. Miller and Elders L. H. Kennard, E. T. Hatch, I. E. Willey, Wm. Chipman, Edgar L. Cropper, Wm. H. Chamberlain and Wm. McGregor. Elder Alonzo Smith and David Neff are laboring in the upper conference of the Tuamotus, and George F. Despain in the lower conference of the same group, and Elders Fred Rossiter and Alexander Curtis in Tubuai. Elder Rossiter has been released to return home and Elder E. L. Cropper is appointed to labor at Tubuai. Elder Hatch has been appointed to labor in the lower conference of the Tuamotus. Elders L. H. Kennard, Wm. Chipman, I. E. Willey, W. H. Chamberlain and William McGregor will remain in the Tahitian group until some are dispatched to open new fields. Four new Elders are expected to arrive before the close of the present year. It is thought by our president to be a commendable plan for the advancement of Saints and Elders if we have a conference of Elders once a year at Tahiti, at which time we will be redistributed to our various fields. I. E. WILLEY.

FROM SWEDEN'S CAPITAL

Stockholm, Sweden, Sept. 17, 1897.—I have visited the great northern exhibition here in company with a young merchant from Philadelphia, G. A. Hullings, who saw the World's Fair in Chicago, and on his authority I can state that the fair here compares very favorably with that great show in everything but dimensions. Here chiefly the three Scandinavian countries are represented, but their exhibits are numerous and it is evident that they have followed closely the progress of the world's industries and arts while in a few things they take the lead, as for instance in the matter of "slojd."

The exposition is held at Djurgården, the famous summer resort of Stockholm. The expenses were estimated at about 3,000,000 kronor, and this is said to have been more than

covered, so the fair enjoys the distinction of being the only enterprise of its kind that has been undertaken without loss to somebody. But then it is under the leadership of many prominent men. The crown prince is chairman of the central committee; Prince Eugene has charge of the art exhibition and the lord mayor of the city is the general commissioner.

To give a detailed account of the various buildings and pavilions would be impossible in a brief correspondence, and would also serve no particular purpose; but I may permitted to mention a few of the leading features. One is a faithful imitation of a section of Stockholm as it appeared in the sixteenth century. This is the work of Architect Lilljekvist, who has closely studied ancient drawings and still extant historical sketches of the ancient city in order to give a correct representation of his subject. As a consequence the city appears to the spectator reflecting its walls and towers in the waters of the Norrström. We cross the bridge over to Helgeandsholmen, where we enter the old historical hospital and perhaps the other houses there erected. Two bridges now lead to the city. One takes us to the royal castle and the other to Mynttorget. We cross the latter and pass up Smedjegatan. On both sides of this narrow and winding street we find shops where mechanics are at work in their various trades much as they were hundreds of years ago. There are numerous taverns where refreshments are served by girls in medieval costumes, and business is brisk. Also fortune tellers have their establishments and are well patronized. An interesting house is that once inhabited by the celebrated Swedish reformer Olaf Petri. To make the scenes here still more realistic, citizens in ancient costumes are seen in the streets. At times street disturbances are arranged. They are checked by guards armed with long spears. I need hardly say that this part of the exposition is one of its great attractions.

Another one is the so-called fairy grotto. A bridge leads to this. Having crossed the bridge we enter a boat rowed by a "fairy" in picturesque Dalcarnia costume, and the voyage commences. We first glide into a low cavern, rather dark, and feel for a moment that we are swallowed up by the earth. The boat glides on, though, winding its way through various passages until it comes to a cavern where we seem to be surrounded by shining silver. The effect is wonderful. On we go again and enter a cavern lit up by a wierd, bluish light. Water lilies in gaudy colors are floating on the surface. There are six different caverns, all built in different style and bewildering in their arrangement. Here a cascade throws its shining spray down a mountain side, there a geyser lit up by electric light is playing its subdued tunes, and there a sea monster with arc lamps for eyes is staring at you as if for the purpose of throwing a spell over you.

The principal building on the grounds is Industrial Hall, occupying a surface of 15,000 square meters. It is a structure in oriental style, with its cupola and minarets, tastily decorated in light colors. It is said to be the largest wooden building in the world. It contains fine specimens of the industry of the northern countries, including Russia and Finland.

The Machine Hall is another stupendous building, the crystal palace of the exhibition. I do not suppose it contains much (if anything) that is not known in the United States, the real home of inventions, but only an expert could judge as to that.

The Art Hall is an interesting part of the exhibition. It contains a vast