

## FROM THE MISSIONARY FIELDS.

Letter from Nazareth.

Haifa, Palestine, May 17, 1898.

The country around the ancient city of Jerusalem is a hard looking land. Go whichever way you will and the country shows great volcanic boulders strewn thickly over the ground. Here and there a field or basin may be found fit for cultivation, but the majority of the hills of Judea are covered with these great boulders and even solid cliffs. The first impressions that a western person obtains of this country is that it is none too good for the miserable Arabs who inhabit it. They live hard and their nature seems to have become as unimpressible as the rocks of the hills. This view of the situation will do for those who have no interest in the land beyond seeing it and visiting its shrines, and then returning to what seems to them a better and more favored country. But there is another side to this important question. All who believe in the Bible, know that it was once a choice land and much blessed of the Lord. And indications are that it was about as stony then as now. The land must have possessed some interesting and peculiar features, or Abraham and Isaac and Jacob would not have felt so pleased with the gift the Lord bestowed on them. Moses, the man of God, was so eager to see the land that he went on Mt. Nebo, where the Lord showed him the whole land. Surely the land did possess great riches in its climate, which is so perfect that most all kinds of grain and many fruits do well here. Just how many varieties they had we do not know, but they had several of which their grapes were enormous, needing two men to carry one bunch.

It is not the purpose to treat in this article of the past as much as of the present. There is an effort among the Latter-day Saints to understand just what the Lord intends to do about settling the land of Palestine, and what are the present prospects of livelihood here. The first and great question with us is, then, has the time come? When the Lord settles this question through the proper authorities, the other part of it will be made comparatively easy. Nevertheless, it is pleasant to know that there are preparations going on all the time. Many years ago the Prophet Joseph Smith sent Apostle Orson Hyde, to dedicate the land for the gathering of the House of Israel. Afterwards President Brigham Young sent his counselor, George A. Smith and Apostle Lorenzo Snow and others to visit the land, and it was again dedicated and blessed. Since that day there has been a gradual tendency among many Jews to return to this land. They are, however, prevented by the Turkish government from coming in in large numbers; hence they are not increasing very fast, and still, all things considered, it is probably fast enough, as they buy land and get here anyhow on the plan of the ever powerful backslish.

Besides the Jews, there is a hardy band of Germans, known as the Temple society, who have felt it their duty to help build up the waste places. Their society is now crumbling for the want of proper leadership and laws necessary to carry out such an important work. Their young men seeing no future here, leave for Germany and America leaving the widows and many an old maid behind to pine away in loneliness.

No matter what may be the mistakes of these people, we are not here to arraign them for such, but rather to profit by their example and do better

when our turn comes. And we ought to do better. We have a very wide experience in colonization. We have the only solid and durable organization on earth, the revealed plan from heaven with its promise of its remaining with us. Then why not do better when God gives His sanction, and we exert our will and talent influenced by His Holy Spirit.

One of the great points made by these Germans, is the possibility of turning the barren wastes into a fruitful vineyard or field. They may not have become rich, but they have lived, and most of those who came for a purpose have remained, and in the face of all opposition, have made beautiful homes.

At Jerusalem they bought in some property just south of the city, below the elbow of the Gihon and Hinnon on a small plan. They at once set about building fine houses and planting trees and treating the country as a la Alamanz. In some respects it was all right; in others it was not; and those who were not too set in their ways had to change. At Jaffa they located on the sand banks of the Mediterranean, where they started orange groves and lemon groves; the place was not healthy but they improved it by planting the cypress and the encalypsus and other trees. They are very methodical in their work, hence their places are all in good order and are a very good example for the Arabs.

Here in Haifa they have made a little paradise of the north slope of Mt. Carmel. They have laid out a colony the main street of which runs nearly north and south. On either side they have built very nice residences. Shade trees, both useful and ornamental are flourishing up and down the street, and around the gardens, so that the colony looks like a garden and is visited daily by the Arabs from Haifa proper, the colony being to them a park, handy for a promenade. Not being a florist, I cannot tell you all the different kinds of flowers growing in the flower beds, but I see nearly all the varieties commonly grown in pots in our homes in Utah. I see the oleander growing and blooming richly in the gardens. A great number of trees grow without any water except that which is supplied during the rainy season. As such the cypress towers up stately, the olive, the fig, the almond, the locust of which John the Baptist evidently ate (not a grasshopper), and many ornamental trees at home in this oriental country can be seen making this little spot quite attractive. This has been accomplished by energy and faith, and they have shown us that they can live and be happy and satisfied. They have a soap factory. They press olives, make a fine grade of oil and soap from pure olives. Much of their products are sent to the United States. Export of wheat is good also.

But coming back to the immediate products of the colony: In their gardens may be seen onions, potatoes, rutabagas, corn, and other vegetables, all growing without irrigation; they would probably do better with a little water, but as there is no water for irrigation they get along without it. On the mountain their industry has made a great showing. Acres of the hardest looking country ever laid out doors are now converted into beautiful wine-laden vineyards. It is said the wine industry is not a paying one, but that is owing to the market and not because of the failure of the once barren and parched hills in producing their yield.

Olives grow there fine. Almonds, figs and other kindred fruits get along without the rain the country supplies. The essence of success is to understand how to terrace and build the vineyard so that the moisture precipitated can be kept in the Mount. The country around Jerusalem is being gradually ruined by the Arabs in this way. There being no fuel to speak of the fellows dig out the roots of the brush on the side hills and among the rocks and carry them to the cities to sell. This exposes the soft earth to the heavy rainfall which in its torrent carries it down into the ravines and some of it to the ocean. This is damaging to the country. The little soil found among the rocks ought to remain. In many places it needs being carried up, and undoubtedly it has been carried up in places; even now they make land that way.

These advantages and mistakes are all made plain by these Germans. If they committed the error in buying little land and making the little they bought nice, we can benefit from it by seeing what they have done, and feel encouraged that we will not tumble into these mistakes that will cause our sons to seek other countries for homes after once located on the promised soil.

In speaking to the acting United States consul in Haifa I was told that the people here were but little in debt and that they did moderately well owing to the call for transportation in the country which they furnished. If then these people without the direct word of God can do as they have how much better will it not be for those who are led immediately by the guidance of the Priesthood of the Son of God?  
F. T. HINTZE.

Letter from Haifa.

Haifa, Syria, April 28, 1898.

As the last few days have been spent in looking over this country on and around Mt. Carmel, both to the south, about the Crocodile river, and to the east and northeast of the Mt. up the Kishon and on the plains of Jezreel, it would probably interest the readers of the "News" to know something about the health of the country in general.

In speaking of the health of this country we must necessarily touch upon village life.

Customs, a subject which has two sides, the nicer, however, being so small that it takes a great deal of magnifying to see it or a great deal of stretch of imagination to know that it exists. Really village life in Palestine is so filthy that it cannot well be described with polite language. As a rule the people are poor. And then they have poor ways which also make poor people.

You may read about Orientals being clad in silks but we don't see it among villagers in Palestine. They do well to get less expensive goods. Often a poor wretch is seen who can scarcely cover his nakedness, the generality of them being well off when dressed in some good cotton garment with a woolen wrap. And what good would silken goods be to them? Their houses are mere huts, dirty in the extreme on the outside, and smoky and poorly arranged on the inside. The village itself has no streets, it has only narrow crooked lanes with many corners and turns each of which furnish a place for human convenience either male or female. Children and dogs are excepted. They enjoy the open street everywhere so that between the animals and humans of a village its narrow, uncomely passages are so filthy that one can only pass by picking his way carefully. What need have they of silken dresses under such circumstances, even though they could afford them? And