

Hawaiian Gazette Supplement, March 2, 1881.

Cane Planting in the Mauritius.

HONOLULU, Feb. 17th. 1881.

EDITOR GAZETTE:—We send you enclosed for publication copy of a letter received by the last mail from John Horne, Esq., Superintendent of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Mauritius. It was in reply to one written by us at the request of Mr. Geo. C. Williams, the Manager of Kohala Plantation, and contains valuable information derived from experience in Mauritius, which may be valuable to our planters. The method of recuperating the land and the cane at Kohala has been similar to that named by Mr. Horne.

Yours truly, CASTLE & COOK.

ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS, MAURITIUS, November 20, 1881.

MESSRS. CASTLE & COOK, HONOLULU, H. I.
Dear Sirs:—I only received your favor dated July 2nd, 1880, and was sorry to learn of the deterioration of the Lohaina cane with you. The cause, too much wet and cold, which you attribute to this is sufficient to account for it, as a continuation of cold, wet, cloudy weather during the period when the canes were ripening, would prevent the formation of saccharine in the juices of the plant. In like cases, here, the planters simply stop crushing for a time, and allow the canes to get a month or two of sunshiny weather, which improves the juice of the cane.

Perhaps there may have been another cause—but you do not mention it—namely, the exhaustion of the soil by close and too frequent cropping. For this, guano and some kinds of artificial manures are used here. But resting the land for periods of several years at a time, and pasturing cattle on it, and applying good cattle yard manure to the canes are far better—for permanent results—than many of the above manures. These act as stimulants, and as such they are useful at certain epochs in the growth of the cane; but they do not return to the soil the things which a heavy crop of cane takes out of it. Were I a planter, I would only use them combined with cattle yard manure, and apply them to the cane at the time when the young canes had formed stools, and were ready to elongate: having previously formed the base of what was to be the future cane. The cane here is subject to several diseases. In one of these, after a certain period of growth the leaves become white. Another is that the leaves become short and rigid, like those of a bamboo, and the cane almost ceases to grow. For these there is no cure that can be applied on a large scale; and the only thing to be done is to get new varieties from other countries. The cause is probably owing to the roots taking up matter which cannot be digested by the leaves; and the first would appear to be an absence of chlorophyll in the plant, or that the plant from some cause loses at a certain period of its age, the power of assimilating it from other bodies. Through the action of the planters on the government of this colony, a very large variety of canes have been introduced into it from other countries, notably from Java, New Caledonia, Fiji, and the Hawaiian Islands, and Polynesia in general.

Some intelligent person has been sent to collect and forward these to this place. On their arrival here, they are planted on a suitable bit of land, and propagated, &c., under a responsible person. When a sufficient number of a variety is propagated, the canes are then sold to the planters—so many to each estate, and whatever number may be left over to the first planter that comes for them. This sale is to defray expenses of introduction and propagation. The government advances the money, and is repaid by sales of new kinds of canes introduced.

Your labor vessels might bring you many sorts from all the islands in Polynesia, which they visit. On the windward side of this island canes grow well up to an elevation of about 1,500 feet above the sea, and on the leeward, or dry side, to about 1,500 feet above the level of the sea. In such places plant-canes take about two years or thirty months to reach maturity, and ratoons about eighteen months to two years. In these localities the thermometer, in the cool season, descends to about 45° or 50° Fah. at night, with a day temperature of from 62° to 72° in the shade.

I will take an opportunity of a vessel for Sydney to send you a case of the best sugar yielding canes of this country. In the mean time, I will be obliged if you would kindly send me, through sample post, about one pound of seeds of the *Albizia tree*, (*Albizia algricola*), which grows abundantly about Honolulu. I remain, dear Sirs, Yours most respectfully,
JOHN HORNE.

Letter from Waialua.

EDITOR GAZETTE:—Not the least among the several beautiful rides from Honolulu, is that to Waialua. The distance is twenty-eight miles, the last seventeen of which are especially interesting. This latter part of the road at an altitude of about 800 feet, is over long, undulating plateaux, separated one from the other by deep ravines, which skirted from the ocean on either side by high ranges of mountains give the whole scene the aspect of a very broad pass.

All the way, which two and a half years ago was dry and parched, and stock could be seen dying of starvation at nearly every step, is now luxuriant with a growth of rich grass and the cattle seem to look most suspiciously at everyone who approaches as though he were a butcher.

Just before the descent to Waialua is commenced, the view is perfectly charming. From this point one commands nearly the whole valley with its numerous houses nestling among the beautiful foliage, ever green cane fields and frequent streams with their graceful windings. Added to this is the long stretch of sea beach, which is at present constantly white with foam.

In former times Waialua was a favorite place of resort of the chiefs, and even now they are sometimes seen here. Much of the land belongs still to the "Kamakūis," and this last year I hear of sad complaints coming from their tenants. They say on account of the exorbitant rent demanded of them, many have been as yet unable even to pay their taxes, which is a fact, is only a further verification of the remark, one frequently hears, "that the Hawaiians themselves are the hardest of all others upon their own people, and when they have the power, rule with a degree of oppression little short of tyranny;" yet still the foreigners must take the brunt of all their misfortunes.

The ubiquitous "John" is at last getting a firm foothold in Waialua. For a long time there was a united and determined stand against him, but the temptation of high rents induced the natives to part with their taro patches, their only means of subsistence, and now taro and poi is fast becoming scarce.

It has been a notorious fact that nearly all the best lands of Ewa were long ago under the control of Chinese, and it was hoped that the Waialua people would be effectually warned against their encroachments. If the Hawaiians could only be impressed with the facts recorded in history of past nations, if they could see how a cognate race to the Chinese poured down upon the borders of the most illustrious of governments, how they stood meekly at the frontier door supplicating admittance and asking protection, and offering in return their true allegiance, and how soon they shamelessly outraged the confidence reposed in them, and the short time that elapsed when they conferred the Roman diadem, on whom they pleased they would surely strenuously oppose this deadly influx.

The Iao Valley, Maui.

EDITOR GAZETTE:—One of the beauties of Maui is Iao Valley, at Wailea, and those who are thinking of going to see Yosemite may be amply repaid by coming here instead. So I bought a party of six ladies and gentlemen who took the trip up the valley last Friday. An hour's ride brought them to a most delightful spot where the cliffs rose almost perpendicularly to a great height and the water sparkled at their feet on its way to the cane fields and the sea. There they spread their lunch among the luxuriant ferns, made their wreaths, and were happy and returned thoroughly refreshed, and I would say to all who seek a grand, fine view scenery, go ye and do likewise.

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