THE LANGUAGE OF HAWAI.*

I.

Engaged in the work of geodesy and astronomy, the author of this paper made several trips to the Hawaiian Islands. Although little attention could be given to ethnological or linguistic studies on account of professional duties, contact with the natives incidentally brought out points which seemed interesting.

Struck by the occurrence of peculiar grammatical forms, and finding unusual mental habits among the Kanakas induced by their ethical ideas, it was thought worth while to briefly note these facts. Parallels have been drawn between Polynesian and European constructions, and, as bearing on the formation of language, some incidents are related illustrating characteristic lines of thought.

Grateful acknowledgment is here made to Dr. Cyrus Adler of the Smithsonian Institution, for valuable suggestions as to the arrangement of the material.

I.—INTRODUCTION.

Geographical Limits of Languages considered.—The establishment of the Oceanic family of speech has been characterized by Max Müller as one of the most brilliant discoveries in the science of language. Both on account of the wide geographical limits involved and the scanty basis of com-