Jenson's Travels.

LETTER NO. 111.

Having secured passage to Naples, Italy, on the line Orient Company's steamer "Oroya" I sailed from Sydney, New South Wales, on Monday May 4th, 1896, bound for the "old world." Among the thousands of people who came down to Circular Quay to see friends off, the only one for whom I had any special interest was Elder Jedediah Grant, who kept me company to the last. I had a pleasant passage to Melbourne, Victoria, a distance of nearly six hundred miles, where we arrived in the afternoon of Wednesday the 6th. The next day I found Elder Joseph Stephenson, who had been laboring alone in the colony of Victoria since Elder George W. Lowe, his former companion, left a short time ago. Elder Stephenson has been suffering with weak eyes for many months, which has been a great annoyance to him; but he appears to belong to that class of Elders, who would rather sacrifice his health than make a failure of his mission; and consequently he has taken a stand which could hardly justify the president of the mission to release him on account of ill health. His time, however, has now nearly expired, and he will be able to return home with honor to himself and family. Elder Edward A. Carr, who is to be his companion for a short time, arrived in Melbourne on the 8th, and made the cabin of Footscray his temporary home. Brother Stephenson himself occupies a rented room in North Melbourne, where most of his labors during the last few months have been directed.

During my three days sojourn in Melbourne I made myself very busy in rolling from the old branch records, and proving up historical dates from old files of newspapers at the public library. Elder John Murdock was the first of our Elders who brought the fulness of the Gospel to the colony of Victoria. He arrived in Melbourne in December, 1852, but unable to obtain a footing, he soon afterwards returned to Sydney. The next year Elder Charles W. Wandell came, and, after diligent labors, succeeded in raising up a branch of the Church in Melbourne. Other Elders followed, and other branches came into existance, among which one at Belfast (a sinking town about one hundred miles inland, which flourished for a short time only, as most of the members emigrated to zion. From Melbourne the work also spread to Sydney, New South Wales; but the ceiling home of the Elders in 1857 and 1858, stopped the further progress of missionary work for many years. In 1885 the late Elder John L. Blythe reopened the field assisted by the Elders, he reorganized the Melbourne branch, and raised up a new branch at Harcourt, for the northwest, which had an organized existance till last year when the president of the branch (Brother Cox) emigrated to Zion with his family, and there is now only one family belonging to the Church in that locality. The present branch in Melbourne is small, but regular cottage meetings are held and the prospects are fair for a further growth. An old Elder Robert D. Beauchamp who never returned to Utah, from whence he was sent on a missionary about 1860, died in a benevolent institution, at Geelong, September 7th, 1890. Geelong is a city situated on Port Phillip bay, about twenty-five miles southwest of Melbourne. Elder Samuel Charlton is now the local president of the Melbourne branch.

Melbourne is the metropolis and seat of government of the colony of Victoria. Its center lies in 37° 49' 53" south latitude, 144° 57' 42" east longitude. Melbourne is so named after Lord Melbourne, who was premier of Great Britain at the time it was founded. In 1836 the present site of Melbourne was known as Beargarse or Iscarpet and on the 10th of June of that year it was named thirteen buildings. The growth of the town during the past half a century has been most extraordinary, having developed from a mere village into the prime center of the British possessions with a handful of settlers to one of the large cities of the world, having an area of 200 acres and a population of one million, and property of the real value of nearly £1,000,000. Melbourne contains some of the finest buildings I have ever seen, and a number of very large business establishments. Among the latter is the so-called Cole's Arcade, which is supposed to be the largest book store in the world. It has about a million books on its numerous shelves, a very large assortment of general stationary stock is kept on hand, and sold both at wholesale and retail. The streets of Melbourne, generally speaking, are wide, straight and regular and cross in other at right angles; though only a part of them, and that particularly those in the suburbs, are made to conform to the cardinal points of the compass. The extensive government buildings, breakwater docks, excellent water system, electric light works, public institutions, etc., are features of great attraction to the stranger who visits the city. A most excellent library connected with an extensive museum and a fine art gallery, all collected and artistically arranged in one large building situated on Swanston Street speaks volumes of praise in behalf of an enterprising community. The municipality of Melbourne only embraces a small portion of the metropolis. Like Sydney the majority of the inhabitants live in suburban towns, which have separate town or municipal governments. The town proper is distant about three miles from Port Melbourne or Hobson's bay, where all the large steamers lie up. Some of the smaller vessels go up the Yarra river to points closer in the city centre.

The colony of Victoria, of which Melbourne is the capital, is situated at the southeast of the continent of Australia, and lies between the parallels of 34° and 39° south latitude, and meridians 141° and 150° east longitude. The largest river in Australia is the Murray, which separates Victoria from the colony of New South Wales. The extreme length of the colony from east to west is about 400 miles; its greatest breadth about 400 miles, and its area 87,884 miles, or 56,245,760 acres, which is about the size of Utah. The coast line, broken by several bays and capes, is about 500 geographical miles. A range of mountains traverses the entire length of the colony, dividing it into two unequal parts; the highest peak has an elevation of 6,508 feet above the level of the sea. The population of Victoria at the close of 1895 was 1,170,330, of which 457,135 or more than one-third, resided in the city of Melbourne and vicinity, which is the seat of government of Greater Melbourne, and includes nine city municipalities, five town governments and a number of intermediate county or shire organizations. Victoria enjoys the distinction of being the greatest protectionist colony on earth. Protection is carried in this organ in very much like that believed in and practiced by the Republican part of the United States of America. On the other hand, New South Wales, its neighbor on the northeast, has lately been made a free trade colony; and consequently the future prosperity of the two colonies will be watched with the greatest interest by all the British possessions and America. And, in my estimation, it will be a final test case in deciding whether Australia ought to be a free trade or a protected country. Victoria is the smallest of all the Australian colonies in point of area, but the second in importance in point of population.

ALBANY, West Australia, May 6th, 1896.

SAN JUAN CONFERENCES.

The Stake, Sunday Schools, Special Improvement and Primary Associations and Relief Society Held Meetings.

MANCOS, Colo., August 22, 1896.—Our Stake conference has just closed, and we have had a very enjoyable time. Conference convened here on Saturday, the 22nd inst. Being a very busy time of the year, the attendance was not as large as usual. Among those present were President F. A. Hammond, Counselor William Halls, three Bishops and quite a number of the High Council.

We had expected visitors to our conference from Salt Lake, but as none had arrived at 10 o'clock Saturday morning, it looked as though we were doomed to disappointment.

Elders Hammond and Halls occupied the time Saturday forenoon, relating the labors in regard to their duties.

Saturday afternoon reports were called for from the Bishops of the several wards. With these were being given, and about 4 p.m., we were all very agreeably surprised to see Brother George Goddard come walking into the aisle to the stand. He had being aware of having to lay over at Ouray, had not ventured on being so long on the road, but unexpectedly arrived here just twenty-four hours later than he expected. After the reports were all given, Brother Goddard spoke a short time, and we felt that the Lord in his late appearance, and fulness by singing an song out of his little book. How that book and that well well-known author have led us back to childhood days, when many a time and oft we have listened with rapt attention to those very songs, sung to the tune familiar home.

At 4 p.m. on Saturday the Stake quarterly conference adjourned sine die to give way for the annual Sunday School conference.

Saturday at 7 p. m. a Primary meeting was held at the meeting house, and a meeting of the officers of the Relief Society and Y. L. M. I. A. at the residence of Bishop Geo. Halls.

The Sunday school conference commenced at 10 a. m. Sunday, after the opening exercises were over and the Sacrament was administered the Articles of Faith were recited in concert by the school, after which came reports from Stake and ward superintendents; then the Lord's prayer was recited in concert, which was followed by a class exercise by the second intermediate class, conducted by Brother H. M. Taylor. They have been studying the Sunday school lesson the past few months, and their exercise combined a review of what they have read and very creditably given. The concert also furnished an appropriate song, which was well rendered.

Brother Taylor then addressed the children in his inimitable style. He spoke in regard to the small hymn book, said we want all the boys to learn to sing so that when they are called on missions they may be able to sing our hymns, and by that means become successful in gaining the attention of the people. Spoke on the subject of honesty and temperance; complimented the children on the good order they had maintained; and in all of his remarks he had nothing but a word of praise for the children kept better order; closed his remarks by singing "Do Our Lovely Deseret," the children joining in the chorus.

On resuming at 2 p. m. the house was crowded, quite a number of our outlying friends being present. After the opening exercises President Hammond bore testimony to the Gospel and the great work in which the Saints are engaged in building up Zion. Elder Charles Wards of Salt Lake City, recently returned from a mission in Pennsylvania, and Elder Lewis Burnham of Burnham ward, New Mexico, just home from a mission to the Samoan Islands, being present, were called to the stand in the place of Professor Halls' remarks. They each bore a strong testimony to the truth of the Gospel, and testified to the joy and satisfaction they had felt in performing their missionary labors. Both had been blessed and prospered. Elder Mains had the privilege of assisting in baptizing twenty-six souls. After these brethren were through speaking, Elder Goddard occupied the remainder of the time in giving an interesting account of his mission to the South, and his early experience in the Church. He was listened to with the greatest attention by all, and certainly every one must have been impressed with the touching story, told in such a simple, straightforward manner. At the close of his remarks Brother Goddard took out his book and announced that he wants sing "Who's on the Lord's side?" He then singing the last verse he requested all who were on the Lord's side to stand during the remainder of the meeting and keeping the motion. They were all on the Lord's side, or enough they were, for all rose in their feet and raised hands in the motion.

At 7 p. m. the Y. M. M. I. A. exercises were held, presided over by M. M. Hall. Reports were given from the various associations, exercises followed by the reading of a paper, which was read by the newly elected president, after which Brother Goddard sang "Gilead Thus come again to mind."

Monday at 10 a. m. a meeting of the High Council was held, and at 10 a. m. of the same day the quarterly conference of the Primary association was held. There was a large attendance of children present, and exercises went off pretty well. The exercises consisted of songs, recitations and answering questions from the Life of Joseph Smith. President Hammond and Brother Goddard talked to the children, and, of course, Brother Goddard sang the children another song, which pleased them very much.

The Relief Society conference was held at 2 p. m., President Martha Hammond presiding. The various branches were reported, and timely instructions given by the president and several of the brethren, and an interesting time was had by the sisters. President Hammond was called upon to sing a song, which pleased them very much.

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