

MISCELLANEOUS.

Written for this Paper.

JENSON'S TRAVELS.

LETTER NO. LI.

Saturday, February 22nd, 1896. Some time after midnight the Teavaroa arrived in the vicinity of Manihi, after which she "stood off and on" till morning, when we approached the passage by the village. The boat was lowered and among those who landed were Elder Cutler and myself. The inhabitants, who were nearly all Josephites were ut in force and lined the stone wharf as we landed. After the usual handshaking all around, we were conducted to one of the houses, where the people gathered around and a long religious conversation was soon commenced and kept up for hours. Wirimau, a native Josephite missionary of considerable ability, took his side of the question of succession, but was badly whipped on every point which he himself acknowledged, as he was confronted with such historical evidence as he had not known before. Judging from his statements in the white Josephite missionaries, in order to carry their point with the natives in the Tuamotu islands have made use of such lies and glaring falsehoods in regard to the true Church as would have put a Missouri mobocrat to shame in the thirties. Shame to such a mode of procedure! These poor natives, who for so many years had been left to themselves without a single Elder from America to advise them, were not in a position to judge as to the correctness of what they were told by these emissaries, who represented themselves as Elders of the same church to which Elders Addison Pratt, Benjamin Grouard and co-laborers belonged. But they no doubt forgot to tell that their so-called reorganized church did not have an existence till 1860, while Elder Pratt and his companions representing the true church performed their missionary labors on the Pacific islands from 1844 to 1852.

One instance was related to me by Elder Cutler where some money was gathered by the natives for missionary purposes. Both our Elders and the Josephite missionaries were represented. When a donation is made by the natives it is customary for the leading men to make a little speech explaining the donation about to be made and the motive that has prompted the same. On the occasion referred to, the man who made the speech was very particular to explain that the donation was intended for the representatives of that same church which Elder Addison Pratt and companions had established upon the islands. Upon which the Josephite preacher deliberately stepped forth and claimed the money, got it and kept it. If this is not getting money under false pretenses, I would like to know what is! The Josephites on Manihi are making great preparations for holding a conference there in April. They have built a large eating house, and expect a great feast on the occasion. They claim a membership of 102 on Manihi, which are nearly all the inhabitants of the island. Elder Cutler and I returned to the ship for dinner with the boat which was landing merchandise and shipping cobra; but we landed again in the after-

noon when we took a long walk around the motu on which the village stands, and also looked for shells on the seashore. Returning to the village, we had another long conversation with Wiriamu and others, and went on board with the last boat just after sundown. Soon after that we sailed toward the south, returning to Apataki. The wind was again in our favor, and we made good time. The moon beamed beautifully upon us, and the voyage was pleasant.

The island of Manihi (also called Waterland Island) is sixteen miles long from southwest to northeast and six wide; its east end lies in latitude 140° 23' south, longitude 145° 52' west. It is also sixty miles west of Takaroa, ninety miles northwest of Rotoava, Fakarava, and 280 miles northeast of Tahiti. The coral reef at the west end of Manihi is quite broad; some of the motus are half a mile wide and several miles long and well covered with cocoanut trees. The boat passage where we went in and out is near the west end of the island on the south side; it is the only passage leading from the ocean to the lagoon.

Sunday, February 23rd. About 1 o'clock in the night we had arrived off the coast of Apataki, which island lies about twenty miles northeast of Kaukura and twenty five miles southeast of Arutua, and we now stood off and on till morning. About 8 o'clock we passed through a narrow passage between two motus on the west side of Apataki, and near the north end of the island, into the lagoon; thence the ship turned to the left and cast anchor close to a motu where the ship's boat landed with thirteen of the natives, besides Elder Cutler and myself. While we Elders took a bath in the ocean and read from our books under the shade of a cocoanut tree, the natives gathered about 300 dozen kavaka eggs, filling eleven or twelve good sized boxes and barrels. This bird, which is considerable smaller than an ordinary pigeon, is very plentiful on some of the Tuamotue. Its eggs are spotted and exceedingly large (nearly the size of chicken's eggs) for a bird of that size; and each bird only lays one egg at each breeding season which it deposits in the coral sand in places where the brush growth is small and scattered. This being the season for hatching the islet seemed literally covered with eggs, and as the natives approached with their boxes and barrels bent on robbing the poor birds, these flew up by the tens of thousands and then kept flying to and fro overhead until the sun was virtually darkened by their great numbers; and some of them while making hideous noises came in uncomfortable close proximity to the heads of those who were willfully destroying their prospects of offspring. Some of the birds, which are good for eating, were killed by the sailors, who also caught some fish and gathered a quantity of cocoanuts to take on board.

After spending about three hours on the uninhabited islet, we returned to the ship about 3 p. m. Soon afterwards anchor was weighed and we sailed back to the ocean the same way that we came; and now spent the remainder of the day and the following night sailing to and fro off the west coast of Apataki.

Monday, February 24th. Early in the

morning Elder Cutler and myself landed with the ship's boat at Pakaka, the only village on the island of Apataki. Here we met Mr. Luther Devore a Josephite missionary, and wife. They are from the State of Ohio. We had a long and spirited but friendly conversation, and I found Mr. Devore more consistent and reasonable than most Josephite missionaries that I have conversed with. If he is sincere and honest in heart as he claims to be, he is not apt to remain a Josephite all his days. He did not believe that the Church organized by Joseph Smith the Prophet in 1830 was rejected because of polygamy; but for other causes; and when I showed him the absurdity of some of these causes, he gave in, and agreed with me in that it certainly did not appear reasonable that God, full of love and long suffering and who bore so patiently with the children of Israel and the Nephites of old, would be so hard on his children in the last days as to reject a whole Church indiscriminately merely because a few men in it appeared to do wrong, when it was an acknowledged fact that the great majority were striving to the best of their ability to do right. He laid great stress upon the fact that the Nauvoo Temple was not finished; but acknowledged that even that taken as a chief cause of rejection did not seem to be consistent. For who but God himself is to determine what He means by a reasonable time to finish a Temple in? Are the facts that enemies came upon the Temple builders and drove them away from their home not to be considered? And after all, was not the Temple finished? The answer can be given both in the affirmative and the negative. It was finished sufficiently for blessings to be given in it, and duly dedicated. But if finished means the last coat of paint in the last room and the highest possible polish and finish that can be put on a building on the inside as well as on the outside, then the Nauvoo Temple was never finished. Nor was the Kirtland Temple, nor any other public building (so far as that is concerned) that I know anything about. But if the Church was rejected because the Nauvoo Temple was not finished, then it must have been rejected in the days of Joseph Smith and not afterwards; for it is a historical fact that from the 6th of April 1841, when its cornerstones were laid, until the martyrdom of Joseph Smith on June 27th 1844, a period of nearly three years and three months, the Temple walls were only raised to the windows of the first story; while from the time of the martyrdom till May 24th, 1845, when the capstone was laid, a period of about eleven months, the rest of the walls were built and completed under the direction of Brigham Young and the other Apostles. Then the roof was put on, the attic story and tower built and the Temple finished sufficiently to be publicly dedicated May 1st, 1846. This proves that if there is any blame attached to any one for not pushing the work forward on that building fast enough, it belongs to a date prior to June 27th, 1844; for after that the work progressed so fast and incessantly that people generally were astonished and the Illinois mobocrats alarmed. I claim that it is simply absurd to charge Brigham Young and the Church after Joseph's death with any neglect in regard to the building and finishing of the Nauvoo Temple, and it is doubly absurd to think that the Lord would reject a whole