

MISCELLANEOUS.

Written for this Paper.

JENSON'S TRAVELS.

LETTER NO. XXXV.

Friday, October 11th, 1895. After attending to some necessary business in connection with the transportation of Elders, I commenced my historical labors in Auckland, New Zealand, pertaining to the Australasian Mission, assisted by Elder John Johnson, who is the secretary of the mission. He commenced to act in that capacity a few months ago, when Elder Ben Goddard, the former secretary, returned home from a long and faithful mission.

Saturday, October 12th. I continued my labors of the day previous, and was introduced to Elder Charles Hardy, president of the scattered fragments of what was once the Auckland branch. Brother Hardy embraced the Gospel in 1854, in Australia, and, together with other Saints, sailed from the province of Victoria, April 27th, 1855, on the brig Targuena, bound for America. But the ship sprang a leak and only brought her passengers to Honolulu, Hawaii, where she was declared unfit for further sea service; and the emigrants had to pursue their way from there to America as best they could. Brother Hardy, who was then an unmarried man, succeeded in reaching San Bernardino, California, where he lived for several years; but instead of going to Utah when the San Bernardino Saints migrated thither, Brother Hardy went to England, where he took to himself a wife, and in due course of time wended his way to New Zealand, where he has raised quite a family. After the elapse of many years he saw a Latter-day Saint, meeting advertised in an Auckland paper, which caused the old spirit of Mormonism to come upon him anew, and he made himself known to the Elders, and was in due course of time baptized by Elder John P. Sorenson, of Salt Lake City. Since then he has remained a faithful member of the Church, and has often assisted the mission in a material way, being blessed with some of this world's goods.

Thursday, October 13th. Having occasion to seek retirement while consulting about matters of importance, Elder William Gardner and myself started out on an early morning walk, in the course of which we ascended the famous Mount Eden, an extinct volcano, situated about three miles inland from the business part of Auckland. The mount or hill is about 640 feet high, and the view from its summit is most extensive and magnificent. All around is seen the craters of extinct volcanoes, a careful count footing up the remarkable total of 63, within a radius of five miles, showing what a warm corner of the earth this must have been at some pre-historic date. Auckland, with its beautiful suburbs and splendid harbor, lies spread out at one's feet, and beyond the Waitakeru ranges on one side and the Coromandel on the other, while the extinct volcano, Rangitoto, with its triple cone, dominates the landscape straight ahead. Mount Eden is also interesting in other points. The crater remains a perfect inverted cone, forming a vast amphitheatre, which is sometimes used for mass

meetings of the populace. In older Maori days the hill was a pa or stronghold, and the terraced fortifications are plainly visible on its sides.

Auckland, containing a population of about 51,000, including suburbs, is situated on the shores of Waitemata harbor, a beautiful stretch of water branching from the Hauraki Gulf. The ground upon which the city is built is rolling, and some of the hills are quite steep; but as the streets, instead of crossing each other at right angles, have been laid out so as to conform to the hill slopes, the streets are quite nicely graded. Auckland is the chief port for the trade with the South Pacific Islands. The city was founded by Governor William Hobson, in 1842, and it remained the capital of New Zealand till 1864, when the seat of government was removed to Wellington.

Since October 27th, 1854 Auckland has been known to Latter-day Saint history. On that day Elders Augustus Farnham and William Cook landed in Auckland from Australia, as messengers of truth and salvation to the people of New Zealand, which at that time contained a population of only about 30,000 whites. Auckland only had two or three thousand people in 1854. The Elders, on arriving, found all the houses of accommodation in the city full. In consequence of an influx of emigrants; consequently they had to hire unfurnished apartments to live in. After first visiting the respective ministers or preachers of different denominations, they gave notice by advertisement, of a series of meetings which they intended to hold at the Venetian cottage, (formerly the residence of General Pitt). Their meetings were well attended, and there was considerable inquiry on the part of the people, many of whom purchased books treating upon the principles of the Gospel. After holding several meetings the two Elders proceeded to Onehunga, a small town situated on the Manukau harbor, on the west coast, seven miles from Auckland, intending to hold meetings there; but the early departure of the steamer, on which they were to sail for Wellington, prevented them from preaching there. The first branch of the Church in New Zealand was raised up by William Cook, after the return to Australia of Augustus Farnham, early in 1855, at Karori, near Wellington. I have been unable to learn of any other organization of the Church in New Zealand, till 1867, when Elder Carl C. Asmussen, who had recently embraced the fulness of the Gospel in England, baptized six persons at Kaipoi, near Christ Church, on the South Island, and ordained William Burnett an Elder; but no branch was organized, though meetings were held every Sunday for some time, and others baptized. In 1870, Robert Beauchamp revived the work near Wellington, and in April 1870, a branch, consisting of eighteen members, is reported to exist at Karori, near Wellington, where the former branch of 1855 had been raised up by Elder Cook. On January 8th, 1871, a conference was held at Karori, at which thirty-one adult members of the Church in New Zealand were represented, including four Elders. In the latter part of December, 1871, Elder

Henry Dryden and Brother Joseph Fawcett, with their respective families (eleven souls altogether), sailed from New Zealand, per steamer Nevada. This little company, which seems to be the first Latter-day Saints to emigrate direct to Utah from New Zealand, arrived in Salt Lake City, February 10th, 1872. On December 14th, 1875, Elders Frederick Hurst, Charles Hurst, John T. Rich and William McLachlan landed at Auckland as missionaries from Utah. The arrival of the four Elders and that of Elder Thomas Steed, who was sent over from Australia about the same time, may be termed the commencement of perpetual missionary work in New Zealand, though I believe even after that the field was without representation from Zion once, for a year or more. But though Elders landed at and took their departure from Auckland, no successful missionary work was done in that city till after the arrival of Elder John P. Sorenson of Salt Lake City, on December 16th, 1879. He commenced to preach in Auckland (at the Odd Fellows Hall), January 11th, 1880, and baptized his first converts in that city, February 29th, 1880. A number of others followed, and on June 6th, 1880, he organized a branch of the Church in Auckland, with Elder Wm. John McDonald (the first man baptized), as president. For many years the Auckland branch was strong and lively, though contentions occasionally arose among some of the members. But in due course of time the "cream of the branch" emigrated to Zion; others apostatized, and there are at present only a few scattered members of the organization left. Among those are Sister Harding and family, with whom we held a little meeting on Sunday evening, October 13th. If the branch is not revived in the near future, it will not be the fault of Elders Johnson and Browning, who are laboring with a zeal which their opponents say is worthy of a better cause, to establish the cause of Zion in the beautiful city of Auckland and vicinity.

Monday, October 14th. In perusing the records of the Australasian mission I found that no accounts of the labors of the early missionaries have been preserved; at least, they are not at the headquarters of the mission at the present time. The record, which is known as the mission history, has been well kept since that date. Nearly two hundred missionaries from Zion, have landed on the shores of New Zealand since 1881, of whom upwards of sixty are pleading the cause of truth here at the present time, the bigger half among the Maori people.

The Australasian mission embraces New Zealand, Australia and Tasmania. The New Zealand part of the mission is divided into fifteen districts, of which twelve are Maori and three European districts; though some European missionary work is also carried on in some of the Maori districts. The names of the districts commencing with the north end of the North Island and finishing with the south end of South Island are as follows: Bay of Islands, Whangarei, Auckland, Waikato, Haurakie, Tauranga, Waipapua, Poverty Bay (or Turanganui), Mahia, Hawkes Bay, Manawatu, Wairarapa, Wairau, Canterbury and Otago. The first twelve embrace the North and the three last the South Island. The Auckland, Canterbury and Otago are the three European districts.