

the South arrived, until about twenty Elders and over two hundred Saints were all assembled at the Branch house near Gisborne. An enjoyable meeting or reunion was held on the evening of April 1st, where the sons of Zion sang for joy and rejoiced like school boys out for a holiday. Beds were arranged for the accommodation of the visitors, one bed containing thirteen Elders covering the floor of one room. At sunrise on the morning of the 2nd inst., all were astir, preparing for the onward journey. The bell rang calling the company to morning prayers, and breakfast, after which there was a rush for the horses. Blankets were rolled and placed on the saddles and in a short time the whole company was counted, and ready to ride forth.

The scene reminded the observer of a regiment of cavalry, minus the uniforms, except that the company was improved by being composed of both sexes (many mothers carrying their babes) and instead of the clanking of the weapons of war, they rode forth singing the songs of Zion or merrily conversing together. They galloped along the beach and over the mountain trails for thirty-five miles and halted at Uawa for the Sabbath. Elder C. W. Taylor welcomed the visiting Saints, and all were soon accommodated.

The following day (Sunday) three meetings were held, which were well attended.

Early on Monday the usual routine of bell ringing, prayers, breakfast, etc., was gone through, and again the pilgrimage was resumed, our numbers having nearly doubled. The road from Uawa to Tokomaru Bay, our next stopping place, was over mountain trails, where we rode in single file, often along narrow ledges, passing deep chasms and descending into the bush where the vegetation was so dense that even one horseman could scarcely pass through. In the evening we reach Tokomaru, having traveled thirty miles, where all the people united in extending a welcome to us, and providing us with supper.

Addresses of welcome were delivered by the Rangatiras or chiefs, in the meetinghouse, where about three hundred persons were assembled.

On the morning of the 5th inst. our mounted cavalcade again rode forth with increased numbers, and, reaching a little town named Waipiro, the people greeted us as usual and insisted upon the company halting for refreshments. In a short time pans of meat, potatoes and bread were spread on the ground and we were soon seated, doing justice to the bounteous repast so freely placed before us.

The most encouraging sight was presented to us as we neared the little town of Hiruharama (Jerusalem) twenty miles from Inkomaru, where all the people were outsiders, or members of other churches. The Missionary church is built on an eminence, and could be seen for miles as we traveled up the valley. As we approached, the inhabitants assembled on the top of the hill, and for some distance we could hear their songs of welcome and "Haere Mai" (Come here) and see their waving handkerchiefs and they danced for joy at our approach.

The Union Jack of England and the colonial flag were floating to the breeze, having been hoisted in honor of the visitors, and as we rode three abreast up the hill, the songs, dancing and waving of handkerchiefs continued, and it caused our hearts to beat with gladness, and we could scarcely crowd back the tears at receiving such a cordial reception.

We were invited to remain for the night and our vast company was well cared for. The natives prepared food and presently a procession advanced, singing and dancing as they carried dishes and pans containing an abundance of beef, pork, potatoes and other vegetables, for all the Elders were provided with a large house and comfortably cared for.

Next morning the caravan sallied forth from Hiruharama towards Te Rahui. A horseman rode ahead with the Union Jack, and as we neared our destination our company was marshalled into line, four abreast.

The meeting house was built on an eminence a few miles ahead, near the beach, and the Rangatira or chief came forth to welcome us, waving his handkerchief. We rode steadily forward, four abreast, to the brow of the hill where a strange sight greeted us.

Two groups of natives, in strange costumes, were stationed on the plateau and our company formed a semicircle around them, all remaining on horseback. As we faced them in double columns, the natives commenced their renowned Haka dance. Formerly this was the Maori war dance, and the natives were thus drilled and worked up to a state of frenzy prior to going forth to battle.

It is now repented and accompanied with songs of welcome for the entertainment of visitors. One of the groups on this occasion was composed of Latter-day Saints and the others were members of what is known as the Missionary Church, an auxiliary of the Church of England.

The dance commenced by about twenty-five Maori women going through various exercises, accompanying all their quaint gestures with native songs of greeting. They wore dark skirts and light waists decorated with colored ribbons. After going through this calisthenic drill for some time, the women retreated and we beheld about fifty men crouching or lying prostrate on the ground. They were naked with the exception of a short skirt around the loins. Suddenly they sprang up with a yell which almost caused the spectators to shudder. This was followed by dancing and singing, which was conducted with great precision, and the contortions of their bodies were truly surprising. It was a weird scene. The waves of the ocean dashing on the beach within a few rods of us contributed a fitting accompaniment to the yells and excited countenances of the performers. At times the arms were outstretched, defiant attitudes were assumed, and their rolling eyes and extended tongues almost terrified the lookers on. The performance lasted about an hour, after which our company dismounted, unsaddled the horses and commenced a tour of inspection greeting the Saints with the usual "hongi" or nose-rubbing.

Te Rahui is a very small village,

containing a few Maori huts, but all the Saints of the district had co-operated to provide for the accommodation of the hundreds who were expected to conference. The meeting house, or Whare, is built in Maori style, the front being decorated with carved figures and painted in various colors. The floor inside was covered with whariki, or flax mats, which the congregation sit upon in preference to chairs or benches. Its seating capacity is said to be about 500, and it is fantastically decorated inside with carved panels and woven reeds. The house is seventy feet long by thirty wide and is substantially built of lumber.

A large dining room had been built for the occasion about 150 long by 20 feet wide. A table had been made extending from one end of the building to the other and capable of accommodating 200 persons at a sitting. We were called to supper, and about that number were soon seated around the festive board. White table clothes were spread and mutton, pork, beef, plum puddings, cake, etc., were served in true European style.

The native waiters are very prompt and courteous and, though many of the modern appliances were lacking, we enjoyed our feast as well as though served in the dining halls of Salt Lake hotels. Instead of electric bells, cords were strung from the dining-room to the improvised kitchen behind, which rung bells in the various departments notifying the cooks when fresh supplies were needed.

It was estimated that about five hundred persons were fed at each meal the first day and the readers of the NEWS can readily surmise that a vast amount of provisions were consumed. At the close of the conference we learned that the commissariat department had disposed of 15 beaver, 61 sheep, 34 hogs, 2½ tons of flour, 15 tons of sweet and Irish potatoes, 4 dozen Worcester sauce, 1 large keg of butter, 6 dozen cases of jam, 1 ton of sugar, 1½ cases baking powder, besides a large quantity of currants, raisins, etc.

All comers were made welcome, and it was certainly the largest and most united reunion your correspondent has ever attended.

Such kind-hearted hospitality is a characteristic feature of the Maori people, and they evidently retain some of the traits of character possessed by ancient Israel in their many pilgrimages. "PHOENIX."

PORIRUA, Wellington, N. Z.,  
April 20th, 1892.

#### SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION.

There was a large attendance of Sunday school workers at the Union meeting Monday evening, May 16th. Nearly all the city schools were represented, also the Deaf Mute, South Cottonwood, Union and Farmers schools. Superintendent Griggs, presided.

The excellent musical exercises given during the evening were rendered by the Eleventh Ward Sunday school choir, under the direction of Brother James Hood.

Superintendent John N. Pike delivered an instructive address on the "Sunday School Guide as an aid to Sabbath school work." Subjects and