

MISCELLANEOUS.

Written for this Paper
AMONG THE MAORIES.

Another good time in Maoridom has been had. For some weeks the Saints in the Manawatu conference had been very busily engaged in making preparations for a Christmas conference which convened on Saturday, December 22nd, 1894, at Te Awapuni a Maori pa, situated about two miles distant from Palmerston North, which is one of the many really picturesque cities of New Zealand.

Invitations to attend had been extended to the Saints of the Heretaunga conference and in response Elders W. F. Nebeker and T. J. O'Brien, in company with about twenty five good Saints, stepped from the cars to the platform of the depot at Te Awapuni at about five o'clock p. m. on Friday, the 21st inst. President Wm. Gardner arrived at the same time, he having come direct from Auckland to attend the conference. In the evening Saints from all parts of the Manawatu conference arrived and after the usual evening services a time of speech-making was had, the Saints of Te Awapuni extending a welcome to their visitors and they in return making appropriate replies.

The first meeting of the conference was held on Saturday, beginning at two o'clock p. m. There were present the following named Elders from Zion: President Wm. Gardner, M. C. Nielson, James S. Abbott, E. O. Best, H. C. Jex, W. F. Nebeker and T. J. O'Brien, with about one hundred and fifty Maori Saints. Elder J. S. Abbott first addressed the meeting. He was much pleased to meet with so many and particularly so to see so many from the Heretaunga conference present. We had met for a good purpose and he knew that all present would try to make this an enjoyable time. Reported the several branches in this conference as being in a fairly good condition. Some good work had recently been done here among the outsiders, and it was the desire of the Elders to continue pushing out among them. He hoped that all would enjoy this meeting together in a conference capacity.

Tamati Ngatoto, a native Elder, then spoke upon the evils by which we are daily surrounded, and exhorted all to pray without ceasing for strength to resist them. Gave a glowing account of the condition of affairs in the Mahia conference to which he belongs.

Brother W. F. Nebeker, President of the Heretaunga conference, then addressed the Saints, dwelling upon the many privileges and blessings which we as Saints enjoy. Hoped that when our Savior comes again we will be prepared to meet Him.

Peneamine, a native Elder, spoke upon the necessity of continuing in good works unto the end. There is a work for all to do and the time allotted, while it is amply sufficient, is yet not too long.

Whakapau Pomare, a native Elder, spoke for some time upon Church organization.

At 8 p. m. meeting again convened and the opening remarks were made by Nikera Te Koro (native,) who bore a faithful testimony and quoted much

scripture in support of his remarks. He was followed by Elder T. J. O'Brien, who exhorted all to faithfulness. Said if we were destroyed it would be because we had not kept the commandments. Niwhai and Ropata Riwas (natives) each spoke for a short time.

President Gardner then greeted the Saints. He was much pleased with the good spirit manifest thus far in this conference, as also was he proud to know that some had come from such a distance. Hoped that all would make good resolves for the New Year, and that all who made good resolutions would perform them without fail. He was pleased to be able to say that the good work is progressing here as well as in other parts of the vineyard.

Sunday, December 23rd, meeting convened at 10 a. m. The speakers were Elder E. O. Best, Mataitau, Te Rangi Kawea and Arepa Maki, all of whom made very encouraging remarks. Elder Best leading out upon the necessity of leading pure lives, and the others following for the most part upon the same subject.

At 2:30 p. m., on account of there being in the near vicinity a goodly number of English-speaking Saints, a meeting for their special benefit was held. After the singing of the hymn, "The spirit of God, like a fire is burning," etc., prayer was offered by Elder T. J. O'Brien, then the hymn, "Arise my soul arise" was sung and the Sacrament administered.

Elder M. C. Neilson was the first speaker. He took up the 12th chapter of Romans and commented upon it at some length. Said that his heart was full of joy at this meeting and that he knew the Spirit of God was in our midst. There are moments in a missionary's life when he feels almost to complain that the work is but slowly progressing, but when he sees a number of those whom he has had the privilege of instructing and counseling with, that feeling is no more. Speaking of the blessings that were in store for the faithful. Elder Neilson said that should we not obtain them it will be because we do not serve God with full purpose of heart. We would do well to remember the words of Joshua when he said: "As for me and my house we will serve the true and living God."

President Gardner then spoke for one hour upon the apostasy and the restoration of the Gospel, and in conclusion exhorted all to live pure and holy and useful lives, so that in the end it might be said of us: "Well done thou good and faithful servant." We must ask ourselves the question: Are we ready to meet the Savior when He shall come?

Meeting was closed by singing, "We thank thee, O God, for a prophet." Benediction by Brother H. C. Jex.

At 8 p. m. meeting was opened by singing and prayer. The first speaker was Elder H. C. Jex, who spoke through an interpreter (President Gardner,) advised us to keep our records clean for according to our works are we to be judged. Te Rimana (native) said we must follow in the path our Savior trod if we would be saved. Tamihana (native) told us to teach the word by precept and by example, for that was the only way to salvation. Horomona Te Rongoparae (native) dwelt for a short

time upon the restoration of the Gospel. President Gardner made a few remarks upon the duties of Presidents of branches, etc.

Monday, December 24th, at 10 a. m., meeting was opened by singing and prayer. The speakers were Ropeta Riua, Karepa Katehiku and President Gardner. The remarks were all instructive and edifying.

At 2:30 p. m. meeting again convened when the speakers were, in order as follows: Hori Kawea, Henare Apatari, Amaru Nopera and Patara, all of whom were very earnest in their remarks, exhorting us to faithfulness and to endeavor to keep ourselves pure and spotless before God.

In the evening a testimony meeting was held at which twenty-four Saints bore each a faithful testimony. After this meeting the visitors were all requested to remain until after Christmas, a proposition which met with a very general good-feeling and was accepted without debate. A program of exercises had been previously arranged to be rendered on Christmas day, together with sports, for which about twenty-five prizes had been provided. At 10 a. m. the Saints were all assembled in the spacious meeting house, when the following program was successfully rendered.

Song, Brother Best, Jex, Abbott, O'Brien and Patara; recitation, Katie Armstrong.
 Maori song, two Maori sisters.
 Music, Best and Jex.
 Song, Sweet hour of prayer, Wm. Gardner.
 Speech, A missionary's aim, W. F. Nebeker.
 Song, My mother-in-law, T. J. O'Brien.
 Maori song, Tamati Ngatoto.
 Song, Annie, Emma and Esther Armstrong.
 Maori song, Irini.
 Comments, Wm. Gardner.

Immediately after the program we sat down to a dinner that simply beggars description. Geese, fish, mutton and eel are some of the meats, while as for plum-pudding, jam, tarts, tapioca, oranges, lemonade, etc., etc., they were truly there in abundance. I only wish I could tell you how the house was decorated with ferns and ornamental shrubs. But it is more than is within my power to tell, so we will pass on to the sports. They consisted of foot-racing, high-jumping, putting-the-weight, and so on, for the men, while for the small boys and the ladies there were appropriate prizes for numerous contests.

Taken all in all it was truly a time of rejoicing in very deed and the Te Awapuni Saints deserve very great credit for their faithfulness in preparing for the great event, while to those who came from afar to attend conference it can truly be said well done.

The weather was simply delightful during the five days of conference, as indeed it has been for some weeks past. On Wednesday (today) we separate for our respective homes and fields of labor, each going with a feeling of determination to live nearer to God in the future, while it is quite safe to say that the conference at Te Awapuni will long be remembered and spoken of as one of the most enjoyable times in the lives of all who were present.

T. J. O'BRIEN,
 Clerk of the Conference.

In reflecting upon Zion and her interests, I thought a few lines concerning Wairarapa would be of interest; I therefore write briefly concerning the same, that the Saints in Zion may know as to