

MISCELLANEOUS.

Written for this Paper

IN THE MISSIONARY FIELD.

I have received an interesting letter from Elder Thomas L. Cox, now laboring in the European part of the New Zealand Mission, from which I make the following excerpts, believing they will be of interest to the vast number of readers of the DESERET NEWS. The letter is dated Lawrence, Otago, Sept. 1st, 1894. After some preliminaries Elder Cox says: "I have been stopping for a couple of months at Owaka, during the warmest part of the New Zealand winter. We have a small number of Saints there, and a branch of the Church is organized at that place. It is not a desirable place, however, in which to spend the winter, as it is a very scattered district.

"The roads are very bad. It is principally a 'Bush' country, and here and there a house can be seen in a small clearing, made by the ax of the sturdy Bushman. The bush is very dense, and if a stranger ventures far from the house he is in danger of being lost in the forest.

"Owaka is within five miles of the ocean and the roar of the breakers can be heard as they roll in upon the sea beach. In this vicinity there is more rain-fall than elsewhere, on account of the great amount of 'Bush.' I have known it to rain there for nine or ten days without ceasing, thus making the ground so muddy that it is almost impossible to move around. Still the people there are quite satisfied, as they have not been used to anything else. Each 'Bushfarmer,' as they are called, will seed his land with grass, on which they feed cattle, sheep, etc. The government is now making a railroad through this section of the country. This makes work plentiful and furnishes employment for a great number of people.

"I took my leave of Owaka about a month ago, in company with Elder Charles Peterson, who is also laboring in this district, and came to Lawrence to perform some missionary work. It is about 65 miles from Owaka. Lawrence is a fine looking town. It has a prosperous appearance, and indeed it is a prosperous place. Surrounding it are several school districts, composed of a farming community. In those places we have the school houses to preach in. We hold well attended meetings in each place, and we are looked upon and treated with great respect by the people, who seems to view the Gospel favorably. There are great numbers of Chinamen employed in gold digging and gold washing.

"We have made several attempts to hold meetings in Lawrence; but at first we were unsuccessful. The cheapest house rent was ten shillings per night, which was beyond our reach. There is a Salvation Army barracks in this town, which is used only one night a week. I made application for the use of it to hold our meetings in. Those who were in charge referred me to 'Major' Robinson, at Dunedin. I applied to him, and the following is a copy of his answer:—'Mr. T. L. Cox. Dear Sir: We cannot accede to your request for the use of

our barracks at Lawrence, as it is contrary to the constitution of the Army for our halls to be used for other than Salvation purposes. God bless you, faithfully yours, C. Robinson.'

"However, the Lord opened our way to preach to the people of this town. It came about in this manner: The editor of a newspaper in this place published a kind of nasty piece about us. We made a reply to it, and asked him to publish it, which he did. This led to several other communications with the editor. He became very much interested in us, and had so great a desire to hear us, that he with some others hired a large hall for us to preach in for one night. He advertised the meeting free. We held the meeting, and as we believe with good results. I sent home the paper containing the report of the services, which you will secure.

"My health is good at present. I expect to leave here some time this month for Auckland, to remain there until the 1st of December, at which time I hope to take steamer for Zion."

The following is the article in *The Tuapeka Times*, a semi-weekly journal published at Lawrence, the capital of Tuapeka. It is an ably conducted, fair and liberal newspaper. The issue is dated Sept 1st 1894:

MORMONISM.

Address by Elders Cox and Peterson.

Elders Cox and Peterson, missionaries of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, delivered an address in the Volunteer Hall on Thursday evening. There was a fair attendance including a small number of ladies. The address, which was divided into two parts, treated of the religious and social phases of the community best known under their original designation of Mormons. Mr. Peterson gave a concise, but lucid and intelligible, exposition of the religious doctrines of the Latter-day Saints, and, with the exception of a few tenets of belief, originating in differences of Biblical interpretation, there was nothing whatever to distinguish them from those that obtain recognition among the various Protestant denominations. Among their characteristic points of doctrinal belief are the coming of Christ to reign personally upon the earth; the renewal of the earth in its paradisaical glory; that Christ will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to His kingdom. They also believe in the gift of tongues, in prophesy, revelation, visions, healing, interpretation of tongues, and the laying on of hands. They profess to have based their religious organization on the same foundation that existed in the primitive Church—namely, Apostles, Prophets, Pastors, Teachers and Evangelists. Of course all the thousand and one other religious organizations arrogate to themselves the exclusive possession of the principles, practices, signs, and observances that distinguished the primitive Church. The contention on this point has raged long and fiercely, and as time passes the controversy to the onlookers grows more bewildering and, perhaps, less important. But, small points of dogma aside, the broad faith of the Latter-day Saint

is unexceptionable, and embodies, we should say, as much as any church can profess and more than most churchmen practice. Here it is, briefly:—

"We believe in being honest, true, chaste, benevolent, virtuous, and in doing good to all men. If there is anything virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy, we seek after these things." They do not subscribe to the doctrine that men will be punished for the indiscretion attributed to Adam in the Garden of Eden, believing probably that justice should be satisfied in punishing men for their own actual delinquencies. They believe that through the atonement of Christ all men may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel, which comprise faith in Christ, repentance, baptism by immersion for the remission of sins, and the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost. They finally believe the Bible to be the Word of God, "as far as it is correctly translated"—a proviso, by-the-way, carefully adopted by all the churches and the one responsible for the multitude of existing beliefs, as well as for the "no-beliefs"—and that the Book of Mormon is the Word of God. Polygamy, the Elders said, did not now exist and was forbidden by the Church of the Latter-day Saints. But he maintained that the institution of polygamy was plainly enjoined in the Bible, the inference from his remarks being that it was abandoned by the Mormons only under compulsion of the law of the United States and not because it was morally wrong or indefensible.

Elder Cox gave an interesting description of the physical and social characteristics of Utah, and contributed some valuable information on the origin and history of the Mormon Church and people. Both himself and the Elder who accompanied him left Utah for the purpose of preaching the Gospel as they believed it. Unlike the preachers in other churches, they looked for no remuneration; they paid their own expenses, and asked for no collections or assistance from anybody. They went through the country on foot in all kinds of weather, as the preachers of the primitive Church did, and not in the luxurious style of the representatives of modern Christianity. They got no large salaries or fat stipends, and they had no well-groomed horses to take them round the country; nor did they expect to be lodged in comfortably-furnished houses, nor fed upon the fat of the land. And yet they were subject to a good deal of misrepresentation and prejudice. Speaking of Utah, he said there were no people on the face of the earth who had suffered more persecution than his co-religionists had, and none who had given more proof of possessing the true spirit of Christ's religion. The history of their people proved that. Their religious temples were the marvel of the world, one of them costing £2,000,000 sterling, and it took forty years to build. They had provided schools for the education of their children, for they believed in educating the mind as well as the spirit; prohibition was part of their creed, for they did not believe in intoxicants, and poverty or want was never allowed to go unrelieved among them.

It appears that the *Times*, and some