

have shown me and my traveling companions will always be remembered. The Maoris are perhaps superior to any of their kinsfolks who inhabit the smaller islands. I believe I could write a little volume on my own experience and associations with them and the inhabitants of Samoa, Tonga and Hawaii. While our Elders, who are laboring among the Europeans in New Zealand would undoubtedly starve to death, should they rely upon the hospitality of the people for their sustenance, those who travel among the Maoris are as a rule well fed and taken care of. Of course the food and accommodation is not always of the best kind; they are almost universally treated to the best the people have, and no more could be expected. It is also a pleasing fact to record that of all the Elders who have labored among the Maoris during the past twelve years, not one of them is known to have transgressed or committed himself with woman. And this has become one of the distinctive features of the Mormon missionary; it being so different to the experience of the Maoris with other white men who have come among them. Elder Bartlett, of the Bay of Islands district, related an instance where a Maori family was visited by two of our missionaries, and stopped over night when the man of the house was away from home. A neighboring woman, a non-member, who happened to call in and who saw the Elders there remarked to the woman of the house how she dared keep these men in her house while her husband was away. "You don't understand," was the reply. "These are Mormon missionaries. They are not like other men, but more like Gods. No greater insult could be offered them than for a woman to make unchaste advances to them."

I have yet three more Maori districts to visit, namely, the Waikato, Hauraki and Tauranga. Then I go to Tahiti, and will return by way of New Zealand to return to Australia, thence I go to Europe, via the Suez canal, expecting to visit Palestine and Egypt on the way. (Finish.) ANDREW JENSON.

AUCKLAND, New Zealand, December, 31st, 1895.

LETTER XLVI.

Wednesday, January 1st, 1896, found a number of Elders from Zion and Maori Saints in the city of Auckland, New Zealand, anxiously waiting to take their departure for the distant town of Te Aroha, where a general conference for all the northern districts of the New Zealand mission had been appointed for the following Friday, Saturday and Sunday. As the people of New Zealand are great observers of both Christian and national holidays—that is they observe them after a fashion—no train left for the south that day. So we waited till the Thursday (January 2nd) when thirteen Elders and sixteen native Saints left Auckland per railway train in a special car on a one hundred and fifteen mile ride to Te Aroha. Our number was augmented by more Elders and native Saints as we passed through the Waikato district; and when we arrived at our destination we numbered sixty souls, besides several non-Mormons, who seeing that there was plenty of room in our apartment, while the rest of the cars were crowded, insisted upon coming in to us. As a punishment for their persistency they were made them

victims of Gospel conversations, as the young Elders with which the car abounded are anxious and ready at all times and at divers places to declare the principles of truth that they have been sent out in the world to preach. Most of the strangers took their medicine in good part, and several of them on taking leave expressed themselves as being highly delighted with what they had heard, and one or two even invited the Elders to call on them if convenient.

On our arrival at Te Aroha, which is the Maori word for love, we were met by still more Elders and Saints; and during our three days, conference, the minutes of which have already been sent to the News for publication, twenty-eight Elders from Zion were present, besides about 120 native Saints and strangers.

The conference was held in a new meeting house, which had just been erected in the little native village, which is situated about one and a half miles up the river from Te Aroha. Both Elders and the other conference visitors were well cared for by the local Saints, who had raised a tent over a long table at which one hundred could sit down and eat at once. This number also represented the visitors present; only about fifty local Saints being in attendance, as the Hauraki district of which Te Aroha, is one of the branches, is only a small one. The Hauraki district consists of three branches and 123 baptized members, or 174 souls including 51 children, of whom 17 are Europeans. The district embraces a country bordering on the east coast of the North Island, including the Coromandel peninsula which terminates in Cape Colville. It extends southward on the east coast as far as Katikati; west and inland it extends to and includes the European town of Hamilton, situated on the Waikato river. The names of the branches are Te Aroha, Kirikiri and Whitianga. Elders Joseph M. Folkman and Moroni Lazenby are the two Utah Elders laboring in the district at present.

Te Aroha branch consists of native Saints residing in and near a small village which lies between the Te Aroha mountain and the Waihou river, about one and a half miles north of the European town of Te Aroha, which is 115 miles by rail or about 85 miles by water from Auckland. Reha Apherhama presides over the branch, which was first organized December 12th, 1886, by Elders William Paxman and William Gardner.

The Kirikiri branch comprises the Saints residing in and about a native village of that name which is situated about six miles south of the European town of Thames, and nearly half a mile east of the Waihou or Thames river; it is also about thirty-five miles north of Te Aroha. The branch was organized September 30th, 1888.

The Whitianga branch, organized by Elder William Gardner October 22nd, 1886, consists of Saints residing in a district of country known as Whitianga, most of them in a village called Kuauunu, which is situated on Mercury bay on the east coast of the Coromandel peninsula, about twenty miles east of the town of Coromandel, and about 115 miles northeast of Te Aroha.

The European town of Te Aroha is claimed to be one of the most favorite

health resorts in the world. It is a town of about 300 inhabitants, prettily situated on the left bank of the Waihou or Thames river and at the foot of a noble mountain, which rises to a height of over three thousand feet immediately back of the town. There are eighteen springs within the town limits under the control of the Domain Board; fifteen of the springs are hot or tepid, and there are seven large bath houses. The waters are, with the exception of the sulphur springs, saline and feebly alkaline, and strongly charged with carbonic acid gas, which is constantly escaping from the springs in large quantities.

Our conference being held so close to this European town, some of the Elders suggested that a hall be rented and a meeting held there, which was accordingly done in the evening. Saturday, January 4th, Elder R. Leo Bird and Thomas L. Browning were the speakers; but only a few attended, and most of those who did refused to become interested. While the meeting was in progress, I stepped quietly in, accompanied by another Elder, and we both took our seat among the congregation, acting strangers. After the services were closed, I arose and asked for permission to propound a few questions, which of course was granted; and then followed quite a dialogue in which the congregation seemed to take considerable interest. Without any previous understanding the brethren caught on, and thus quite a number of doctrinal points were cleared up which had not been fully explained during the meeting. Getting along so well on the inside, I continued my observations after getting out on the street, where a number of people were lingering around discussing the merits of the meeting; but a young man who might have passed for a Yankee anywhere so far as cheek was concerned, stepped up with an air of importance and asked me if I was not one of them. I told him I belonged to the Latter-day Saints. The same thing chipped in another; and he was about right. And so the conversation took another turn. The cheeky man offered some abuse, and just as we were ready to reply, another young man stepped to the front and championed our cause in a most earnest and spirited manner, until the other fellow went away confounded and beaten. I complimented our unknown friend for standing up for truth and right as he had done, and said he was evidently a genuine Englishman, who believed in fair play. He said he did, and that he had enjoyed the meeting, and would as soon hear the Gospel preached by Mormons as by any other. Such is the life of Mormon missionaries! How diversified is the experience of an Elder in a foreign land! I felt justified in doing what I did after the meeting, as the only thing I could think of at the moment to counteract the sleepiness and indifference which seemed to possess the little audience. But the European population of Te Aroha cares more for English gold than heavenly truths. It is strictly a business place, and nearly all the inhabitants get a living either direct or indirect from tourists who frequent the place as a health resort.

On Monday, January 6th, the day after conference had closed, most of the Elders and visiting Saints took their departure for their different fields of labors and respective homes. Elder