

Hawkes Bay district; Lewis G. Hoagland, president of the Mahia district; Joseph W. Linford, president of, and R. Leo Bird traveling Elder in the Wairarapa district; and Edgar O. Best and Wallace C. Castleton, missionaries in the Canterbury district. These well attended and interesting meetings were held during the day, commencing respectively at 10 a. m. and at 3 and 7 p. m. George Bowles, Andrew Jenson (through Lewis G. Hoagland as translator) and Aporo H. Kumeroa were the speakers in the forenoon; President William Gardner occupied all the time in the afternoon; and the speakers in the evening were Arapata Meha, Lewis G. Hoagland, and Andrew Jenson (with George Bowles as translator.) After the regular evening meeting the chief Tamahau delivered another speech in which he propounded a number of questions in regard to certain principles of the Gospel; these were successfully answered by President Gardner, who in explaining them spoke with freedom and ease, and seemed to give entire satisfaction to the chief and all who were present. Some of the native brethren also spoke. A good spirit prevailed in all the meetings, and the general verdict was that we had had a most excellent time during the day and evening. The day was very warm—the warmest day of the season so far in New Zealand.

Monday, Dec. 23rd. We celebrated the ninetyeth anniversary of the Prophet Joseph Smith's birthday in New Zealand by continuing our conference at Papawai and holding three more well attended meetings. Wiremu Neera Te'Kanae, Hoani Turi Whatahoro (also called John A. Jury) one of the assistant translators of the Book of Mormon into Maori. James L. Abbott, Wilford F. Nebeker and Joseph W. Linford were the speakers in the forenoon; Otene Pomare, R. Leo Bird, Edgar O. Best and Hoera Te Ruruku in the afternoon. Elder Abbott translating for Elders Bird and Best; and in the evening the speakers were Paratene Tui, Henare, Apatari, Rangi Kawea, Heber C. Jex (through Elder Bowles) and Foi Fe Huatahi, president of Te Oreore branch. A child was blessed in the afternoon meeting and several sick persons were administered to during the day and evening. Elder Thomas J. O'Brien left for Hawkes Bay to attend to some marriage ceremonies in his district.

Tuesday, December 24th. A number of the Hawkes Bay Saints returned home in the morning. For fear of overdoing it, the day being hot, it was deemed wisdom to hold only an evening meeting on this date. Some of the Carterton Saints (Europeans) visited Papawai, and in the afternoon Mr. Price, a photographer from Masterton took a large picture of Papawai meeting house and conference visitors, the Elders from Zion and the chief Tamahau occupying a central position in the same. A negative was also taken of the Carterton Sunday School. In the evening the finishing meeting of the conference was held; it was commenced at 7 o'clock and continued for fully four hours and a half, or until 11:30 p. m. Following are the names of the speakers; Andrew Jenson (through President Gardner) Hamuera Karaitiana, Rewa Maka, Whakapau Pomare, Matinga Rutu, Horomona Te Rongaparae, Ngawhakaa-hua (a sister) Hakaraia Hemi, Aporo H. Kumeroa, Wiremu Neera Ve'Kanae,

Hana Te'Kanae (a sister,) Peniamine Hawakawa, James S. Abbott and William Gardner. These speeches were generally interesting, full of meaning and rich in good sentiments. Much of what was said was an endorsement of the teachings given by the Elders from Zion during the conference. Some of the speakers also denounced the acts of the Church of England missionaries, who in many instances had defrauded the natives of their lands. One case was referred to by Watene Hemi from the South Island, where the Church mentioned had received a donation of 3,000 acres of land, in return for which the missionaries had only built one small meeting house for the natives. Several appropriate hymns were also sung during the session. This was the largest meeting I have ever attended in New Zealand or anywhere else, and toward the latter end of it, it kept the Deacons busy most of the time poking away at the sleepers with their long sticks. Whenever these officers of which there were quite a number in active service, saw anyone dozing off or even nodding, they would step up close to the sleeper, and if this was not sufficient to awaken him, they would apply the point of the stick to the limbs, body or head of the sleeper, until an awakening necessarily was effected. Our Deacons in Zion might learn profitable lessons from their Maori brethren as to how people can most successfully be kept awake when they are being addressed by tedious, long-winded speakers.

The Wairarapa district of the Australasian Mission may properly be termed the cradle of Mormonism so far as Maoridom is concerned, as it was here that the first successful missionary work was done by Latter-day Saint Elders among the natives of New Zealand. A European branch of the Church had existed at Carterton in the Wairarapa Valley for some years when Elders Alma Greenwood and Ira N. Hinckley, Junior, in July, 1883, began to preach the Gospel to the Maoris. They commenced to baptize July, 21, 1883, organized the first native branch of the Church at Papawai August 26, 1883, and the second at Te Oreore, December 16th, following. The Whitapu branch was organized December 5th, 1886, and when this latter branch was divided in May, 1887, that part of it which was made into a new branch was called the Kohunui branch, and the late chief Piri Te Maari set apart as its president. These four branches, together with the European branch at Carterton constituted the Wairarapa district at the close of 1894, and represented at that time one hundred and forty-nine baptized members, or (including children) two hundred souls belonging to the church. But during the present year a new branch called Paranako has been organized by Elders George Bowles and H. Lee Bradford. There are four Elders laboring in the district at the present time, of whom two watch over the Maori part and the other two the European part of the district.

The Papawai branch consists of the Saints residing in the native village of Papawai and the Europeanburg of Greytown, the latter being the terminus of a branch railway fifty three miles northeast of Wellington and six miles from Carterton. Papawai is two miles east of Greytown, near the Ruamahanga river,

which is the principal stream of the Wairarapa Valley.

The Kohunui branch contains the Saints residing in the lower or south end of the Wairarapa Valley, or in the villages of Kohunui, Turanganui and Paporowhiti. The meetings and Sunday Schools are held at Kohunui which is situated on the main road running south from Greytown and distant from that place about thirty miles.

The Waitapu branch has recently been mated with the Kohunui branch. Prior to that it consisted of the Saints residing in the village of Waitapu, situated on east or left bank of the Ruamahanga river, in the Wairarapa Valley, about twenty-five miles south of Greytown, or twelve miles inland from the ocean.

The Paranako branch embraces the Saints residing in the village of Paranako, which stands on high ground three miles inland from the east coast, or about fifty miles east, southeast of Masterton. The branch was organized July 28, 1895.

Te Oreore branch consists of the Maori Saints living in the villages of Te Oreore, Hione (Zion), Akura and Manaia, the greatest number in Akura. Te Oreore lies three miles northeast of Masterton, Hione between Te Oreore and Masterton, which is a European town of 3,000 inhabitants, situated on the railway sixty-six miles northeast of Wellington. The Elders laboring in the district have their headquarters at Masterton, and occupy a little house which the native Saints have built for them at Hione. The Oreore branch has quite a history.

The Carterton branch, presided over by Swen August Nilson, embraces all the European Saints living in a very scattered condition in the Wairarapa valley. The branch was raised up by Elder Jens Jensen, who organized it February 20, 1881, since which it has seen a great number of changes, and both pleasant and unpleasant experiences.

Wednesday, December 25th. Christmas Day. The village bell rang at the usual hour—5 o'clock p. m.; and though most of us who did not sleep in the meeting the night before had by no means obtained sufficient sleep or rest, we rose cheerful and happy and exchanged the compliments of the season with one another. It was the first time that many of us Elders present spent a Christmas in a southern zone, in the middle of summer and hot weather. The early morning hour found Tamahau, the village chief, out greeting his visitors. A committee consisting of both Elders and Maori brethren had been appointed to arrange a program for Christmas Day and had been busily at work; and according to their arrangement the people gathered in the meeting house at 10 a. m. to listen to the exercises. The chief Tamahau, who had been appointed president of the day, made an appropriate opening speech, after which he gave out an opening hymn and called upon President William Gardner, who had been chosen vice-president for the day to pray. Elder Gardner offered up an inspired prayer, which softened the heart of Tamahau so much that he shed tears of joy, and then he continued his speech, in which he expressed his great love for the Elders and said that he believed the message they bore was true. Elder Gardner responded in