

ticularly near its base; hence the picture of desolation is not so perfect now as it was for some time after the eruption.

While still gazing upon the wonders of nature the fast falling shades of the hills upon the placid and cream colored waters of Tarawera reminded us that the day was spent, that the sun was disappearing below the western horizon; and the overhanging clouds also gave us reason to believe that the night would be a dark one; and here we were in a strange, uninhabited, volcanic country, eleven miles away from the nearest human habitations. So we beat a retreat and started on our return trip at a time that we, according to the stable man's idea, ought to have been at our quarters, as he had assured us that it was a very "unpleasant thing" to be found out on the steep mountain slopes of the Tarawera country after night fall. Retracing our steps, we soon reached the top of the hill or divide, thence passed down to the site of the ruined village, once more feasted on cherries, and then walked briskly back to Rotorua, in the darkness of the night, arriving at our destination at 10 p. m. We met with no accident and had not sat down to rest once on our sample twenty two mile walk; but our soft European bed felt unusually comfortable that night.

Friday, January 10th. We visited the government sanitarium and other points of interest. The country around Rotorua has been the scene of several hot contests and battles between different tribes of Maoris; and hundreds of people have been slain at different times. Out toward the centre of Lake Rotorua is a good sized island called Mokaia, which for many generations was the stronghold of the Arawas, and where they generally were able to defend themselves against their powerful enemies from the north who were in the habit of evading the country in almost North America Indian fashion. On one occasion the great chief Hongi from the North landed in the lands of the Arawas, on the east coast, and after beating the latter in a number of battles, they retreated to their island stronghold, where they defied their enemies to follow. But Hongi, who was a great warrior at once gave orders to have his war canoes brought overland from the east coast to Lake Rotorua, crossed over to Mokaia with his big army, and slew the Arawas with an exceeding great slaughter. There are also several beautiful Maori legends connected with this island. The Arawas still dwell in this renowned lake country; and some of them have embraced the fullness of the Gospel, and constitute part of the membership of the Tauranga district. The Arawas derive their name from a large canoe of that name, which was one of the seven traditional canoes on which the Maoris reached New Zealand from their former home in Hawaika.

The Rotorua country is included in that missionary division of the North Island of New Zealand, which is known as the Tauranga district. This district comprises three branches of the Church, called respectively Pukerimu, Puketarata and Orakeikorako with a total membership of 99, or 131 souls including children who have been blessed but not baptized. Two are Europeans, the rest Maoris. Elder David H. Packard is now the president of the district, succeeding Elder Christian Petersen in that

capacity, and Elder William W. McDonald is his traveling companion. The district embraces a tract of country bordering on the Bay of Plenty, which is on the east coast of the North Island. The coast line extends from Opotiki on the southeast to Katikati on the northwest. Inland it extends to and includes the country surrounding the great Taupo lake, the largest fresh water sheet in New Zealand; this lake is in a mountainous country near the centre of the North Island.

The Pukerimu branch consists of the Saints residing in the native villages of Pukerimu, Otaranania, Waitangi and Hurea (Judea). Pukerimu is situated about one-half mile southeast of the European settlement of Te Puke, which is eighteen miles southeast of the seaport town of Tauranga, and about thirty-seven miles north of Rotorua, the famous government health resort described above. The Pukerimu branch was first organized in September, 1895, by Elders Charles O. Anderson and Francis H. Wright. In 1893 it absorbed the neighboring Waitangi branch and is now the largest and most important branch in the Tauranga district; it is the headquarters of the Elders laboring in that district.

The Puketarata branch consists of the Saints residing in the village of Puketarata and vicinity. The village named is situated about twelve miles north of the town of Taupo, on the road to Aleamuri, or about eighty miles from Pukerimu. The branch was organized September 25th, 1887, by Elders William Gardner and Henry J. Manning.

The Orakeikorako branch consists of some native Saints residing in Ohaki, Waiotapu and a number of other villages. The village of Orakeikorako is now defunct. It was situated on the Waikato river about eighteen miles below the point where it leaves the Taupo lake, or twelve miles up the river from Ateamuri, or thirty-three miles south of Rotorua. The Orakeikorako branch is an outgrowth of the Puketarata branch and was organized December 11th, 1887. This locality is celebrated for its boiling springs, geysers and terraces which overhang the river adjacent to the Maori village and for its remarkable alum cave, which has been visited by a great many tourists. The Waikato river scenery is also very interesting.

ANDREW JENSON.
NGARUANEAHIA, New Zealand, Jan. 16th, 1896.

TRAVELING IN TEXAS.

HONEY GROVE, Texas, April 5th, 1896.

Your ever welcome paper, which comes twice a week, is appreciated very much in this part. It is like hearing from a dear friend at home, and with your permission, I will drop you a few lines, so that your readers may know how the Lord is opening up the Lone Star State and preparing the hearts of the people to receive the precious truths of the everlasting Gospel.

I left my home January 26th, 1895, for a mission to Texas, and after imitation into the missionary field for about three months with Elder S. H. Wells of St. George, I was assigned to labor in Fannin County, Texas. On May 16th, Elder S. R. Wilcock and the writer started to their field of labor, where we worked until July 8th, making friends and removing prejudice. While the people

were hospitable to us, yet none were touched with the spirit of conviction, although they investigated our doctrine and while they could not deny any of it, yet they would try to console themselves by trying to believe that part of it was done away.

There we met the other Elders of Texas, at the Grubbs school house, in Hopkins county, with a hearty handshake, a loving spirit of unity and a welcome to those who had just come from Zion. Owing to sickness, Elder Kimball could not be with us, so our worthy ex-president, A. S. Campbell took charge of our conference, which was a source of great pleasure and enjoyment to all the Elders, who had never attended one before. The rain had fallen in such torrents, that some of the Elders had to be ferried across the stream to come to conference. After an assignment of new companions, we parted with tears in our eyes and with a "God bless you and success, dear brother," and started for our different fields of labor.

On July 10th, Elder R. H. Smith and your humble servant landed back in Fannin county where we held several meetings and revisited friends as we were instructed. Then because of the hot weather and other reasons, we were advised to find a place where we could stay for awhile, as the chills and fever were raging very badly, also other diseases common in Texas during the summer season; and the Elders from the pure mountain valleys could not stand the summer heat in the South. Many of the Elders were stricken down with ill health until it seemed as though Satan was going to stop our progress in this part of the vineyard, but of this noble little army, there were none but what held out to the very last not willing to give up, although some of us had as many as thirty chills, and some of us lay as long as three weeks with the malarial fever, and one gave his life for the cause, his faith never faltering. A dark gloom was thrown over the poor weak Elders of the Lone Star State, but they were steadfast to duty.

At Vansickle, Hunt Co., Texas, November 3rd, fourteen humble Elders were seated in a semicircle on some logs, prepared for the occasion in the woods hard by the schoolhouse, and in which conference was to be held, to receive the much needed instructions from our worthy president E. S. Kimball. He showed us our weakness, one being the money we were carrying, instead of going without purse or scrip and putting our faith in our heavenly Father to raise up funds to take care of us. I will not say all were that way, but for one I was in that condition to some extent, and instead of making converts, we only made friends enough to take care of us. Our president Elder Kimball told us that if we would keep the word of wisdom and commandments of God and travel without purse or scrip, then instead of going up to a man and fearing and trembling to get to stay over night with him, the Spirit of God would tell us where to go and we would be bold and fearless of man's arm, and we would have friends raised up to us in time of need, and would make lots of converts.

Elder Campbell was taken to work in the office at Chattanooga and A. C. Dalby succeeded him as president of the Texas conference. The Elders were all assigned their fields of labor, but when it came to me I was to go alone