

tering a native village with grip in hand is occasion for wonderment, only equalled by the arrival of a circus in a country village.

Our April conference will be held at Takarua, one of the islands in the Tuamotus. This group has long been a stronghold for the Latter-day Saints. The people there have a means of obtaining money very easily. Bounteous nature has filled these waters with the valuable pearl shells. During the diving seasons some of the native Saints earn as much as a hundred dollars in a single day's diving. The shells find a ready market among the traders.

At present there are five Elders laboring in this group, they are: A. F. Smith, George F. Despain, David Neff, E. T. Hatch and W. H. Chamberlain. William Chipman will take the first opportunity for joining Elder Chamberlain. President D. T. Miller will be present at conference. Elders A. R. Curtis, I. E. Roppley, L. H. Kennard, William McGregor, Grant Andrus and A. F. Roppley are appointed to continue in the opening of the Leeward group. President Miller, E. L. Cropper and F. T. Yeates are expected to leave for the Austral group this month. Osborne Widtsoe will keep vigil alone on Tahiti and Morea until the arrival of new Elders from America.

We Elders at Tahiti spent our Christmas in Fautaua canyon above Papeete. By dint of much perseverance we succeeded in getting soaked in a tropic shower, plastered with mud, and some of us ducked in the river in an attempt to cross on stones. We arrived at home at dusk worn and faint. A glorious Christmas!

Every Mormon Elder who has labored on Tahiti of late years knows full well the bamboo hut of Elder Tamaiti at Pirae. It was at this familiar spot and at his familiar board (a banana leaf) and in his own rude way that Tamaiti entertained us on New Year's day.

I. E. WILLEY.

### TIME OF REFRESHING.

Rock Springs, Wyo., Feb. 21, 1898.

Rock Springs ward has been visited the past few days by three missionaries—Brothers Charles Kingston of Evansville, as a home missionary, Charles Callis of Coalville and Elder Welsh of Moreau City, Utah. The last named brethren were working in the interest of Mutual Improvement work. The missionaries were with us Thursday evening last, February 17th, at our Mutual Improvement meeting, imparting such advice and instruction as were requisite for the growth of the institution, and rejoicing our hearts exceedingly. The two following days the brethren made a house to house canvass, visiting those who were somewhat derelict in Mutual Improvement work, and thus rousing them from their semi-lethargy. This we do not doubt will result in great good. On Sunday, the brethren were with us at Sunday School, and after the regular routine of the school, Brother Kingston gave some excellent instruction to the children, concluding a noble testimony of the divinity of the Gospel.

Between Sunday school, and our afternoon meeting, funeral services were held at the residence of Brother and Sister Charles Spence, over the remains of their eighteen-months-old baby. The house was crowded, and excellent instruction and consolation were given to all present.

At the afternoon meeting, our cosy meeting house was filled with Saints and strangers, and every nook and corner was pervaded by the Spirit of the Lord. Brother Kingston, as first speaker, encouraged us all to be up and doing. Brother Welsh followed and his remarks seemed to penetrate every fibre

in our bodies, and to fit exactly our case and needs.

At the evening meeting the house was again crowded. Brother Callis occupied most of the time. This indeed was a time of refreshing. He spoke on the first four principles of the Gospel, elaborating them with forceful and splendid illustrations. He showed the importance, beauty and sublimity of the Savior's mission and his present and future position as King of kings and Lord of lords, and he graphically portrayed the allegiance the whole world owes to Him, showing the calamity that would have befallen the human family had the Savior's mission failed.

Brother Welsh followed, directing his remarks especially to the youth of Zion in this part of the Lord's vineyard, concluding with a noble testimony of the Gospel revealed in this the nineteenth century.

We have had a glorious time the last few days—a pentecostal shower; we thank the brethren for coming, we also thank those who sent them, but, above all, we thank the Lord our God.

J. G.

### POSTAL FACILITIES

It was an English writer who pointed out that an excellent method of measuring the civilization of a community was by no means of the number of letters sent annually by each of its citizens. Measured by this standard the United States not alone leads the world, but it has practically no second so far as the other competitors in the race are concerned. Of the postal business done by the United States that of New York exceeds and excels all the rest. The per capita figures are so large as to seem almost incredible.

The pieces carried are far past the billion mark and the total amount of the money orders exceeds the entire value of many of the smaller powers of the Old World. The consolidation which went into effect on New Year's day doubled the size of the postal system of the city. Before that time it was larger than Paris, and almost as large as London. Now, it is in advance of even the British capital.

It consists of two magnificent main buildings, the one on Broadway, Manhattan, and the other on Washington street, Brooklyn. Each is a vast stone structure, fire proof, storm-proof, and almost time-proof, and each contains within its walls court rooms, judges' chambers, and the other accommodations demanded in Manhattan by the United States district and circuit courts of the Southern district of New York, and in Brooklyn of the Eastern district of New York.

In each of these main buildings is a financial department, where money orders and postal notes are issued and where millions of dollars are received and disbursed. In each there is an office for the reception of blind letters, the place which is a humorous comment upon human infirmities. There appears to be some mental law whereby one person out of a million in addressing a letter will put on the name of the recipient but not the address.

There is another person in a million who will write nothing at all upon the envelope, but will drop it, nevertheless, into the postoffice. There is a third person who will put the name and the street but not the city or the state. There are two persons in a million who will put the name and the city, but not the state. There is one person whose writing is so bad as to require an expert to decipher it. There is another whose spelling is so extraordinary as to require an expert to make out what is meant.

These men are always busy, the number of letters they receive being just as constant as the change from

day to night. In each of these two headquarters there is ample provision made for the economy of time in the handling and dispatch of mail matter. There are swift-footed boys and young men who deliver letters on which there are special delivery stamps; there are quaint little chariots, opened in the rear, with which collectors drive from lamppost box to lamppost box, gathering the letters which have been dropped into them by the public; there are powerful express wagons, drawn by strong horses, which, loaded with mail bags and sacks, are driven like the wind from main office to branch, from office to steamer pier and railroad depot.

In Brooklyn there are special post office trolley cars, and in New York post office cable cars, fitted up as miniature railway offices, in which mail matter is sorted and distributed as the car rolls uptown or out of town in the country.

The saving on time which this means may be inferred from the fact that fifty years ago the average mailing time for the sender in New York to the recipient in Brooklyn, Queens or Richmond was twenty-four hours, while today it is often cut down to three hours and four, and even this low time is about to be still further reduced by pneumatic tubes running the length of Manhattan Island and extending through the main thoroughfares of the Bronx, Queens, Brooklyn and Richmond, down to the very boundary lines of the huge new city.

Formerly the hours for collection were those of the business day, but the increasing pressure of this demand has lengthened this period at both ends, so that the first collector starts out at the dawn and the last may be seen in the silent thoroughfares at 11 o'clock in the evening. Even this is beginning to prove insufficient, and it looks as if very soon there would be collections made and letters forwarded in the dark hours of the night by means of all-night branches and pneumatic dispatches.

As indicated by Postmaster Van Cot in a recent speech this could be done so thoroughly that the letter would ere many years be a formidable rival to the messenger and within city limits to the telegraphic message.

Under these two great offices are branch offices. In Manhattan and the Bronx there are no less than twenty of these indicated by letters of the alphabet, and others, unlettered, at City Island, Highbridge, Kingsbridge, Madison Square, Tremont, Westchester, Williamsbridge and University Heights. In Brooklyn there are nine lettered and one numbered, and others at Flatbush, Bath Beach, Blythebourne, Canarsie, Coney Island, Fort Hamilton, Sheepshead Bay and Manhattan Beach.

In addition to this the borough across the river has no less than sixty-four sub-postoffice stations well distributed in every part of its immense territory. The magnitude of the postal business may be estimated from the official returns of the government.

The gross receipts of the New York office the last fiscal year were \$7,837,707.66; of Brooklyn, \$1,113,053.12; of Long Island City, \$34,000; of Jamaica, \$12,941; of Port Richmond, \$11,504; of Brighton, \$8,100; of Castleton, \$2,400; of Far Rockaway, \$7,400; of Flushing, \$23,700; of Tottenville, \$2,700; of Tompkinsville, \$14,200; of West New Brighton, \$25,300; and of Woodhaven, \$2,900, making a total of between nine and ten millions of dollars, an industry of the largest proportions.

Improvement is still the order of the day, and every week sees some new suggestion, process, or labor-saving contrivance. A new stamping machine for cancelling stamps is among the latest novelties, and reduces the time of the operation one-half, or doubles the effective power of the operator.