AMONG THE MAORIES.

Conference of the Manawatu and Wairarapa Districts.

REPORTS OF THE VARIOUS BRANCHES.

Progress of the Work Among Its Natives at New Zealand—Their Hospitality.

Written for the News.

Another good time at Mauriceville has been had. For some weeks the Saints in the Manawatu conference had been very busily engaged in making preparations for a Christmas conference which convened on Saturday, December 22nd, 1894, at Te Awapuni a Maori pa, situated about two miles distant from Palmerston North, which is one of the many really picturesque cities of New Zealand.

Invitations to attend had been extended to the Saints of the Hawkesburgh conference and in response Elders W. F. Nebeker and T. J. O'Brien, in company with about twenty five good Saints, stepped from the cars to the platform of the depot at Te Awapuni at about five o'clock p. m. on Friday, the 21st inst. President Wm. Gardner arrived at the same time, he having come direct from Auckland to attend the conference. In the evening Saints from all parts of the Manawatu conference arrived and after the usual evening services a time of spontaneous welcome took place, the Saints at Te Awapuni extending a welcome to their visitors and they in return making appropriate replies.

The first meeting of the conference was held on Saturday, beginning at two o'clock p. m. There were present the following named Elders from Zion: President Wm. Gardner, H. C. Nielsen, James S. Abbott, L. O. Best, H. C. Jex, W. F. Nebeker and T. J. O'Brien, with about one hundred and fifty Maori Saints. Elder J. S. Abbott first addressed the meeting. He was much pleased to meet with so many and particularly so to see so many from the Hawkesburgh conference present. We had met for a good purpose and he knew that all present would try to make this an enjoyable time. Reported the several branches in this conference as being in a fairly good condition. Some good work had recently been done here among the outsiders, and it was the desire of the Elders to continue passing out among them. He hoped that all would enjoy this meeting together in a conference capacity.

Tamati Ngatoko, a native Elder, then spoke upon the evils by which we are daily surrounded, and exhorted all to pray without ceasing for strength to resist them. Gave a brief but clear report of the condition of affairs in the Manawatu conference to which he belonged.

Brother W. F. Nebeker, President of the Hawkesburgh conference, then addressed the Saints, dwelling upon the many privileges and blessings which we as Saints enjoy. Hoped that when our Savior comes again we will be prepared to meet Him.

Paneamina, a native Elder, spoke upon the necessity of continuing in good works unto the end. There is a work for all to do and the time allotted, while it is amply sufficient, is yet not too long.

Whaipapa Pomare, a native Elder, spoke for some time upon Church organization.

At 8 p. m. meeting again convened and the opening remarks were made by Nikeia Te Kuvo (native), who bore a faithful testimony and read from the scripture in support of his remarks. He was followed by Elder T. J. O'Brien, who exhorted all to faithfulness. Said he was pleased to meet with the white race as we had not had the opportunity of late. Nehai and Kopeta Hewas (natives) each spoke for a short time.

President Gardner then addressed the Saints. He was much pleased with the good spirit manifest thus far in this conference, as also was he proud to know that each had come here on his own instance. Hoped that all would make good resolves for the New Year, and that all who made good resolutions would persevere in them. Without fail, he was pleased to be able to say that the good work is progressing here as well as in other parts of the vineyard.

Sunday, December 23rd, meeting convened at 10 a. m. The speakers were Elder L. O. Best, Matahiua Te Rangi Kawea and Arepa Maki, all of whom spoke very encouraging remarks. Elder Best dwelt upon the importance and necessity of leading pure lives, and the others following for the most part upon the same subject.

At 2:30 p. m. on account of there being in the near vicinity a goodly number of English-speaking Saints, a meeting for their special benefit was held. After the singing of the hymn, "Oh, Say What Is Goodness a Thing to Borrow," an address was offered by Elder T. J. O'Brien, then the hymn, "Never an Earthly Love" was sung and an address offered by Elder H. C. Nielsen.

Elder M. C. Nielsen was the first speaker. He took up the 12th chapter of Romans and commented upon it at some length. Said he was pleased to be full of joy at the meeting and that he knew the Spirit of God was in our midst. There are moments in a missionary's life which he does not forget, moments that the work is but surely progressing, but when he sees a convert of those whom he has had the privilege of instructing and administering to in holy things he rejoices more. Speaking of the blessings that were to them for the faithful, Elder Nielsen said no saint can obtain that in any other way than to put forth diligent effort to serve God with full purpose of heart. We would do well to remember the words of James when he said: "Be ye not only hearers of the word, but doers of the same and be ye not deceived with your own selves. The time is coming when we must meet the Savior whether we shall desire it or not."

President Gardner then spoke for some time upon the necessity and the importance of the Gospel, and in connection exhorted all to use their time and days well while on this earth, that in the end it might be said of us: "Well done thou good and faithful servant." We must not ourselves, but we must so live that we may meet the Savior when He shall come.

Meeting was closed by singing, "We thank thee, O God, for a prophet." Benediction by Brother H. C. Jex.

At 6 p. m. meeting was opened by singing and prayer. The first speaker was Elder H. C. Jex, who spoke briefly on the importance of united effort, and advised us to keep our records clean for according to our works are we to be judged. Te Rontoa (native) said we must follow in the path of Savior that if we would be saved. Tamihana (native) said he had to reach the end by perseverance by example, for that was the only way to salvation. Hemana Te Kaupapa (native) dwelt for a short time upon the resurrection of the Gospel. President Gardner made a few remarks upon the duties of Presidents of branches etc.

Monday, December 24th, at 10 a. m. meeting was opened by singing and prayer. The speakers were Eugene Bell, Kaiapo Kawhena and President Gardner. The remarks were all interesting.

At 2 p. m. meeting again convened when the speakers were as under as follows: Hare Kawia, Hemare Apatiti, Aneta Nganeko and Peiera, all of whom spoke very earnest and faithful words, testifying as to faithfulness and to endeavor to keep ourselves pure and spotless before God.

In the evening a testimony meeting was held at which twenty-two Saints bore each a faithful testimony. After this meeting the Saints were all together for a social time. Elder Hudson, a preacher who met with us very several good songs and was accompanied on the violin. A program of exercises had been prepared for the evening, rendered on Christmas day, together with sports, for which court towels five or six had been provided. At 9 p. m. the Saints were dismissed by the following program being successfully rendered.

Song, Gather Ben, by Adam O'Brien and Peiera, Hemare, Hare Apatiti.
Recitation, Hare Apatiti.
Song, Hemare and Peiera.
Song, Hemare and Peiera.
Song, Hemare and Peiera, Wm. Gardner.
Song, Hemare and Peiera, Wm. Gardner.
Recitation, by Hemare, by L. J. O'Brien.
Song, Hemare, Peiera.
Song, Hemare and Peiera, Wm. Gardner.
Recitation, Hare Apatiti.
Song, Hemare, Peiera.
Closing, Wm. Gardner.

Immediately after the program we all drove to a house that might be termed a house that might be termed a house of entertainment. Green tea, coffee and cakes were served, while on the table were pudding, fish, taro, taytoes, oranges, lemonade, etc., etc., they were many there in attendance. I only wish I could tell of the table which was so decorated with fruits and ornamental plants. But it is more than is within my power to tell, as we were not to be the guests. They consisted of Kaitaring, high jumping, putting the weight, and so on, for the men, while at the small boys and the ladies there were appropriate prizes for the successful contests.

Taken all in all it was truly a time of rejoicing to very dear and the Te Awapuni Saints deserve very great credit for the satisfactory manner in which they entertained us. Such a time will be long to be remembered by all present, while to those who come from afar to attend conference it can truly be said well done.

The writer was greatly delighted during the five days of conference, as indeed it has been for some weeks past. On Wednesday (today), we separate for our respective homes and fields of labor, and I pray with a feeling of thankfulness to live nearer to God in the future, while it is quite safe to say that the conference at Te Awapuni will long be remembered and spoken of as one of the most enjoyable times to the lives of all who were present.

T. J. O'Brien.
Clerk of the Conference.

In reflecting upon Zion and her interests, I thought a few lines concerning Wairarapa would be of interest; I therefore write briefly concerning the same, that the Saints in Zion may know as to its welfare, and that a few of the Lord's servants are still toiling there. As to its progress the same may be gleaned by perusing the following.

At the last April conference held in New Zealand, an additional Elder was appointed to this district, for European labor; thus enabling the two already here to devote the greater portion of their time and labor to the Maori people, as well as assisting them now and labor among Europeans. During the past months, the work of spreading the everlasting gospel has been energetically pushed by all residing in or near Gladstone; great work has been done and that the time is short to perform that duty, which is to warn all mankind that the Gospel has been restored, and of God's judgements which are so near, yea, even at our doors.

In my travels among both races here, I notice a more manifest desire on the part of the white race to investigate the principles of the Gospel, than has taken place, to the writer's knowledge, since the first day of the first dispensation of the fullness of times, namely the first day of December, 1830, at the organization of the Church of Christ of Latter-day Saints. Many are the calls for Elders to visit and preach in their midst, and the Elders are kept busy in answering these calls, and in preaching the Gospel to those who are anxious to hear it. Many are the calls for me to visit Gladstone, but I am unable to do so, as I am appointed to labor in Masterton, and have been laboring there for the past two months. Brother Ellis and myself have been visiting from house to house, and preaching the Gospel in the streets of the town. Last month we had the privilege of baptizing one person, a young man, who is now laboring with us in the ministry. Since then we have had the privilege of baptizing another young man, who is also laboring with us in the ministry. Last Sunday we had the privilege of baptizing a young lady