Jenson's Travels.

LETTER NO. VIII.

Friday, December 6th, 1895. The hearts of Elders William Gardner and Andrew Jenson were made glad by the reception of American mail, which had been forwarded to us from Auckland. All was well at our respective homes when our family letters were written. The public news from the land of the Saints was also of a cheering nature. If there is anything that causes more than ordinary joy in the heart of an Elder in a foreign land, it is the reception of good news from home; and in New Zealand, where there is only a monthly mail from America the arrival of the mail steamer is always a red letter day with our Elders. All traveling programmes and missionary appointments are generally made with due consideration of American mail day, when the Elder desires to find himself in close proximity to his post office, that he may receive his news from "loved ones" at home. At 5 o'clock p. m. we boarded the good steamer Tasmania, one of the Huddart, Parker and Co's vessels, once more and sailed for Dunedin, South Island. The day was cloudy, but not stormy; hence we had a pleasant voyage. The coast scenery which presents itself to view as one sails out of the Wellington harbor is very interesting, though not so grand or beautiful as seen in several other parts of the world.

Saturday, December 7th, at 5:30 a. m. the Tasmania reached the mouth of the inlet on which Port Lyttleton is situated about six miles up from the Ocean. At 6 a. m. we arrived at the harbor, 175 miles from Wellington; and as the steamer was to remain here for several hours, Elder Gardner and myself landed, and boarded the railroad train which in twenty minutes brought us to the beautiful city of Christchurch, six and a half miles from Lyttleton. Nearly two miles of this distance is through a tunnel which has been bored through the heart of the mountain which separates Port Lyttleton from the Canterbury plains. We spent the morning hours walking through the artificial park lying adjacent to the museum and we were particularly interested in the fine ponds and the scenery along the Avon river which passes through both the park and the city, and abounds with fish. We also visited the public library, and on returning to the railway station we unexpectedly met Elders Edgar O. Best and Wallace C. Castleton who are laboring as missionaries in Canterbury with headquarters in Christchurch. Many years ago there was a flourishing branch of Latter-day Saints in Christchurch, and others in the immediate vicinity; but the members of these have long since emigrated to Zion or, have strayed off, with the exception of one or two who still remain and are only counted as scattered members. In 1894 missionary labors were renewed in Canterbury, and the prospects are now good for a successful work being done. Quite a number of people are investigating the principles of the Gospel, and a few months ago Elder Best baptized two.

The city of Christchurch is situated in a flat country, on the edge of what is known locally as the Canterbury plains. The distant mountains to the west, especially in winter and spring, when covered with snow, form a beautiful background to the city, while to the south the Lyttleton Hills rise to a height of 1,600 feet. The city has been admirably laid out; only the roads which follow the winding banks of the small river Avon that flows through the town breaks somewhat the regular plan of street system; large plantations of English trees have been made in the parks, squares, avenues and private gardens; many of the buildings, both private and public are excellent specimens of architecture, whether built of greystone, brick or wood. Personally, I like Christchurch better than any other city I have seen so far in New Zealand.

One of earliest difficulties which the first settlers of Christchurch had to contend with was that of communication between the Port and the Plains. At first the only means of conveying goods to Christchurch was by sea in steam lighters to the estuary of the Avon, and up the river Heathcote. In 1857 the road between Christchurch and Sumner, on the Lyttleton Inlet, was opened, but it was soon afterwards resolved to make a tunnel through the hills. The tunnel is 2866 yards in length—the longest tunnel in the southern hemisphere. The line was opened in 1867, being the first railway constructed in New Zealand.

After a hurried conversation with Elders Best and Castleton we returned to Lyttleton and again boarded the Tasmania, which sailed at 2 p. m. After rounding the heads at the mouth of the inlet the ship headed for Dunedin, about two hundred miles away, and as the weather was good and the sea smooth, we spent another pleasant night on the briny deep.

Sunday, December 8th. At 6 o'clock a. m., we entered the picturesque inlet which leads up to Dunedin; about half way up we passed Port Chalmers on our right, and at 7 a. m. we were lying alongside of the wharf at Dunedin. Here we met Elder John G. Young, one of the missionaries from Zion laboring in the Otago district, or the south end of the South Island of New Zealand. As we had no Saints to visit in Dunedin and felt no particular desire to go to any of the Sectarian churches, we took a stroll through the main street of the city and also visited the museum; the remainder of the day we spent at our rooms in the hotel reading. In the evening we walked to the Princess theatre, where one of the popular Dunedin divines was preaching a farewell sermon, but the house was too crowded for us to gain admittance, so we had to content ourselves with listening to some Salvation Army performance and to go away without being "converted" or "saved," though one of the "ladies" in the meeting who considered it her duty to talk to us, tried her best to tell us something about being baptized of the Lord, without being able to answer our question in regard to the necessity of being baptized of water and of the spirit.

Monday, December 9th. We (Elders Gardner, Young and Jenson) called at the Union Steamship general office in Dunedin, and succeeded in making arrangements for a reduction of 10 per cent in the regular fare for our Elders traveling from port to port in and between New Zealand, Australia, Samoa, Tonga and Fiji, or on all the Union Steamship Co's steamers. Hitherto our Elders have been allowed no reduction, though such has been given to ministers of the Gospel belonging to other denominations. The main object of my visit to Dunedin was to secure a concession of that kind from the company named. After this visit we climbed a high hill from the summit of which we obtained a good view of the city and harbor, through the courtesy of the town clerk we were also permitted to ascend the high tower of the city building from which a grand bird's eye view is obtained of the business part of the city. We also spent a couple of hours in the Athenaeum library, which is very creditable to a town like Dunedin. At 4 p. m. we took leave of Elder Young, who returned by rail for his field of labor in the south.

Dunedin is the capital of the provincial district of Otago, and by its own citizens it is claimed to be the largest, best built and most important commercial city in New Zealand. It is situated on a picturesque site at the southwestern side of a bay running inland about nine miles. Its streets are well paved and lighted with gas, it has also good water works. During the last few years a large number of substantial buildings have been erected, rendering an air of permanency and wealth to the business portion of the city. The city is enclosed by a recreation reserve called the Town Belt, through which a carriage drive called the Queen's drive has been laid out. Dunedin was founded in 1848 under the auspices of an association of members of the Free Church of Scotland, and the intention was to make it purely a Scotch community and permit no other class of settlers; but the scheme would not work, though the Free Church of Scotland members still constitute a majority of its inhabitants. The progress of the city was slow until 1861, when gold fields of extraordinary riches were discovered seventy-two miles from the town. This brought crowds of diggers in from Australia. The town now has a population of about 48,000. It is situated in latitude 45° 52' 17". Hence, the climate is strictly temperate, but only a little snow falls in the winter.

Tuesday, December 10th. After attending to some more transportation business with the steamship companies, Elder Gardner and myself left the Leviathan hotel, where the extremely modest and moderate proprietress demanded pay for what we had not received, and repaired to the harbor arriving in time to see the Tasmania swing out from the wharf as she was leaving for Port Chalmers, the bridge having been taken in already. But by watching our chance, as one end of the ship touched the wharf, we sprang on board, an undertaking which was not accomplished without some danger of falling into the water. We could have overtaken the steamer at Port Chalmers by taking a railway train later on, but we desired to meet John Mutrell, Esq., general New Zealand agent of the Huddart, Parker Company who was on board. We had no difficulty in effecting with him the same reduction for our Elders that the Union company had granted. Leaving Dunedin at 10 a. m. we arrived at Port Chalmers (eight miles down the inlet) an hour later. Here we landed and spent several hours on shore. After taking a rest sitting in the green grass on the top of a hill overlooking the harbor, we walked through the town, which contains about 4,000 inhabitants, and also made interesting observations in regard to the dry dock, a heavy weight hoisting apparatus, the heaviest forge in New Zealand and other things of interest at the harbor. Port Chalmers is the deep sea port for Dunedin. All large vessels stop here; and only the smaller ones owing to shallow water and irregular channel, can with safety go up to the Dunedin wharf. At 4 p. m. we boarded the Tasmania once more and steamed off for Lyttleton but owing to the heavy current considerable difficulty was experienced in turning the ship in the narrow channel. We reached the open ocean at 5 p. m., and the wind and waves being favorable, we experienced another pleasant voyage.

Wednesday, December 11th. At 6 o'clock a. m. we arrived at the mouth of the Lyttleton inlet and an hour later we arrived at the Lyttleton wharf. Being informed that the ship would not sail till 4 o'clock in the afternoon Elder Gardner and myself landed, and walked up to the top of the mountain lying immediately back of Lyttleton. Its highest point to which we climbed is about 1600 feet above sea level; and from that lofty summit we enjoyed a grand view of the surrounding country. Looking northward the city of Christchurch with its suburbs and surrounding villages lay unfolded to our gaze, while far beyond the snow capped mountains popularly called the Alps of the South rose their lofty peaks heavenward, and formed a sublime background to the extensive and fertile Canterbury plains which extend from the coast inland about sixty miles. From north to south this level tract of country is about one hundred miles long. Looking to the right or northward and northeast, the broad expanse of the ocean called forth our admiration. The view reminds one of Salt Lake valley as seen from Ensign Peak, though the New Zealand landscape is by far the most extensive. But there certainly is a similarity. While the windings of the Jordan and the Hot Springs lake is plainly seen from Ensign Peak, the serpentine course of the Avon on the Canterbury plains and a sheet of water or coast lake lying about as near the ocean as the Hot Springs lake does to the Great Salt Lake, is observed with much interest from the top of the Lyttleton mountain. Looking south and southeast the view is nearly as grand. Here almost at our feet lies the town of Lyttleton which for the lack of level ground to build upon has its houses perched upon the steep hill sides. Across the inlet with its numerous arms and miniature bays lies Banks' Peninsula, a mountainous tract of country which hides part of the Canterbury plains from the view of an ocean observer. After enjoying the interesting scenery before us for some time, we sat down upon the grassy hill side and sang some of the songs of Zion; we also poured out our hearts in thanksgiving to God for His kindness and mercy to us, and invoked His blessings upon our future labors, and upon Zion and her cause in every land, not forgetting our own loved ones in far off Utah. It was a beautiful summer day, the finest day of the season in New Zealand so far, and all nature clad in its beautiful robes of green appeared lovely indeed. While standing on the summit several railway trains passed through the mountain underneath us, and we also watched several steamers passing in and out of the Lyttleton harbor, which viewed from such an elevation as the one we occupied added increased interest to the surroundings. After descending the mountain we spent some time viewing the vessels in the Lyttleton harbor. We also boarded the great steamer Tokomaru of London, which is capable of carrying 9000 tons of freight; at present it is chartered for the frozen meat service, and can carry at one time 100,000 sheep carcasses. The exportation of mutton from New Zealand to England is a very important branch of commerce in this part of the world. One of the officers (Mr. Inniss) took us into his cabin and treated us to a bottle of soda water each. This was quite timely so far as I was concerned, as this was the forty-fifth anniversary of my birthday. We also visited the dry dock where the steamer Fiesburg, of Glasgow, was laid up for repair. She ran on the rocks off the east coast near Oamaru last Sunday night and was badly damaged. She had no Mormon Elder on board when she struck. At 4 p. m. we again boarded the Tasmania and at 5 o'clock we continued our voyage now bound for Wellington. Another fine night and another pleasant voyage.

Thursday, December 12th. At 7 o'clock a. m., the Tasmania landed Elder Gardner and myself together with all her other passengers safely at Wellington. We shall long remember the Tasmania and its gentlemanly officers and other persons. She is a fine steamer, affording nearly all the modern conveniences which a traveler meets with in first-class vessels. Captain Thomas McGee, who is a man of much experience on the sea, is a kind-hearted and interesting gentleman, and very popular with the traveling public. After landing in Wellington, we sought our former quarters on Willis street, then called at the post office where we received some additional mail matter from home; I also called on government officials to obtain literature and maps of New Zealand, and spent the remainder of the day and evening at the public library reading "Capt. Cook's Voyages."

ANDREW JENSON.

PICTON, New Zealand, Dec. 12th, 1895.

CONFERENCE IN INDIANA.

Report of Five Days' Meetings Held in the Hoosier State.

MARION, Ind., April 13th, 1896.

To the Editor:

Herewith is a synopsis of the conference of the Indiana conference of the Northern States Mission held in the Marion Court House from March 27th to 31st inclusive.

The Elders were entertained during their stay by the following: A. L. Gore, J. C. Jackson, M. Cannon, J. M. Campbell, J. M. Froggy, Anderson, Eliza C. Pollard, Dr. Cary, Mrs. Dennison and W. W. Wilder.

The music was furnished by the Misses Johnson and Betts, with the Elders, conducted by Christian Larson.

Conference commenced March 27th at 10 a. m., with forty-nine Elders in attendance. Elder Joshua R. Clark president of the Mission and Elder Samuel G. Spencer president of the conference were among the number. The meeting opened by singing; prayer was offered by Elder J. H. Clark. Elder Clark made a few opening remarks in which he introduced Elder George A. Hill, who spoke upon the first principle of the Gospel, faith. He was followed by Elder Christian Larson upon the same subject. The choir sang and repentance was next taken up by Elders F. M. Stephenson and C. E. Dinwoodey. Benediction by Elder J. H. Stout.

2 p. m. Services called to order by President Clark. Elders J. G. Ranck, A. M. Archibald and B. H. Telford spoke upon the subject of baptism. Elder S. G. Spencer bore his testimony to the truth of the Gospel, and the meeting closed with benediction.

At 7:30 p. m. conference resumed. During this meeting the Holy Ghost was dwelt upon by Elders A. Buchanan, V. L. Candland and John Davis.

Saturday 28th, 10 a. m. After opening exercises Nephi E. Rogers spoke upon the dawn of apostasy. He was followed by Elders M. Wathrope and S. G. Spencer upon the same subject. Elder A. A. Dibble spoke upon persecution. He reviewed the persecutions of the Saints from the beginning of the Church to the present time. President Clark added a few remarks on the same subject.

At 2 p. m. after opening exercises Elders W. F. Talley and Joseph Empey spoke upon the atonement, and Elders J. H. Stout and W. C. Humphrey spoke upon the apostasy from the ancient church.

At 7:30 p. m. Elders B. H. Telford and E. M. Boyer took up the subjects of authority and restoration showing that the Gospel had been restored to the earth, with the proper authorities to minister in it.

Sunday, March 29th, 10 a. m.—The subject of Church organization was dwelt upon during this meeting by Elders Freeman Durfee, John L. Snow and W. F. Mayhew.

At the 2 p. m. meeting, Elder Joseph R. Clark delivered an address upon the personality of God.

At 7:30 p. m., Elder Samuel G. Spencer spoke upon the Book of Mormon, taking up the life of Joseph Smith from his birth up to and through the translating of the plates.

Monday, March 30th, 10 a. m.—The subject at this meeting was Latter-day revelation, and was discoursed upon by Elders T. W. Jones, Thomas W. Eggett and W. E. Cragun.

At 2 p. m., Elders Nathan George and S. L. Bunnell spoke upon the subject of tithing. They also bore their testimony as to the truth of the Gospel. Elders O. R. Orier and Asa Kienke dwelt upon the subject of lost scriptures. Elder E. M. Boyer spoke a short time upon both subjects.

7:30 p. m.—Elder John Davis took up the subject of salvation for the dead, occupying the whole time.

Tuesday, 31st 10 a. m.—Elder W. E. Cragun took up the subject of the scattering of Israel. He was followed by Elder E. D. Sorenson upon the same subject. The subject of the gathering of Israel was presented by Elders D. E. Lowery and Martin Brucherson. Elder C. Larson then made a short review of both subjects, and touching upon the principle of faith.

2 p. m.—The first subject for this meeting was the pre-existence of spirits, taken up by Elders J. W. Vickers and Thomas S. Cook. Elder B. H. Telford then spoke for a few minutes upon the second coming of Christ.

7:30 p. m.—Elder S. G. Spencer occupied the time upon the subject of the resurrection and also upon marriage.

Two days' Priesthood meeting followed the conference, Elders B. H. Telford, J. L. Snow and Nephi Rogers were released. The meetings of the conference were not very largely attended although we think they have allayed much prejudice.

The Elders have made many friends here who did not like to have them leave.

C. E. DINWOODEY,
Clerk of Conference.

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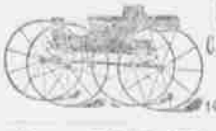
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