

## MISCELLANEOUS.

## JENSON'S TRAVELS.

LETTER NO. LVII.

On Sunday, April 26th, 1896, we held Priesthood meeting at the Bellevue House, Sydney, where most of the Elders were lodging, and the newly arrived Elders were assigned to their several provinces, agreeable to the instructions given them at the headquarters of the Church. Elders Peterson, Kirkham and Peterson go to New Zealand to receive their further appointments from the president of the mission; Elders Orme and Harvey go to Tasmania to fill up the vacancies caused by the returning of Elders Ellis and Pond; Elder Carr goes to Victoria to labor as a companion to Brother Joseph Stephenson, and Brother Hamilton proceeds to Queensland to assist the three Elders already in that field, or to fill the gap instanced by Elder Bodily having left for his home in Zion. In the evening we held a public meeting in a rented hall in Alexandra, where Elder Pond and myself spoke to an appreciative audience of Saints and strangers, under the influence of the good spirit which gave utterance to God's servants. No less than seventeen Elders and one sister from Zion were present; they formed a suggestive and interesting semi-circle at the head of the hall while the auditorium was well filled with attentive listeners.

On the following day I rendered the brethren some assistance in their arrangements for transportation, and obtained a concession of 20 per cent reduction from the Orient steamship company in the fare of our Elders, who hereafter may desire to return home by way of Europe. The presentation of their missionary license signed by the First Presidency is all that is necessary in securing the reduction.

On Friday May 1st, the steamship Warrimoo sailed from Sydney for Vancouver, British Columbia, with thirty two Latter-day Saints on board. This included the thirty souls already mentioned as passengers on the Anglian from Auckland to Sydney, and in addition to them Elder George W. Lewis and a Brother Brooksby, who is emigrating to Zion from the Harrow branch, in Victoria, Australia. In saying goodbye to our brethren and the departing Saints those of us who remained behind felt a peculiar sensation around the region of the heart, and a sort of feminine moisture obstructing the usual functions of our visionary organs, notwithstanding our best efforts to make it otherwise. And as a parting word to our fellow-laborers, in connection with our heartfelt "God bless you," we requested them to remember us to our friends in the land of the Saints, and that when their eyes should gaze once more upon the majestic heights and snowclad peaks of the mountains of Utah, to give three cheers in behalf of Utah's patriotic sons who are laboring as ministers of the Gospel in foreign lands.

After the departure of the company for Zion and most of the newly arrived Elders for their respective fields of labor Elder Goff and myself turned our special attention to historical labors; but as none of the old records were on hand we could accomplish only a very little

in this direction. I was much more successful in gaining information of a general character of New South Wales and Australia, and obtained from some colonial officials and others some excellent books and maps to aid in writing something about the condition and resources of the country.

Australia is the largest island in the world, if it is proper to class it as an island; it is in reality a continent. It lies to the southeast of Asia, between the parallels of  $10^{\circ} 39' 11\frac{1}{2}''$  south latitude and the meridians of  $113^{\circ} 5'$  and  $153^{\circ} 16'$  east longitude. Its greatest length from west to east is about 2,400 miles and greatest width between Cape York on the north and Wilson's promontory on the south is 1,971 miles. Its coast line is about 7750 in length, and its extent is computed at 2,944,628 square miles or 1,884,561,920 acres. Some conception of the area of Australia may be better gathered by comparison. It is about twenty six times the size of Great Britain and Ireland, fifteen times the size of France, about one-sixth smaller than the whole of the United States of America, and only about one-fifth smaller than the continent of Europe. The northern shores of Australia are washed by the waters of Torres Strait (which separate it from New Guinea) the gulf of Carpentaria, the Arafura Sea and the Indian Ocean. It is bounded on the south by Bass Strait (which divides it from Tasmania,) and by the South Pacific Ocean; on the east by the South Pacific Ocean; and on the west by the Indian Ocean. A fair idea of Australia and the location of its several colonies may be gathered by considering it as divided into three parts, namely, Western, Central and Eastern. The Western part consists entirely of Western Australia; the Central of South Australia and its allied Northern Territory; the Eastern of the three colonies of Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria. Western Australia, occupying the whole of the western portion of the continent, is surrounded on its northern, western and southern side by the sea, its eastern boundary being the colony of South Australia and the Northern Territory. Its capital city is Perth. To the eastward of west Australia and stretching from ocean to ocean, occupying the whole of the central portion of the continent is the colony of South Australia, the northern part of which is known as the Northern Territory; Adelaide is the capital. The principal town of the Northern Territory is Palmerston. To the eastward of the Northern Territory and South Australia lies the colony of Queensland, which embraces the northeastern portion of the Australian continent. Brisbane is the capital of Queensland. South of Queensland and east of South Australia is New South Wales, the mother colony of Australia. Sydney is the capital. Occupying the most southerly part of the continent, southwest of the New South Wales and eastward of South Australia, is the colony of Victoria. The metropolis is the city of Melbourne.

Australia consists of an immense plateau, with a narrow neck of land sometimes intervening between the edge of the elevated area and the sea. The east side is the highest, averaging about

2000 feet above the ocean. The west side is not more than 1000 feet above the same; the north is a little higher. The south side is either level with the ocean or abuts in cliffs upon the sea, ranging from 300 to 600 feet in height. The general character of all the seaward side of the table land is precipitous, but on the southeast angle of the continent the tabular form disappears, and there is a true cluster of mountains called the Australian Alps whose highest elevation is a little over 7000 feet. The inland portion of the table land slopes by a very gradual incline towards a central depression, which is south and east of the true centre of the continent. Thus the incline is greater and shorter for the east side of Australia and it is on this side alone that there exists what may be properly termed a river system. The elevation of the west side of Australia being only half that of the east, or even less, and the distance of the central depression being twice as great, there is no drainage toward the interior. Whatever water falls from the clouds collects in marshes, which are generally salt. The soil on that side consists generally of disintegrated granite rocks and is sterile and dry, forming little better than a sandy desert. All the tableland is more or less interrupted with ranges of mountains which, however, are not sufficiently high to give rise to a river system.

Each of the five Australian colonies have their own governments, local laws and fiscal duties. They all enjoy what a Britisher terms responsible government. The form of government is a modification of the British constitution, the queen being represented by the governor, who is appointed by the crown; the House of Lords by the Legislative Council, nominated or elected; and the House of Commons by the Legislative Assembly, elected by the people. The imperial laws are in force, unless superseded by local enactment, and all acts passed by the local legislatures must receive the queen's assent prior to their becoming law.

The climate of Australia, taken as a whole, is healthy and generally very dry and free from malaria. It is, however, subject in summer to hot winds and periodical droughts, and in winter to heavy rains. The seasons are reverse to those in Europe or North America, December being midsummer and June midwinter.

The staple productions of Australia are gold, silver, copper, tin and other metals, wool and other pastoral products, sugar, grain and neat. Wool is the general and great staple of Australia and forms its largest exports. From 1887 to 1890 1,989,208,705 pounds were exported of the value of £81,315,960. For the year 1892 the total exports were nearly 800 million pounds, valued at £28,342,490. For the growth of wool of excellent quality the Australian pastures are unrivaled. It is no wonder that the sheepmen of the United States of America cannot successfully compete with the Australian wool grower without protection.

At a rough estimate, Australia has 110 different kinds of that particular family of animals known as marsupials, of which the kangaroo and the opossum are the best known varieties; others being the wombat and native bear. There are also twenty-four varieties of bats; one wild dog family called the dingo or warragal; thirty species of rat or mice,