

Written for this Paper

LETTER FROM SAMOA.

SAVAII, Samoa, October 24, 1894.

Having many relatives and friends in Zion, and laboring in the same glorious cause with Elders who are similarly situated. I now take the time to write to the many readers of your valuable paper, that they may be informed concerning the labors of the wandering Mormon boys on Samoa. I will endeavor to give a little of the history of a few of us the past six months.

Six months ago now, I left Fagaili, Upolu, and went alone to Fagatuli, Savaii, about one hundred miles west of Fagaili. It was just a few days before our beloved president R. M. Stevens, left us for his heavenly home that I parted with him, his lovely wife, Sister Hilton and several brethren, for my western field of labor. How well I remember the last remarks and actions of our late beloved president! 'Tis stamped upon my memory, never to be erased, while life or immortality endure.

It was a month after leaving Fagaili before I heard from any of the brethren, but at last the sad account of our president's death arrived. How terrible it seemed at first! But after duly considering the matter, I had to say, "Thy will O Lord be done; give us strength to trust in Thee." Though some might think foolish, I have many times thought I would welcome the day when I am called to go to preach on the other side, if I could be worthy to reunite with Elder Stevens in preaching the Gospel to the departed—to the old Samoan fathers, who have died since they lost the knowledge of the Gospel in the days of old, after their flourishing so long in the light of truth, and united in great, ancient America; after the appearing of our Savior to them. But, I am yet a sinful man. I must wait to learn and gain experience, that it may be said of me, "he has fought a good fight, and finished his work in righteousness." Then and not till then, do I wish to go; that I may be able, as here, to unite with my brethren in carrying the Gospel to God's children—offering salvation at their doors.

To return to my story: I spent seven weeks of the happiest days of my life laboring at Fagatuli together with J. A. Rasband, my companion there. We healed each other and healed others when afflicted, by the power of the Priesthood, which brought joy and great comfort to us, knowing that the Lord accepted our weak efforts to serve Him.

June 14th we were surprised by the sudden appearance of Elders J. W. Beck and S. W. Walker at our door. They brought our mail, but I was so anxious to know their business that I forgot to ask about the mail until two hours had passed away. I was greatly impressed that my field of labor would soon be changed, and so it was; for on the morrow, about 10 a. m. Brother Beck took me for his companion and left Brother Walker to labor with Elder Rasband.

We were three days journeying from the west to my destination. I was requested by Elder Beck to do my best towards erecting a meeting house in this branch—Salelavalii. With Elder J. C. Knudsen for a companion, we soon were busily engaged in our new ap-

pointment, and at last, through the blessings of the Lord in opening up the foreigners' heart to assist us, and giving us excellent health and strength, we have our labor completed; the house being finished and dedicated the 6th instant at our conference, which was held here at that time we are happy and glad to say is the best on the mission, and hasn't cost the Church \$10. Thus the Lord has blessed and to Him all praise we give.

I wish to state here, in favor of foreigners here on Samoa, especially on this island, that they treat us Elders with all the kindness and respect that we could wish for. Many from whom we buy give us things at wholesale prices, and some without even charging the freight. Mr. D. Kenison and sons, and Mr. Allen of this place, Mr. Peter Jensen of Salailua, and the Burgess family of Falalima are among those who will ever be remembered by all Elders of this island because of their helping us in so many ways. There are others who are equally as kind whose names I will not give. Our prayers are that they will receive the reward that the Savior promised those who assisted His servants in any way; surely "they will in no wise lose their reward," for they have given us much more than a cool glass of water when we have been in need.

As to our experience after conference at Salelavalii, Monday the 8th instant, after the morning meeting had closed, the Saints of Saleaula soon got ready and were not long sailing homeward. About noon, Elder Silver and the writer took Brother Beck out to the schooner of Mr. Allen. Brother Beck wished to go to Upolu to visit his old field of labor before the gathering of the Elders at Fagaili, the 19th of the present month; however, the schooner returned at 5 p. m., and on learning the cause of its quick return, we were surprised that the captain of the boat was overcome by fear because of the rough sea in the straits.

Tuesday the 9th, Elders Rasband and Silver started on their journey over land to Saleaula to spend a week before going to Upolu. Bro's. Beck and Walker remained with us until Saturday the 13th, when they left in Mr. Kenison's vessel for Upolu.

Monday the 15th, Bros. Rasband and Silver returned from Saleaula. They found my companion and me very busy engaged helping our friend F. Kenison, to put a roof on his stone kitchen. The next day we four Elders spent the day very pleasantly together.

On Wednesday the 17th, Mr. D. Kenison returned in his schooner from Apia, but we were very much put out to learn that his boat ran over the reef the night before and so damaged it that he would not be able to take us to Fagaili. The boys then looked to me for a way to go to Upolu; so I sent my companion with two natives to Tuasivi, five miles, to get a boat that had been promised us if we wished it. They returned about noon, and before sunset we had the boat all rigged up, and at sunset, with a gentle east wind, we four Elders and two natives set sail for Upolu. As the last rays of the sun faded away we passed through the Savaii reef. We found the sea very smooth, to our great delight, and thus it continued until we reached Upolu, about 1 a. m. We rested at Laloui until day began to dawn, when we again started for Fagaili in the boat. We rowed along

this morning with very little wind until we neared Malua, our half way point, from Laloui. The last mile was very hard rowing, owing to a heavy head wind, and our empty stomachs. At Malua we left the boat, and on going to the L. M. Society's teacher at his house on business I was received and treated very kindly by the minister. Returning to the Elders, I was accompanied by the reverend gentleman who gave us a very pressing invitation to come to the house and take dinner with himself and companion, who was then at his class. I sent the brethren back with him but went on with the natives. I was soon overtaken however by a native, who said: "Aliil Na fai maille Misi, sei fai mai!" which means that the principal wished me to return. I returned and was very kindly greeted by the Rev. Prof. Meriot who said we "must by no means continue our journey until after dinner. Being very hungry we allowed our appetites to overcome our pride, although we were dressed in our rough traveling suits. So we remained a couple of hours and were treated with all the courtesy that we could ask for. We were entertained for an hour before dinner by a young, pleasant intelligent-looking, school mistress from New Zealand. It made us think of, and feel like home to converse with this pleasant lady, but when our eyes would drop upon our long-worn clothes, we didn't feel so much at home.

Malua is the old established normal school station, of the London Missionary Society, where they educate and train natives for the ministry, it is situated fifteen miles west of Apia. We were the first of our Elders to have visited there, and we feel very much favored that we were so kindly treated by those who formerly treated us with such hatred; thus again fulfilling the promises of President Woodruff at the dedication of the Salt Lake Temple when he said, "Those who have been bitter towards us will turn to us with favor and, the Elders in the missionary field will be treated with more kindness than has hitherto been known, for the spirit of hatred will vanish away from this time forth" etc.

We traveled by land, on foot, from Malua to Fagaili where we arrived before dark. We were very much pleased indeed to shake each other again by the hand. Such joy is only known to Elders of Israel, who have labored in the field. We were also very happy to greet the "new missionary" of Elder Hilton and wife, who was born four days before our arrival. But, alas, his mission was short here on earth. He was taken sick near the midnight hour of Friday night, the 19th instant, and near eleven o'clock Saturday night, the 20th, his little spirit took its flight to return to the God who gave it, to reunite with those pure beings with whom it parted such a short time before. In vain we strove unitedly to save the little soul's life by faith and prayers to God in its behalf, but its days were numbered, we could not change the Divine will of Jehovah. Indeed it was a sad parting with our little brother and son, yet we now feel to say, "Thy will, O Lord, be done."

Sunday morning we began conference and the exercises of the day were very interesting. Monday and Tuesday forenoon we held meetings, in which valuable instructions were given, both in