

Elder N. P. Nelson congratulated the people assembled. Thanked them for their kindness to the Elders of this conference; showed the condition of the Christian world today and the necessity of inspired Apostles and Prophets to guide the people in the straight and narrow way; bore his testimony to the divinity of the mission of the Prophet Joseph and the Book of Mormon; and asked God's blessings upon the people.

Elder J. P. Aydelotte spoke upon the principle of faith and the fruits flowing from it.

Elder W. E. Dawson spoke upon repentance.

Elder T. B. Thatcher spoke upon Baptism—its essentiality, object and mode. He asked the people to read and study for themselves and then ask the Lord in humble prayer to give them an understanding of what they read.

Elder T. R. Mitchell spoke upon the authenticity of the Book of Mormon.

Elder I. F. Holts Claw spoke upon the apostasy, restoration and the kingdom of God, quoting an abundance of scripture to substantiate his position.

In our Priesthood meetings, we had the Spirit with us and many good and timely instructions, pertaining to our work as ambassadors of Christ, were given.

The Elders bore testimony and expressed a desire to accomplish more in the coming year than they had in the past.

We were favored with the company of two of our brethren from the North Carolina conference, who gave us good instructions upon our duties as the Lord's servants.

Our conference closed with the Elders all feeling well and determined to do their duty to this people.

The "News" is a welcome visitor.

We remain your brethren, the Elders of the East Tennessee conference,
S. B. THATCHER, Pres.,
Hale, Mitchell County, N. C.

Southern Illinois Conference.

St. Louis, Missouri,
September 24, 1898.

The Elders of the Northern and Southern Illinois conferences met in joint semi-annual session at Springfield, Illinois, September 16th, 17th and 18th, where, by kindness of the management of the state capitol building we were given the free use of representative hall, for which the mission were very grateful. The changes in public sentiment and feeling wrought during the last half century, were very marked indeed. The action of the officials in thus opening the legislative halls of the state, for the proclamation of the Gospel, that same doctrine for which only fifty years ago whole communities were despoiled of their goods, driven from their homes and expelled from the state, to wander as exiles over the then wild bleak prairies of Iowa, exposed to the dreadful vengeance of the savage, as well as the cold chill of the winter winds; yea, more, for the proclamation of which men whose only desire was the welfare same doctrine for which only fifty years blood, and that, too, while under the supposed protection of the state, secured by the pledged honor of the chief executive.

Only a half century ago, within the legislative halls of the state were heard discussions of enactments by which the Mormons could be legally expelled from the state of Illinois; now the doors of the state capitol building are thrown open to forty-four Elders of that same organization—the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, who represent the missionary force of the state of Illinois; and from the Springfield press comes such expressions as the following:

"The Elders who are in attendance at the conference, are men who would attract favorable notice anywhere. They are men of intelligence, of good address and acquainted with affairs. They are able preachers of the word, as they understand it.

"It is somewhat of a commentary on the advancement of civilization, that these men are now able to preach fearlessly their doctrine in the very state where their Prophet was put to death only a half century ago, and his people driven forth as wanderers on the face of the earth."

The Springfield Monitor of September 17, 1898:

"Mormon Gathering—Fifty Elders of the faith present at the opening session. The semi-annual conference of Northern and Southern Illinois opened at the State House yesterday. The sessions were held in Representative's Hall and were attended by fifty Elders and many citizens who were interested in the religion of the sect."—Springfield Journal, Sept. 17, 1898.

"The Church of Latter-day Saints has over 200 members in the state of Illinois. Over fifty have been added to the membership since the last semi-annual conference. The Elders in attendance are all intelligent looking men; some of them are quite interesting. The Elders welcome the attendance of everybody without regard to sex, race or color. They are ready to explain their faith to any who desire enlightenment."—Springfield Register, Sept. 17, 1898.

There were in attendance, besides the Elders of the Northern and Southern Illinois conference, Louis A. Kelsch, president of Northern States Mission; Sec. J. E. Cardon and wife, and Elder E. W. Croft, president of Wisconsin conference.

During these three days of conference the principles of the Gospel were presented to the hearers in plainness, and the distinctive features of Mormonism were made to appear in striking contrast to the prevailing beliefs of Christianity but in most beautiful harmony with the Scriptures, reason and truth.

Sunday morning in Priesthood meeting the Elders were given their companions and assigned to their respective fields, and after giving in their reports for the past six months, were given much good counsel and instruction by Elder Louis A. Kelsch, Elders J. E. Cardon and E. W. Croft, after which the conference closed with the same good spirit which had attended throughout. We all felt much encouraged, and were fired with renewed zeal, strength and determination for the proclamation of truth.

We wish to express our appreciation and thanks for the "News," which is always read with much profit and satisfaction.

We also desire to say to any of the Saints at home who have relatives or friends living in Illinois or St. Louis whom they would like to have the Elders visit, we should be pleased to call on such relatives or friends.

Please send addresses to conference president who will have the Elders call if they can make it convenient.

Your brethren in the Gospel,
MAHONRI M. STOOKEY,
Clerk.

MELVEN J. BULLOCK,
President of the Southern Illinois Conference.

Of the Southern Illinois Conference.
E. P. MIDGLEY,
Clerk.

J. L. McCARREY,
President of the Northern Illinois Conference.

In the Wisconsin Conference.

Fond du Lac, Wis., Sept. 28, 1898.

The Lord is still attending the labors of His servants in this portion of His vineyard.

Since our last communication we have conversed with a great many people both in public and in private, and have walked over a great deal of territory. Last week Elder T. P. Thompson and J. C. Murdock called at a residence in Forest to offer a tract and ask for the privilege of conversing upon the Gospel. It had been raining and they were obliged to clean the mud from their shoes before entering the house. While doing so, the lady of the house came out to meet them; and as they were about to introduce themselves, she inquired if they were not "Mormon" Elders; to which they replied in the affirmative. She welcomed them into the house and with the greatest of rapture said she had been praying for thirty years for the Lord to send them to her door. She then related her experience among the Saints in Utah, where she had gone more than thirty years ago with a friend who belonged to the Church and who went to Salt Lake City to receive her endowments. She also stated that she received a blessing under the hands of President Brigham Young while there; all of which, she said, had been fulfilled, except the coming of the Elders to her door, and that that was now fulfilled.

Her "Mormon" lady friend gave her a bound volume of the Journal of Discourses, which she and her husband had read through several times and that, in connection with what she learned in Salt Lake City, converted her to Mormonism, and now she desires baptism.

Last evening, when we went into the street to hold an open-air meeting we found the crusaders there with their band, occupying our favorite corner, and had attracted a large crowd; we listened until they were through, expecting to try to keep the crowd, and thought to hold services; but when they left, they were followed by the crowd, so we went our way, too. As we passed their hall where they were holding forth again, Elders E. R. Lindsay, L. T. Jones and J. C. Murdock felt impressed to go in and listen, and while there the persuasive words of the Crusaders, together with their singing, induced several persons to step forward to be prayed for, that they might be "converted." One man knelt there for a long time but could not acknowledge that any change had taken place in him. At length when he had been on his knees for more than two hours, the Elders arose to leave the room, when the candidate for conversion arose and turning to them, said: "Gentlemen, I am no more converted than I was at first," and pointing to Elder Lindsay, said: "Don't you want to say something?" Elder Lindsay said he would be pleased to do so with the consent of the presiding officer. Permission was granted and he addressed the audience upon the principles of the Gospel for about fifteen minutes with great power. When the Elders left the hall, the whole audience followed.

The work is very encouraging in this conference, and we all rejoice in the manifestations of the hand of the Lord.

Your brother in the Gospel,
J. D. CUMMINGS,
Clerk of the Wisconsin Conference.

A letter has reached Vancouver from St. Michaels saying that the ballistics sent out to search for Andree were there. They have given up their balloon trip and staked 25 claims.