

ern part of the state and has no railroad entering it. Nearly all the people are engaged in farming. Outside of the farms there is a heavy growth of splendid timber consisting of yellow pine, oak, hickory, etc. In this county Governor McLaurin, the present chief executive of the state, was born and raised. In traveling among the people we have found them, generally speaking, kind and hospitable, and we have made a host of friends in the southern part of the county, where our labors have been mostly confined. Over one hundred families invited us to revisit them, including some of the most influential people.

Hon. J. S. Eaton, representative in the state legislature, gave us permission to use his school house in which to preach and after our services invited us home with him and has treated us very courteously. We have held quite a number of meetings, nearly all of which have been well attended. At one of them three or four times as many people came out as could get into the school house, so we moved the seats out and preached under the trees. At the close of our meeting we received another invitation to preach and several invitations from people to visit them.

One great difficulty we have to contend with is the influence the so-called Christian ministers use against us. Would that their understanding might be touched that they might see the condemnation they are bringing upon their heads in fighting against the truth. Almost invariably the non-professors of religion treat us better than those who claim to be leading lights in the church of Christ and types of perfection. It often reminds one of the scribes and Pharisees spoken of in the life of our blessed Redeemer.

While making efforts to secure the high school building at Sylvaena in which to preach, we had occasion to meet the pastor of the Baptist church, a Mr. Rainer. Upon learning our business he was very pronounced in his opposition to our preaching in the neighborhood. He said our doctrines were wicked and corrupt, and that if his congregation heard us preach, it would require probably months to preach such nonsense out of their heads. We asked him which of our doctrines were corrupt. He answered that the organization of our Church was, and a whole lot more. We bore testimony to him that we were teaching the pure doctrine of Christ as laid down in holy writ, and that the organization of our Church was the same as it was in the days of the Apostles—with prophets, apostles, evangelists, etc. He thereupon remarked that any sensible person knew that a minister and two deacons constituted a fully organized church of Christ, and gave as authority I Tim., 3, where it speaks of the duties of a bishop and a deacon. After talking for some time we prepared to go on and were told by our Baptist friend that he was sorry but he could not ask God's blessings upon us, and didn't wish us Godspeed. We informed him that the Lord had blessed us in our labors in the past and we didn't think we had had his prayers in our behalf either, and we thought in the future we could get along very well without them, if he chose to retain them.

I am pleased to note the better feeling manifested by the people generally toward the Latter-day Saints. The sunlight of reason and truth is scattering the mists of prejudice and ignorance. Not many years ago the people in this county—especially in the south-eastern part—were very bitterly opposed to us. They endeavored to persecute the Elders and drive them from their midst. It was there that the noted "Jeff Windom war" took place. Probably the particulars as told by some of the participants may be of interest. About fourteen years ago a family of Saints by the name of Barker lived in the south-eastern part of the county. Their home was frequently a resting place for the Elders, and the neighbors were very much prejudiced against them. A young man by the name of Jeff Windom, whose mind, it is claimed, was unbalanced, lived with his parents near by. He arose from his bed in the middle of a dark night and started out in his night clothes. After traveling several miles—part of the distance through a swamp—he arrived almost exhausted at the house of a relative, and arousing the family told them that the Mormons had risen and had killed his "daddy" and "mammy" and the rest of the family, he alone having escaped the massacre. His rather incredulous relative remarked "Jeff, you're crazy." "Yes, you'll think crazy," shrieked the ghost-like messenger, "when you see daddy and mammy with their throats cut." A man was started on horseback and the planters were aroused for miles around and pretty soon men were seen coming from all directions armed to the teeth determined to rout and put an end to the terrible Mormons. Probably two or three hundred men congregated, and there was such a demand for ammunition that a country merchant doing business in the neighborhood let each man help himself to it, not taking time to weigh it out. The poor darkies living around thought their time had come. When the men arrived at the scene of the reported tragedy it was all found to be a mistake. The family were in their usually good health and Jeff was severely chastised.

From last reports, the Elders in this conference are well and the work is progressing.

The NEWS is read with much interest and I wish it the prosperity it so richly deserves.

GEORGE F. SHELLEY.

RALEIGH, Smith County, Miss., April 23, 1896.

"ON THE SUWANNEE RIVER."

LIVE OAK, Suwannee County, Florida,
April 18, 1896.

Not noticing anything in the NEWS from this part of the Lord's vineyard, I hereby submit my hearty thanks for your valuable paper, the pages of which I have had the privilege of perusing for about seventeen months in the sunny South as a missionary trying to impart freely to my fellow-men that which I have received.

I offer in brief an account of my labors since I arrived, if you can find space in your columns for publication. Perhaps it will be of some interest to your readers, especially to my many

fellow-laborers who are abroad on the same message as myself, helping to prune the vineyard.

Since meeting my first traveling companion I have had the privilege of seeing many of the noble band of Elders who are earnestly working for the establishment of truth. My first labors were in south Alabama. I was then assigned to west and middle Florida, where I enjoyed myself among Saints and friends up to November 6, 1895, when my companion and I received notice to open up a new field of labor in Suwannee county, east Florida.

The morning of November 9th found us in Live Oak, the county seat of Suwannee county. Starting out north giving away tracts we met with reasonable success, held one meeting and left appointments for two more. Coming in to Live Oak we received notice of two new Elders on their way from Zion and so kept close watch for them. On November 16th the train coming in from the golden west had among its passengers Elders W. G. Fisher and Samuel Isom. My companion, Elder Ephraim Yeates, took Elder Isom and went to Columbia county, Elder Fisher and I continuing the work in Suwannee county. This county is free from bogs and swamps, as is not the case with other counties in Florida. The famous Suwannee river surrounds this county on the north west and south. We often find ourselves on its banks humming over the old song, Way Down Upon the Suwannee River.

I deem it of interest to make mention of the Suwannee spring, which is in the northern part of this county. We have had the pleasure of visiting it a few times and were well paid for our trouble. A large and magnificent hotel has been erected near the spring for the accommodation of northern guests who spend the winter months there. Sawmilling and phosphate mining, are the leading industries here. Farming is carried on to some extent; corn, long lint cotton and peanuts are the principal crops raised.

In the last five months we have canvassed about half of this county, held many meetings and made many good friends. The people as a rule are very hospitable, and are anxious to hear what we have to say. Church houses, schoolhouses and private houses are freely given to hold meetings in, and we have even held some open air meetings as circumstances render it more convenient. Our meetings are generally well attended.

Elder Joseph A. West, president of the Florida conference visited us through the first of March, helping us to hold some meetings; and while he was with us we had the pleasure of baptizing ten souls into the fold at one time. Among the little crowd baptized were two young men, twin brothers, something that doesn't often occur. Since that time we have baptized two more and the time is set to baptize some more in the near future.

The new Saints are feeling well and prospects are good to organize a nice Sabbath school before long. While there is a goodly portion of the spirit of the Lord poured out on the people, Lucifer is working out through a few individuals trying to overthrow the rolling of the "little stone," but it is swiftly