

gave an eminent divine a whole quart of his best brandy to preach us into hell. If he considers his native county the aforesaid warm place, the brandy had the desired effect, for the two Mormon tramps are still roaming over the hills of Elliott, and can be seen very often in some old field feasting on blackberries or perched up to some one's table eating spring chicken, of which our friends hatched an extra quantity to feed what they term their preachers.

Since March 15th, on which date the first baptism was performed, our numbers have gradually increased, until on July 8th Brother Isaac Sparks made the seventeenth to accept the glorious principles of truth and be baptized by an authorized servant of God. Many others are earnestly investigating, and we have good reason to believe that many others will accept the truth in the near future. The names of those baptized are, Lackey Branham and wife Artie, Richmond Ison, his wife Martha and son Robert, Samuel R. Fraley and wife Hannab, James Branham, Mrs. Anderson Ison, Miss Ellen Ison, Miss Elizabeth Ison, William Ison, his wife Elizabeth and daughter Melissa, Jerry Lewis and wife Lila, and Isaac Sparks. They are all respected citizens of the community in which they live, and people are beginning to think there may be something in Mormonism after all, when such influential citizens as some of the above named would take up with it.

We are now making arrangements to go to conference, which will be held on July 31st and August 1st and 2nd, at Vanceburg, Lewis county, Kentucky. Thirty-five Elders will meet on that occasion, and we anticipate having a good time together. You will see by noting our experience that a poor beginning bids fair for a good ending.

Your valuable paper comes regularly, and is read with much interest.

JUDSON I. TOLMAN,  
MATTHEW SPEIRS.

## A MORMON SUNDAY SCHOOL PICNIC

QUEENSLAND, Australia, June 5, 1896.—Knowing that a few lines occasionally from the Elders who are laboring in distant lands are not altogether without interest to your many readers as well as the relatives and friends of the missionaries, it occurred to us that as we have just celebrated our Sunday school picnic a few lines in relation to the same might not be devoid of interest, as showing how the work of the Lord is progressing in the northern part of Australia.

About two years ago a Mormon Sunday school was started in Coorparoo, Queensland, with John F. Burton of Ogden as superintendent. Its beginning was surely humble enough, for on the first morning there were only a dozen children present all non-members of the Church. However, its influence spread from child to child and thus from home to home, until in spite of the opprobrium that usually attaches to the word "Mormon," the attendance has increased so that we have now ninety names enrolled with an average attendance of eighty. Our Sunday school has now become widely known all over this section of the country and has been the means of advertising the Elders and the work they are seeking to accomplish in a very favorable way.

While tracting out some distance a short time ago the writer met an intel-

ligent lady who inquired about the Mormon Sunday school, as she had heard it spoken of very favorably, she said, while visiting friends; and asked me if we would accept her two boys as pupils. When answered affirmatively she said she was so glad as she wanted them to go to some good place where they will learn something, and this in spite of the fact that there are sectarian Sunday schools near by.

The number of children has increased so rapidly during the past few months that it became necessary to seek more commodious quarters in order to successfully hold three classes each Sunday. This fact has so incensed our Salvation Army friends a little further down the street that they have felt that something was due on their part to prevent the tide of favor which at present seems to be flowing our way. In open air meetings on the streets as well as in the sanctum of the business meeting Mormon influence is constantly deprecated and various measures are taken to combat it. The only result we see as yet of their exhaustive thought upon this matter is the application of the name "sheep-stealers" to the Elders, and an increased attendance at Sunday school. Needless to say we hope and trust that good seeds are being sown in the hearts of the children, but we also hope to be able to reach many homes through the influence of the Sunday school, and present the grand truths of the Gospel to parents who, though good and honest hearted, partake of the common spirit of religious indifference and not knowing much of Bible truth are inclined to pass it by as one of the many man made systems of the day with which many of them seem disgusted.

The 24th, of May, Queen's birthday, is celebrated in Queensland by giving the Sunday school children an annual picnic. It is the custom of the place and the children look for it. Many of the sectarian schools meet in the city and march to the public domain where they enjoy themselves, others go down the river and some go out in the "bush," as all Australian forests are called.

After due consideration we decided to take the school out into the bush, and a quiet stroll through the woods one day revealed a lovely green lawn situated in a shady hollow, being almost surrounded with timbers. Well pleased with nature's contribution in the shape of an extensive grass plot, plenty of shade and trees for swings, we went up a day or two before and arranged for the swings, built a huge bowery in case old Sol should forget that winter is near and try to roast us, and in sailor phrase made things ship shape generally.

Early on the morning of the 25th ult. while the children were assembling at the school under the direction of Brother Livingston, one of the brethren and the writer went up to attend to some preliminaries and were just about finished about 10:30, when the spring wagons made their way down the bush track loaded with seats, tarpaulins in case of rain, and refreshments, etc., which had been generously contributed by the parents of the children. Shortly after the arrival of the wagons the merry laughter of the children was heard resounding through the hollow as they made their way down the hillside to the flat which was so nicely carpeted with green grass. A desire for fun and enjoyment was depicted on every coun-

tenance as they marched up the hollow to our bowery. The parents too partook of the spirit of the children and seemed determined to banish dull care for that day at least. The neat appearance of all the children told of the anxious desire of many kind mothers to have their children brought up well.

As soon as the sward was reached a rush was made for the swings, and it was a very short time before they were being tested in such a way that showed us that too much care was not used in putting them up. Cricket teams were soon playing further down the green, and the much-loved foot ball was soon to be seen being kicked and hugged in turns. For some time the Elders were kept busy swinging children of all ages. They were not supposed to tire, and if they sought to rest awhile the inevitable "Please swing me" was sure to follow them. It was somewhat of a relief when Elders C. S. Crow and A. P. Hamilton arrived from Ipswich, twenty-six miles inland from Brisbane, and W. F. Armstrong and R. H. Argyle came over from West End Brisbane.

The people continued to come, and when noon came around it found about one hundred children and fifty adults on the grounds, including nearly all the Saints in the Queensland branch.

The day was all that could be desired: The sky was clear and a cool western wind tempered the warmth of the sun's rays and made things very pleasant. Under such conditions it is not to be wondered at that after an hour's romping the children began to glance wistfully at the pile of good things stowed in one corner of the bowery. Tea was made for those who wanted it, and lemonade was provided for those who did not use tea, and when all was ready a remarkably obedient lot of children responded to the call for dinner.

Right here I must digress long enough to say that it was an inspiring sight to me to see one hundred children, the majority not members of the Church of Christ, sitting down with their parents to a picnic got up by Mormons. There was not the least feeling noticeable save that of perfect good will. Every one was free and sociable, and all seemed to have but one thought, and that to make the day pass pleasantly. In fancy I could see the day when the Latter-day Saints would rise up in the power of righteousness and be known for what they are, when they would be known from the east even to the west as an upright, God-fearing people, and be universally respected among the nations. Truth is mighty and must prevail, and it seemed to me as every one sat down to dinner that the gathering that day was but a forecast of what will yet be more marked among the honorable people of the earth.

After dinner games of all kinds were indulged in for some time, until the children were assembled to sing some songs that had been taught them by one of the brethren, who, by the way, is a distinguished musician.

The calmness and serenity of the day and the seclusion of our bush retreat lent to the children's voices a very effective sweetness as they sang the songs they had learned to the parents who were seated around listening to the innocent voices of childhood.

After the races, many of which were of a novel and exciting nature, the call came for "tea." Once again stomachic