

CORRESPONDENCE.

Written for this Paper

A GOOD REPORT

OWENSBORO, Davis Co., Kentucky,
Feb. 16, 1895.

As it is very interesting to me as well as encouraging to read the correspondence of the Elders from their different fields of labor, I thought I would add my mite.

I left the state of Mississippi, my former field of labor, April 5th, 1894; arrived at Madisonville, Hopkins Co., Ky., the 6th, and was assigned to labor with Elder C. W. Houiz in Hancock County, Ky. Since leaving the North Alabama conference I have traveled 468 miles on the cars, 1985 miles on foot, held 58 meetings, visited 1401 families, distributed 1201 tracts, baptized and helped to baptize 24 persons, blessed and helped to bless 10 children, and ordained one Priest; written six articles treating on the Gospel and had them published in the local papers. On the 2nd of August I baptized in the beautiful Ohio river an old gentleman aged seventy-five years and his wife, sixty-six. The old gentleman had never belonged to any church; said he had been a Mormon all his life and didn't know it. He enjoys a goodly portion of the Spirit of the Lord, and it makes him very happy, and he says he would not return again into darkness for all the world contains of perishable matter.

I have witnessed some marvelous healings and answers to prayers while in the missionary field. My health as a general thing has been pretty good, and I have enjoyed my labors. I have labored harmoniously with nine companions.

Perhaps a few items of my experience would be beneficial to some of my fellow laborers that are in the field or who expect to go there in the near future. A missionary experience is invaluable to a man. It tends to broaden his views, teaches him humility and reliance upon the Lord, and last but not least, a love for his fellow-man. I had been raised under the droppings of the salutatory and thought I understood Mormonism pretty well, but I had not been in the missionary field a month before I discovered that I knew but very little. There are four principles that form the basis of a missionary's success, namely: Obedience to counsel, humility, strict observance of prayer and system. It is astonishing how few there are endowed with the last named principle. I know Elders that have been in the field for nearly two years, and they cannot take a subject and treat upon it intelligently and make it plain and comprehensive to their hearers; their other endowments are all that could be reasonably asked for, but they ramble all over the Scriptures, and when they get through the audience know as little about the Gospel as they did before the speakers commenced, for the few ideas they did have are confused. When such Elders take a new companion he drops into the same error, and it destroys part of his usefulness.

Some Elders are too retiring and bashful, others too aggressive. The

last fault is far the worst, for a person naturally cultivates boldness, but it is a hard matter to restrain the desire to display what we know, (and sometimes what we don't know) and endeavor to cram the Gospel down the people when they are so full of prejudice and sectarianism that one couldn't get a mustard seed down them. I often think of the words of the Savior to His Apostles: "Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." (Mat. 10. 16.) I have found in my experience the more diplomatic a person can be the better success one will have—stroke the cat towards the switch end, and we are not so apt to ruffle the fur; if we can't make a convert make a friend.

The Southern States mission under the efficient labors of the Kimball Brothers is fast reaching a high standard of perfection. The house to house canvass is a great improvement on the old haphazard style—it brings the Elders in touch with all the people and we are not so apt to shun the cities and big houses. When the time arrives that they will have conference twice a year, this mission will have reached a high state of perfection. There are new Elders coming into the field every now and then, and the instructions given at the conferences has greater weight with the Elders than to get it second handed from their companions.

I have found the southern people to be exceptionally kind and hospitable, and there are hundreds of them that would embrace the Gospel if it were not for their ministers; but a great many of them are ignorant as regards to book education, and they depend upon their ministers to instruct them in the Scriptures and they use every means possible to keep them ignorant for selfish purposes, and circulate all manner of falsehoods and libelous literature among them to prejudice them against us. But to judge by appearances and the signs of the times, the people will become too poor to pay the minister and then the preaching will cease and the people will hunt the true Gospel. God speed the day.

We have closed out Hancock county, and my address will be Hopkinsville, Christian county, Ky. The DESERET NEWS comes to the Elders as a comforting friend, for it gives us the news of our far away home, besides a great deal of valuable instruction. May it ever prosper as it deserves.

CHAS. E. WALTON.

SEVIER STAKE CONFERENCE.

Our quarterly conference just closed has been one of the most interesting ever held in this Stake. There were present President Joseph F. Smith, and of the Apostles Elder John Henry Smith, besides the Stake Presidency, High Council, Patriarchs, Bishops and a large congregation of Saints. It was found our present place of meeting was too small and arrangements had to be made for an overflow meeting at the social hall in the afternoon.

President Smith addressed the Saints on the benefits of charity and exemplary conduct respecting each

other's rights in all things, to overlook our brethren's failings and follow the pattern and teachings of our Savior while on earth, that we might become prepared to enjoy His presence at a future time. He also referred to the Word of Wisdom and the excellent report made by President Seegmiller regarding the observance of that law by those acting in the Priesthood in this Stake, that only a very few at this time were violating that commandment. He advised temperance in laboring as well as eating and drinking and that children should help their parents, as well as parents helping their children and that love and due respect would greatly aid in equalizing our respective burdens in life.

The overflow meeting filled the Social Hall in the afternoon and was addressed by Elder J. H. Smith of the Apostles as chief speaker, especially upon the innate nature of humanity to revere some superior power, and that we as a people need not be misled into worshiping an improper subject, for the true light of the Gospel was within our reach, and all were exhorted to get that true knowledge and always be willing to acknowledge our Redeemer and our Creator of heaven and earth in all things.

In the afternoon Elder J. W. Crosby spoke for a time on our accountability to God and each other. In the afternoon also at the main meeting place, President Joseph F. Smith delivered a soul-stirring discourse showing the far-reaching effects of the fall of our first parent, then the blessing of the atoning blood of our Savior and the deep obligations that we are under as His professed followers, to live humble and upright lives, never letting go of the rod of iron, so that we may avoid the terrible consequences of the second death.

At 7:30 p. m. a meeting especially called for young people was held and much good instruction given.

Monday the 13th—President Joseph F. Smith having returned northward, the first subject of conference was presenting the Stake report (statistical) showing a total of 6,319 souls, contained in 1,065 families. The General and Stake authorities were next presented and unanimously sustained.

Rev. Mr. Meteer of the Presbyterian church made a few remarks, followed by Elder Hyrum S. Harris graphically showing the trials and sufferings of the primitive Church and its progressive adulteration and final absorption by the church of Rome. Elder John Henry Smith then spoke of the noble reformers, Martin Luther and others, who manifested the greatest courage and faithful adherence to principle in successfully combatting the wicked practices of the licentious Roman church. He also highly eulogized the efforts and integrity of the young man Joseph Smith in establishing the most perfect system of theology ever presented since the Savior, and bore a powerful testimony to the work of God as now organized for the benefit of the children of men.

In the afternoon President Seegmiller introduced the Stake Tabernacle subject, and several home industrial matters; his counselors, W. H. Clark and Joe. S. Horne, also made instructive remarks on several subjects.