

by Elder Geddes and companions. We made a house to house canvass, making a great many friends, and finding the people kind and hospitable. We held many meetings and succeeded in baptizing four honest souls into the fold of Christ.

During our sojourn we visited the navy yards at Warrington, at the mouth of the Pensacola harbor. The yard was very much dilapidated, and the mason work crumbled. There was a great deal of old-time artillery, and stacks of cannon balls of all sizes and shapes to be seen on either side of the walks, which were about thirty feet wide. They were so arranged that they were easily got at without any overhauling.

We went to Fort Barrancas; also visited the lighthouse, and were granted the privilege of ascending the stairs, 160 feet, where we could get a good view of the Gulf of Mexico, and the country in the rear.

South Alabama conference was held in Clenshan county, July 20th, 1895; had a most enjoyable time. We met with many friends of Elder P. Flam, of Rexburg, Idaho, who had labored there some six years previously, and who spoke very highly of him as a messenger of the Gospel.

I returned to my old field accompanied by Elder Frank Smith, of Meadows, Utah, where we continued until the conference was divided and Florida conference organized, with Elder Joseph A. West, of Salt Lake, as president. I was then assigned to labor in the south half of Madison county, with Elder Wooton, and later with Elder W. Criddle and other companions. We canvassed and preached ten months, during which time we were visited twice by Elder West, Elder Chris. J. Brown, of Ogden, and Elders F. Cutler and W. H. Summerhays, making several tours of the county. Myself and companions baptized twenty-two people.

We attended the first Florida conference, held in Suwanee county, May 30th and 31st, 1896; enjoyed a rich outpouring of the Spirit, and listened to the inspired instructions given by Elder Elias Kimball. The Elders were assigned to their new fields of labor. I returned to Madison county, continuing until August 14th, when I was called to labor in Baker county, with Elder Smith, and later with Elder Criddle and Elder Joseph Facer, of Willard, who arrived here March 25th, in company with Elder James H. Allen, of Lewiston. Elders Criddle and Allen were sent into Charlton county, Ga.

In our travels we came to the little town of Olustee, noted for a battle fought there; also for the mammoth saw-mills owned by Epinger & Russel company. We had a pleasant interview with Mr. Epinger, whose residence is in New York. He crossed the plains in 1850, en route to California; stopped in Salt Lake two weeks, and was kindly treated by our people, since which time he has always stood up for them.

We have been successful in obtaining many churches, schoolhouses and dwellings, in which to hold meetings. Among others who have opened their doors, is Mr. Robert Rogers, who visited Utah, and worked for Hon. D. H. Peery, and who always has words of praise for Utah and her people.

We were accorded a pleasant visit from Elders Brown and Gee, who assisted in holding meetings and leaving

appointments for Elder Cutler and companion, who are now with us. In the past three weeks we have held 38 meetings and baptized two members.

From Elder Cutler, our president, we learn that good reports are coming in from all parts. The health of the Elders is good. Conference will convene in Jefferson county on May 1st and 2nd, when we expect to have a spiritual feast and another visit by Elder E. S. Kimball, who no doubt will have much timely counsel to impart to Elders, Saints and friends.

"The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few." There is a great demand for good Elders, those who have availed themselves of the opportunities afforded them, and have prepared themselves on the first principles of the Gospel and learned to sing the inspiring songs of Zion.

Brethren, do not think, when called, that you are too young or too old to fill an honorable mission. Any Elder having the privilege of laboring in the Southern States, should think himself highly honored, especially should he be accorded a place in the Florida conference.

Since traveling in this county, I met with an aged gentleman, Mr. Charles Sap, who refused to take up arms against his country, and concealed himself in swamps. The authorities, determined to press him into service, set hounds on his trail, and, in order to evade the hounds he mounted an old ox he had owned years ago. Thus he threw them off the scent, and escaped his pursuers and the confederate service.

The storm of September 29th, passed through this county. It did much damage to timber and turpentine farms, and demolished fences, churches, schoolhouses and dwellings. The roads were logged up so they were impassable, until cut out. Much cotton was blown away and wasted. The people's lives were miraculously preserved, as many buildings were thrown down over their heads.

My labors have been of the most pleasant kind, and a source of much joy to me. I am becoming more and more interested each day. When I am released it will be a trial to leave the good Saints and kind and hospitable friends of the South. I am on my twenty-sixth month, and have no desire of returning home until the Lord says enough.

We note with pleasure, the warm reception given President Woodruff on the anniversary of his ninetieth birthday. May he live to pass the hundredth mile-post—yea, more, if it be the Lord's will.

The News is always a welcome visitor, and its pages are eagerly perused by Elders and friends.

JOHN WATTS.

### THE CALIFORNIA CONFERENCE.

The Northern conference of the California mission convened according to appointment Sunday, April 11th. The Elders began to come in from their fields of labor about Friday. Saturday evening they divided into groups and held meetings on the streets, preaching the Gospel and advertising the conference. There was also a meeting of the Mutual Improvement association, which was attended by the visiting Elders.

Sunday at 10 a m, conference was

called to order by Elder E. H. Nye, president of the California mission. Many of the Elders reported the results of their labors in San Jose, Monterey, El Dorado, Amador, Latrobe, Napa, Sacramento, San Benito counties. They stated that the work was progressing and the people were becoming more favorable to the Gospel.

The afternoon session opened at 2 p. m. The general officers of the Church were unanimously sustained; also Elder E. H. Nye, as president of the California mission. Elder Willard Scowcroft was sustained as president of the Northern conference, and Florence T. Rawlinson was chosen secretary, both by a unanimous vote.

Further missionary reports were heard from Monterey, Latrobe and San Francisco.

Elder Joseph Hansen stated that God had blessed him in his labors while traveling without purse or scrip in Monterey county, and he had had an exceedingly happy time. He and his companion, on their arrival at Salinas, dedicated the county to the Lord, praying that He would guide them that they might accomplish the most good. They had made many friends and the people were favorable to them. They had been guests at the finest hotel, and they had walked in the silent hours of the night alone with God; they had not gone hungry, though their food had been most varied. The speaker further testified of the powers of healing and of prophecy and related instances of each.

Elder W. E. Stoker briefly reviewed the apostasy, including the period of the Reformation, the landing of the settlers in America, the establishment of the Constitution of the United States, an inspired document paving the way for the ushering in of the last dispensation of the Gospel of peace. And he pointed out that as soon as the Priesthood of God was revealed through the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Evil one renewed his attack upon the Church. Elder Stoker related some of the persecutions and trials the Latter-day Saints had gone through, the journey across the plains, and their arrival in the valleys of the mountains, then a barren desert; how they had built up the State, until Utah was a grand monument of the industry of the Mormon people, and compared favorably with her sister states.

During the evening meeting, Elder Loveless delivered a brief address on the necessity of men being called by revelation to preach the Gospel and to officiate in the ordinances of the same.

Elder Henry Peterson, by request, spoke upon the subject of "traveling without purse or scrip," and related some of his experiences of the past four months of travel. The speaker said that several of the Elders, in talking with their president, E. H. Nye, and with Elder Elias A. Kimball, president of the Southern States mission, who accompanied him, became imbued with faith in traveling without purse or scrip, and volunteered to start out in this way. Among these were the speaker and Elder B. J. Bennett, his companion.

They gave up their work, went to their new field, San Benito county, and there started to work. They were total strangers there, had not a cent in their pockets, and no friend but the Lord on whom to rely. The first work they did was to find a secluded spot and there