

## CORRESPONDENCE.

Written for this Paper

## OKLAHOMA'S SUFFERERS.

SALT LAKE CITY,

June 12th, 1895.

Noticing your editorial, "Oklahoma Destitution," which appeared in last evening's issue, I wish to add some few facts. The position you have taken respecting the destitute condition of the settlers of Oklahoma is correct, and the scenes there are but tamely portrayed. I have been watching developments for some time, knowing well the condition of the people, and would gladly have urged emigration on the part of our Saints there, that they might avert the now pending troubles, could I have felt justified in so doing. We are already overdope here with unemployed, and it seems to me some are getting so inhospitable here, that they have no room in their hearts or homes for the poor of other lands.

Some action has been taken to relieve the Oklahoma Saints, and a lively and sympathetic interest is being shown on this matter. Elder Arthur N. Wallace, president of the Oklahoma conference, has been instructed to assist the starving Saints with what means he has, until further aid be sent, and means be devised for the permanent relief of worthy people. The number of Elders laboring there may be reduced for the time being.

I wish to say that notwithstanding the poverty of the settlers of Oklahoma our Elders have freely shared their hospitality. Of course, of late they have paid their way mostly, preferring to assist rather than to take from the people any of the little they had. It is earnestly hoped that the sympathy of the people will be drawn out toward the sufferers of that land, and that national aid will be forthcoming.

In the year 1889 Oklahoma territory was commenced; about one and a half million acres of land was bought by the government from the Seminoles Indians for the settlement of friendly tribes, but not being used for that purpose, in was thrown open for white settlement. Subsequently other reservations have been added, and in the fall of 1893 the Cherokee strip, comprising six million acres, was added. During this six years about two hundred and fifty thousand settlers have located in Oklahoma, the great majority of whom were very poor. The first few years there was plenty of rain and everything seemed prosperous, but the last two seasons crops have been almost a total failure. When we take into consideration the many hardships incident to pioneer life, coupled with the almost total failure of crops for two years, the older members of our western home can readily imagine the sufferings of the Oklahoma people. In some instances farmers have sown and planted their fields and gardens several times, each time the seed drying up and blowing away in the dust. A little rain came about the first of May, which proved only an aggravation and stimulus to false hopes. Garden stuff came up

only to be dried out afterwards, and detain the poor people longer in starvation-threatened country. They took new hopes and commenced plowing and planting again. Now all their hopes are gone. The season is too far advanced, even with the rains told of in today's telegrams, to develop crops.

One of our poor families, writing to me, said: "We would be glad for anything, even old clothing, or anything to help keep us alive." Brother Triplet relates how, in the city of Guthrie, the capital of Oklahoma, where there are about fifteen thousand inhabitants, his daughter tried to get work but failed; she could not get even plain sewing to do. He also tells of a poor woman who was trying to give her children away, saying she could stand that better than to see them starve.

It is gratifying to learn that some of our Saints sold their possessions some time ago preparatory to a move; and while in the kind providences of the Almighty I believe the faithful Saints will get relief, cannot we do something for the other poor sufferers? Our lovely country is teeming with plenty on every hand. Let us load a few cars of provisions and relieve our suffering fellow creatures. I believe the railroad companies would aid with free transportation, and by a united effort on the part of those so favored, the unfed may still live and the people of this favored land never feel the loss.

ANDREW KIMBALL.

## THE LATE JOHN LYON.

SWAN VALLEY, Idaho,

May 31st, 1895.

I send herewith a clipping from the *Kilmarnock Standard*, published in the town where Brother Lyon was born, and where I embraced the Gospel. I knew all the parties well, and thought it might look well in a corner of the NEWS. Respectfully,

H. C. Martin.

RETROSPECTS OF JOHN KELSO HUNTER.  
*John Lyon, the Mormon Poet—The "New Mill"—The Miller and an Impertunate Widow.*

John Lyon was a poet worthy of his name. There was a rampant nobility in his nature. He spoke in advance of his time. Society was slow of faith to the facts uttered by him, and he resolved to leave Kilmarnock in the dark, and advance the light of the Mormons at Salt Lake. John had clear views of progressive perfection, and declared that the summit could only be reached by perpetual culture, and that those who left this world in a state of mental idleness, would be set on a very low stool in the next. John believed in class spiritual as well as in class temporal. While talking to me one day of the reign of bliss, "Depend upon it," said he, "society will be very select there. There will be no imitations; worth alone will procure a seat suited to the mental capacity. Would it be fair to seat such minds as Sir Isaac Newton's on a barrow tram to listen to an Irish navvie rehearsing what masses

of dirt he had set in motion by brute force in the old world? Not likely." This poetical scrap is from a poem on the "New Mill," and dedicated to Duncan McMillan, ventriloquist:

"O the New Mill's a name whilk will ever be new.  
While the dam fills the lade whaur the water rises through;  
Though the miller be dead wha first gied it the name,  
Still the noise o' the grinding and happer's the same.  
O weel do I mind o' the year ninety-three,  
When we gathered in groups neath the muckle ash tree;  
An' the miller aye blithely ower his coggie o' yill,  
Tauld his auld farren tales o' his mutter and mill."

It was after this date when he tauld some very funny stories about the different kind o' customers he had ground corn to; how he had tane his mutter, and how he had got it. In the year 1800 there was a dearth such as we have not seen since. At that time forestallers were looked on as the lowest class of wretches, and they who were known to have meal on hand could be compelled to bring it to market, and have it disposed of at market price. A sort of strike was essential to conceal as well as reveal the real state of things. Many a body had corn, but naeboddy had meal. Among the miller's customers was a widow woman, whose piety was like her personal vanity, not of a sma' shape. She had a few sacks o' corn at the mill. It was dried and ready for milling some weeks past. She had bespoken the miller to be ready to make it into meal at an hour's notice. He reasoned with her on the impossibility of so doing, but said that he could make it, and she could lit it when she likt. "Na, na," quo' she, "I'm uo gaun to sho awa' my soul that way; in the meantime I can safely say that I hae nae meal." "Hout," quo' the miller, "It's the big price that ye're after, and just ye tak' the readiest road to get it." "I'll hae my ain way wi' my ain," quo' the wife, "and ye can do as ye like wi' yours, so aye and be ready when I tell you." Her sacks were soon buried beneath those of other proprietors, till the meal rose to four shillings and ninepence the auld peck. Out came the widow smiling one evening and said, "Miller, I want my meal the morn, as its expected up to five shillings." "I canna help that," quo' the miller, "ye wadna tak' it when I could gie ye, and ye must just wait till ye get it." The woman began to rage and said, "Whatever the meal fell below five shillings, she would look to him for it, so he had better get it done without ony tala." She gaed away hame, and got nae sleep that night, for reports of a conflicting character were rife as to the fate of the meal on the morrow. It rose to the wished-for pinnacle of the wee note. At that time, owing to the scarcity of silver, there was an issue of paper at that value. One peck was said to be sold in the Old Meal Market at this unwonted price, which was expected to make one widow's heart to sing aloud. The tide turned, and thrice in one half hour the town-crier passed the widow's door, each time threepence down. Here was ninepence off the peck, and who could say what the next half hour would do. The widow started the race for the mill wi' marrowless stockings on her legs and bauchles on.