

just enough of speed and accuracy to make all their work a failure.

This is the fatal plateau of mediocrity, the dead level of good enough, where nothing grows to maturity. One tremendous effort would lift the student above it; but too often the ambition to make the effort has been wasted by scattered effort.

Thus it will be seen that complexity and speed, while both fine qualities, are in a sense opposed. It is impossible so to practice for complexity as to fail in speed and accuracy. "Too many irons in the fire," or "jack of all trades and master of none," is the way common people look at this mistake in motor education.

Beginnings are simple in almost every line of work, just as beaten paths are easy to tread. The real difficulty confronts us when we reach the end and must pioneer our way, but here lie also all the honor and profit. A brain smattered all over with beginnings characterizes the learned man of whom it is said, "He doesn't amount to a hill of beans;" persistent, concentrated effort—effort which raises a man out of the calm of being into the storm of doing—characterizes the real student.

Lastly, it may be maintained that there can be no real health without muscle-digestion; and muscle-digestion is not possible without vigorous exercise. To be well is the first duty of life; to keep his pupils well, is the first duty of a teacher. Of two teachers, he makes the greater failure who graduates a student unfitted physically for the battle of life. N. L. N.

IN THE EASTERN STATES.

New Paris, Bedford Co., Pa.,
Sept. 9, 1897.

I left my home at Loa, Wayne county, Utah, March 28th, 1896, as a missionary to the Eastern states. I arrived at Brooklyn, N. Y., April 9th. Since that time I have labored in various parts, and with many different companions, almost too numerous to mention. But I am pleased to state that in every place in which I was called to labor the Lord raised up friends.

Last May our beloved president of the Eastern States mission, Elder A. P. Kesler, assigned me to labor in this county in connection with Elder Walter P. Rich. We labored in the usual way among the people distributing tracts and holding meetings in groves, on the streets, in school houses and churches, and addressing many earnest listeners until July 20th, when Elder Rich was assigned to Somerset county.

The first meeting held by Elder Rich and myself was of a very interesting character and somewhat laughable. Mr. McVicar volunteered to put up a tent for us to hold our meetings in at a very convenient point between Bedford city and New Paris. We readily accepted of this offer. The time arrived to commence our meeting, and there had assembled in the tent about one hundred persons. There was quite a heavy gale from the west when we commenced the hymn "O My Father Thou that Dwellst," and at the third line of the second verse our tent took a raise, dragging guy ropes and pegs over the congregation. They became much frightened and one lady received a slight bruise on the head from a guy pole, but nevertheless she said she was going to hear what the Mormons had to say.

We then made another start and had an excellent meeting; the people listened with interest and were surprised at the doctrine, as they expressed themselves at the close of the meeting as they have been taught that the Mormons were preaching erroneous doctrine, not in accordance with the Bible.

But as an old saying has it, "a bad beginning makes a good ending," I believe it will in this case, for we have been holding meetings regularly at that place in the shade of an oak grove which the wind cannot blow away as it did the tent; and from our first meeting up to the present time many hundreds have met together to hear the Gospel truths.

We had not held many meetings in this county till the adversary began his work through his ever willing agency, the ministers, who began preaching against us from their pulpits. They stated that our Bible was not like the Protestant Bible, and used their influence against us as much as possible. But as usual it has made friends for us, for which we feel to thank our heavenly Father.

We go without purse or scrip, and feel that this is the right way to labor, as we get to converse with many people against us who would not otherwise. We find many people that acknowledge we have the truth, but feel as though they could not stand the ridicule which is hurled at the Mormon people should they unite with us.

My labors since July 20th have been with Elder A. B. Neff of East Mill Creek, Salt Lake county. We have just returned from a tour through Bedford and into Fulton county where we spent two weeks with a branch of the Saints at Buck valley, Fulton county, which is presided over by Elder J. J. Hendershot. We found them enjoying themselves, which is the heritage of faithful Latter-day Saints.

The most of the people are very hospitable toward us and for the short time that we have labored in Bedford county we have made many friends, who are defending the principles that we teach. We feel that the Lord is opening up the way and that a great amount of the prejudice that existed here years ago is being blotted out. From what we can learn there never has been any of the Mormon Elders in this vicinity. My father, E. H. Blackburn, was born in this village, and left here when he was 7 years of age.

We feel well in the work that we have been called to perform, and have a strong belief that many honest-hearted souls will be gathered out of this part in some future day. If any of the readers of the "News" have friends or relatives in this section they would like us to visit they will greatly oblige us by letting us know where and who they are, and we will be glad to call on them.

By Elders in a strange land and amongst strangers the "Deseret News" is always highly appreciated.

THOMAS BLACKBURN,
A. B. NEFF.

A NEGRO MEETING.

The poet said in describing the character of a good man:

'Some angel guide my pencil while I draw.

What nothing else than angel can exceed."

To adequately describe a religious meeting among the darkies is certainly beyond the power of my pen. If some genius would get up a phonograph that could reproduce the scenes in a colored meeting when they are worked up to the proper pitch, it would have all the dramatic effects of a first class play in a theater. I will try to give a sketch of one of these meetings, as witnessed the other night. They began coming in just after dark, and after the house was lighted up, they began their prayer meeting by singing some familiar hymn. After each song one of their number would lead in prayer, with such earnestness, pathos and sing-song style that a

peculiar thrill of some kind of emotion would come over you, in spite of you—like a boulder, hurled from a mountain top, the further, the faster, till but few objects could stand before it. Each song and prayer were a little more animated as they progressed. The leader would pitch into the next verse before the first one would be finished, indeed, a large number of the women would not be more than half way, when the deep-toned bass of the leader would warn them that another verse was entered. All now pitched into this new verse, the bass of the men and the shrill bugle-like soprano of the women all blended together, and yet not together, in such a manner as to cause one with a sympathetic temperament to weep a little, laugh a little, and listen with mouth and ears wide open! The laws of harmony were utterly set at defiance, and yet in such manner as to produce a pleasing sensation. The volume of sound was of such force as to be heard a mile away.

After they had gone on in this strain for perhaps an hour, they changed it to a beg for money to pay the preacher. And how you would find yourself instinctively feeling for your purse, and if a nickle or dime is found, it will be forthcoming. After this, the preacher delivered his sermon. I have heard many a white man fall far short of his eloquence and logic. The text was from Rev. : 17. He worked himself up to such a pitch of enthusiasm that the brethren now and then responded with "Amen!" "Dats so," etc., while ever and anon a darky sister would utter a keen squall; jump up and beat the air with her arms, stamp the floor with her feet (and woe to others' feet that happened to be in the way); two or three of the stoutest would grab such, and it took their united strength to keep her from falling among the seats and perhaps crippling herself. Finally the preacher came down out of the pulpit and called for mourners, and now pandemonium broke loose in earnest, a description of which would be utterly impossible. It must be seen to be appreciated.

If any Elder who may read this sketch would like to vary the monotony of his canvass, just visit a negro meeting some night with select friends. Perhaps a Mormon Elder's visit to such a meeting would not throw such a damper on it as it sometimes does on a meeting of the whites.

H. P. DOTSON.

FROM SAINTS IN TEXAS.

Austin, Travis Co., Texas,
Sept. 9, 1897.

As myself and two daughters are the only members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in this city, I feel that we ought to let our brothers and sisters in Zion know that we are trying to live up to the principles of the Gospel. We greatly rejoice that the Gospel was brought to us in its purity, and that we accepted it, although we had a struggle at first. I was brought up in the Campbellite church, but found no comfort or light there. I attended other churches with the same result. The Bible is not taught by them in the plain simple way the Latter-day Saints teach it. We, as others, are possessed with the desire to be where we can be taught in the true light. It may be a long time before there will be a branch of the Church organized here. There are some people here who might become mobocrats if they dared, but as it is strictly against the laws of the city to disturb religious worship, the Elders are only treated with indifference.

MRS. E. L. THOMPSON,
DORA THOMPSON,
ALICE THOMPSON.