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WEEKLY.

TRUTH AND LIBERTY.

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THE TENNESSEE TRAGEDY.

INTERVIEW WITH TWO OF THE SUR-
VIVORS.

VERY INTERESTING PARTICULARS.

THIS morning we received a call from Elders W. H. Jones and Henry Thompson, with whose names our readers are familiar, they being two of the brethren who escaped from the Tennessee massacre. Elder Jones is 26 years old, short of stature, moderate build, and of polished and agreeable address. Elder Thompson is somewhat over medium height, somewhat heavy build, and fair complexion. His age is 25 years. He speaks with deliberation, and has a pleasant and modest address.

Thinking this a favorable opportunity to get a full statement of the details of the tragedy and circumstances connected with it, we interviewed those brethren.

Elder Jones gave the following sketch of his exciting experience in the mission, and particularly in the late bloody affair, it being here presented in his own words: "I joined

BROTHER JOHN H. GIBBS

on Cane Creek last April, and labored with him since then as a constant companion, having been associated with him night and day from that time to the day of his death. I am consequently able to speak with knowledge regarding his blameless character and purity of life.

We held several meetings on Cane Creek since that time, and at one of them, about four months ago, an intelligent

YOUNG LADY WAS BAPTIZED.

This attracted much attention, and about two hundred persons came from different parts of the country to see if it could really be true that she was about to espouse so despised a cause as 'Mormonism.' Her father had been a friend to us, though inclined to infidelity; he never opposed her being baptized in the least. We baptized four others at the same time, and this was no doubt one of the chief causes of the bitter enmity against us. Several threats were made after this occurred. Two weeks subsequently we had another meeting published, but the Saturday night before it occurred the

MOB BURNED

down our meeting house, a log cabin, and left a notice, poorly written and spelled and without any signature, warning us out of the country, and mentioning personally some of our friends and the local brethren, who were also threatened. We held our meeting nevertheless, convening under a large elm, and several hundred were present, including the Sheriff of the county. The morning was occupied by Brother Gibbs, and the afternoon, at which service there was a large congregation and one of the local preachers, was allowed to me. After meeting three more were baptized. Next day Brother Gibbs and I went to Hohenwald, and in the journey had an opportunity of seeing the utter absence of cause for the hatred manifested toward us by the ministers of the other sects. As we were journeying along we saw a

BAPTIST AND A METHODIST

preacher standing in front of a store conversing. Brother Gibbs who knew them, addressed the former, and passed the compliments of the day, but the surly preacher answered that he wanted nothing to say or do with him. Being asked why, or if he had any reason for thus expressing himself, he answered that he didn't know that he had, but simply preferred not exchanging words at all. The Methodist answered in a similar way and finally declared to us that our presence was annoying, upon which, of course, we rode on.

We returned that afternoon, held

ANOTHER MEETING

on Cane Creek, and baptized five more. More threats were made, oral and written. About two weeks later we returned another way from a horse-back town, held a meeting and baptized five. Then we started on a tour in West Tennessee, visited over a dozen county seats, lecturing wherever we could on the Mormon question, doing the same also in several cities in northern Mississippi. After being out over two months, we returned down the Tennessee to New Era, walked through two counties, about thirty miles, to our old field of labor on Cane Creek, where, on arrival, we met

ELDERS BERRY AND THOMPSON

on Friday the 8th of August. Here we had made an appointment and they had also for meeting on Sunday, the 10th. Saturday night and Sunday morning the three of us were all together at the house of Mr. Garrett, our friend, Brother Berry having stayed a couple of miles down the creek. Elders Gibbs and Thompson went down the creek to Condor's, while I remained a little while at Garrett's, reading a sermon in the News aloud to several persons who were present. The two places are about a mile apart, and soon afterwards I also started. I had gone about three-quarters of a mile, when a

MOB RUSHED DOWN

from the forest along the edge of a cornfield and ordered me to throw up my hands. I did so, but let them fall again. They repeated their order and I placed them akimbo then raised them up, whereupon they searched me and commanded me in a gruff disguised voice, to go over the hill through the cornfield. They punched me with their guns as I went ahead, first kicking me on one side and then on the other. They searched me three times in all. They marched me over the brow of the hill into a brushy rocky ravine, ordering me "to the right" or "to the left," until they got me to the point when they called halt. After stopping they looked at me, then at each other for some minutes. I returned their look, and then gazed off in another direction, waiting for their next move. I stepped to one side to get under a tree out of the broiling sun, but one of them, with an oath told me to stay where I was or he would kill me. I said "you'll let a man sit down, won't you?" They replied that I might take that liberty, and I did so, sharpened a toothpick and sat there picking my teeth. After a time they commenced

ASKING ME QUESTIONS

as to where I was from, where I had been, what I was intending to do, etc., in answer to which I gave them my name, and stated that I was from Utah, had been sent out to preach the gospel, had preached several times in that neighborhood, and had been in company with Elder Gibbs on a tour seeking to disabuse the minds of the people of the prejudice many of them harbored against an innocent and imperfectly understood people. I told them that I could prove to them from my books that the "Mormon" people were not such a class as they pretended to think they were, but that they were moral, upright, honest and tolerant toward all creeds which came among them. They asked me how many Elders there were and where they were. I told them of Gibbs and Thompson, but refrained from mentioning Bro. Berry's name, as he was not with the others and I thought would be more likely to be hunted for if they knew him to be alone. I did not tell them exactly where these Elders were, simply stating that they were somewhere on the creek. In reply to their question as to where we were going to hold the meeting, I said that it had been talked about holding one under the elm tree, which was some distance away. I saw that they were

MURDEROUS IN THEIR HEARTS

for they were in a perfect frenzy, swore and cursed, and acted more like beasts of prey than human beings. I was able to detect the smell of liquor in their breath, and knew them to be prepared for anything, so I endeavored to prolong the conversation, as it was near meeting time, hoping that when once the congregation had assembled they would not dare to carry out their designs. After making some further inquiries they left me with a guard of four men, with orders to shoot me if I moved. They then rushed down toward the road, where they perceived heard the Elders singing at Condor's house. Immediately afterward they came back again, surrounded me and commenced putting

MORE QUESTIONS.

One asked what were the fundamental principles of our religion. I told him and them all that if they would throw off their horrid costumes and go down like gentlemen to the meeting, they would hear the doctrines and would find the principles of the Gospel taught in purity and fulness as they were taught by Christ and His apostles. They asked a number of impertinent questions which I answered by keeping still, inquired some about polygamy, to which I replied that "Mormon" men did not have any more wives than they could take care of, and that those who entered into that principle took upon themselves life-long obligations to care for their wives and families, which responsibility no one would take upon himself from any other motive than principle. They

MADE NO CHARGES

in my hearing of any immorality or anything of that kind against the Elders laboring in Tennessee. They asked why we insisted on remaining and dared to stay there after being warned. I said that we had received some warnings which had not been signed and to which we paid little attention, but that we intended to preach, for the law would protect us, wherever and whenever we had opportunity, and the freedom of religion was guaranteed by the constitution, and the right of speech could not be abridged. Finally one spoke up and said, "this is a young fellow; I

don't know whether we want to hurt him." One asked gruffly how old I was, to which I replied over twenty-five. "Well," said one of them, "if we will let you go, will you get out of the State and never come back?" I did not answer, but on their repeating the question I said, "Gentlemen, if you will bring your Bibles and your preachers, and convince me that what I preach is false, I will shut up my book and go home without any threatening or further promises." Upon this they held another consultation, after which one of them said, "time is flying;

LET US GET GIBBS."

I asked what they had against Gibbs. "Take us before the law," I said, "if we have violated any law." Their rejoinder was "by G—d you will have to obey our law. You have by your preaching made trouble among neighbors, and we will have you answer to us." One said "Gibbs boasts that he is not afraid of us and is not afraid to die." "Would you be afraid if it came to the test?" I said I did not know, but did not want to be put in any such position; still if they killed us, our blood would be on their hands and would be required of them. I plead with them to leave us alone and go away. They held another consultation and decided to leave me in charge of one of their number, a large man who had a silver-mounted double-barrelled pistol, whose instructions were

TO SHOOT ME

if I attempted to get away. After they left his first words were: "By —, I will shoot you if you try anything unfair, but if you act fairly I will treat you as a brother." He ordered me over the hill and said he was going to let me go. In conversing with him he told me that some of these mobbers intended murder, they were the meanest men in the county, and were old guerrillas who had "killed their dozen men." I asked him why he was found among such a gang, and he said he only was there because he was pressed into it, and wanted to see that we were not harmed, for he had always been a friend to the Mormons and had never seen anything wrong in them. Just as he said, "I am going to get you off safe," I heard a gun shot; then after a short space, two or three more, then quite a number until I judged over twenty shots had been fired. On this my guard threw up his pistol saying, "It's as I told you, they have shot among the women and children. Run! they will come back and take revenge on you." I said "Then I will run." He followed me about a mile from there, directed me not to return nor call at any house, but to take a little path which he indicated. This trail I could not see, being in front of a large oak tree, so I stepped aside a little, saying "That path?" He leveled his pistol again, remarking "Stand where you are!" I said good-bye to him and told him to turn back and dissuade the mobbers from further killing. He told me that he intended to investigate the gospel and said "you will never know my name," to which I replied that it would be improper in me to require that, but advised him to investigate the principles for himself. Then I proceeded on my way the thirty miles distance to Shady Grove. I called at two or three houses to inquire the way, but did not follow any of their directions, so I got lost, and took a zigzag course, covering thirty or thirty-five miles. It was well I did so for

THREE MEN FOLLOWED ME,

and got on my track at one of these houses where it was seen that they had their masks under them in their saddles. They stayed that night within two miles of me, and made inquiries respecting our strength and the stopping place of the Elders in Shady Grove, and as to whether it would be possible to get at us there. On Tuesday we heard some of the details, and Brother Kimball and I procured horses and started down, when we met Brother Thompson who had escaped and Mr. Garrett and they told us further particulars attending the death of the brethren. Since the deed there have been many threats in the locality where Hinson, the killed mobber, lived, and they declare that if they cannot get revenge on the Elders, they will kill all the 'Mormons.' Afterwards we went to Nashville where I remained till released to return home. I know that

NOTHING CAN BE SAID TRUTHFULLY

against the character of our Elders, and I have never heard any such thing uttered. Even our enemies confess that our teachings have effected a marked

CHANGE FOR THE BETTER

in the habits and customs of the people. Since they have become members of the Church they have ceased their wild, rough life, and have become peaceful, more law-abiding, and in every respect better citizens. As to baptizing, that has always been done publicly, and never without the consent of the parents or husband of the convert. In other parts where I have labored it was not uncommon for ministers to ask publicly for the number of those who were willing to help to

DRIVE THE MORMONS

out of their midst. This was the case in Alabama, where I labored some time, and I have met all the time the bitterest hostility from the pulpit, much increased by the false stories published and sent abroad about us through the press. Since this shock-

ing affair the ridiculously small reward offered by the Governor of Tennessee and the general indifference manifested in the matter of securing the murderers, are matters of common talk in that State. Before the outbreak took place, the

"RED HOT ADDRESS"

of Bishop West, of Juab, which was published in the *Tribune* here, and afterwards proven to be utterly without foundation, was thrust at me wherever I went. The refutation of the falsehood was of course not published then. The newspapers have contained clippings from that paper spreading the vilest slanders about us, and the Associated Press reports have not been, as you may well imagine, always of the most favorable or trustworthy character. I was once waylaid, in company with Elder Gibbs, by a couple of big fellows with hickory clubs, who vowed vengeance on us for the murder of their uncle in the Mountain Meadows by the Mormons, proof of which they claimed to have in John D. Lee's confession. This was in a district of Tennessee, where quite a feeling of enmity was created owing to the false newspaper stories so industriously circulated.

BROTHER HENRY THOMPSON,

who lives in Scipio, Millard Co., in giving his account of the dreadful scene in which he was an actor, corroborated in the first place the remarks of his fellow-laborer, regarding the newspaper articles which had their origin in this city, and stated that he had also had some experience in combatting and answering that "West address." Proceeding then to a narration of the occurrence at Condor's house, our informant said: "We met there about ten o'clock in the morning and engaged in singing hymns until about half-past ten. Brother Gibbs had just brought out his Bible, saying that there was a good sermon to preach from in the hymn we had just been singing. I had turned to Brother Berry and was just telling him what a good time we had been having at Garrett's, where the other three of us had been together. While we were thus conversing, the

MOB CAME TO THE GATE,

and the first I knew, (we were sitting with our back toward the door), one of them was two-thirds of the way across the room. His first move was to get the gun that was hanging in a rack over the back door. As he got to the gun one of the boys (Martin Condor) came in at the back door and they both got hold of the weapon at the same time. The mobber pulled his pistol and snapped it in the young man's face, which the latter dodged, at which time the masked villain succeeded in getting possession of the gun. As soon as he did this he presented it at Brother Gibbs and fired, the charge taking effect under the arm. Elder Gibbs put his hand around and clutched the wound, but had not fallen when I left the house. The murderer then leveled his gun at me, and Brother Berry and I started towards him. Berry seized the gun, but made no effort to get it away, simply holding it with a firm grip. Just then two more of the mobbers came into the door, and leveled their guns at Brother Berry, who stood before them,

MERELY BOWING HIS HEAD

as if in thorough resignation to his fate. At this moment I ran out of the back door, and as I stepped off the porch a man slipped around the corner of the house and prepared

TO SHOOT ME.

A lady whose child was playing near, stepped forward to get it, and this prevented his shooting at me. I ran out through the lot and into the woods, going about half a mile and being able to hear the shooting and screaming, which was the most heartrending I ever heard. I remained there on the west side of the creek till Monday morning just before daylight, when I crossed to the east side into a cornfield. Before doing this I heard some one on the hill and made my way up there, meeting some men and women who were leaving the place of meeting. They said "They've killed them, and will kill you if they find you." So I went back into the woods and remained there all day. I thought I would cross during the night and might be able to make my way to Shady Grove, but I heard horses tramping and dogs barking all night, and decided not to attempt it. About an hour before daylight, the noise ceased, and then I crossed over into a cornfield in the east side, where there were two women one of them belonging to the Church, who had come over from Garrett's to that place to milk some cows. I asked if she would send a boy over with a hat (I was bareheaded all this time) and also give me some directions as to how to get away. She promised to do this, but the boys were not at home, having gone into the woods, and I had to remain there till nearly sundown, when the woman came back with a hat and something to eat, I having been without food for thirty-six hours. I did not think it prudent to start till very near dark, when two men came and said if I would wait there till morning, Mr. Garrett would come and take me wherever I wanted to go. So I appointed a place for them to meet me four miles from there, and towards morning Mr. Garrett came with his

buggy and took me to Shady Grove, before reaching which place, as Bro. Jones has stated, we met him and Bro. Kimball.

This is the story of the terrible tragedy, so far as the details came under the personal observation of our informants. With the subsequent particulars, including the killing of Elder Berry, Brothers Martin Condor, and J. R. Hudson, and Hinson, the mobber, together with the wounding of Mrs. Condor, our readers are already familiar, as they have been previously given in our columns.

MORE EVIDENCE AGAINST THE
SLANDERERS.

THE interesting interview with Elders Jones and Thompson which appeared in the *EVENING NEWS* of Saturday, contained, among other important statements, one item to which we desire to direct special attention. Both of these Elders, who providentially escaped assassination with the martyrs on Cane Creek, attributed much of the excitement and opposition in Tennessee to the circulation of that infamous tirade of falsehoods concocted for and published in the Salt Lake *Tribune* and called "A Red Hot Address." Elder Jones complained of other vile slanders clipped from the same disreputable sheet, which had been republished in Tennessee papers and obtained credence to the injury of our missionaries.

Our readers will remember the "Red Hot Address" purporting to have been delivered by "Bishop West at Juab" on a certain Sunday, and containing some of the most atrocious sentiments that could be uttered. The refutation of the libel was found in the facts that no person of that name lived at Juab, that there was no Bishop West living in the "Mormon" Church; and that on the Sunday named there were no services at Juab, in consequence of a washout on the Utah Central Railroad which needed immediate attention.

The refutation was so complete that the *Tribune* slanderers had to make some kind of a story in explanation, and tried to make it appear that they had been deceived. But the vile thing was "worked for all it was worth." It was extensively circulated. Copies of the paper containing it were taken and sent East in large numbers. But the virtual acknowledgment that it was a lie was not sent abroad to correct the wrong. Many people and papers that received the fabrication did not receive the admission of its falsehood, and those who did receive both permitted the lie to pass current without exposing its villainy.

The sheet which willingly gave publicity to the libellous trash has withered like a wounded snake over the imputation that its fiendish course has helped to bring about mob violence against our Elders culminating in murder. But turn and twist, and hiss and dart out its venom as it may, the facts are too patent for denial to avail. In the statements of Elders Jones and Thompson are additional corroborations of the evidence against it, and the connection between its wilful falsehoods and the passionate outburst of anti-"Mormon" mobocrats is unbroken and complete.

The apologies it has made for the murderers, and its attempted justification of the red-handed and cowardly assassins in Tennessee have exhibited the true character of the men who write for that scandal-mongers delight, and exhibited them in the eyes of all sensible people who have read their diabolical sentiments "as hail fellows well met" with the savages of Cane Creek.

In their attempts to wriggle out from this position they cannot help showing their tangs and their true character. They copy atrocious sentiments similar to their own, and opinions of bloody-minded preachers made up chiefly from perversions of the truth originally appearing in their own sheet, and seek to justify themselves in the fact that their devilish views are shared by others. And here is an acknowledgment unwittingly made of the very thing with which we have charged them. It is clipped from a *Tribune* editorial of Sept. 12th.

"We know that the mission of Mormon Elders abroad is to convert people to this faith, and we believe that if a female member of any family is converted, without the rest of the family falling into the net, the Elders advise her to come here, or to some region within a day's ride of here, where polygamy will be her almost certain fate. We publish these things and they go abroad, but we did not originate the business, and what we say is mild compared with what journals North and South throughout the Union have been saying for years."

They "believe" a lie, and admit that they "publish these things and they go abroad." Exactly so. This is what we charge against them. These falsehoods which they pretend to "believe," they send abroad as positive facts, and they inflame the minds of people who do not stop to investigate and mobocracy and murder are the results. In the same article they quote approvingly the charge that "under the guise of religion Mormon missionaries were attempting to seduce wives and daughters from the paths of virtue, and they have not disproved it." Just look at the villainess of the whole accusation.