

humblest will then say, "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of the Lord, than dwell in the tents of the wicked."

OKLAHOMA CONFERENCE.

HENNESSEY, O. T., May 17, 1895.

It is with pleasure that I forward a few lines to the readers of the NEWS pertaining to the Oklahoma mission. This part of the field has not been heard from for some time, so a brief account of our experiences for a little while back may be interesting.

On the 1st of May last we left our headquarters, Brother Smith's, on a missionary tour. We traveled south seven miles to a school house known as the Union, where we were treated royally by the people residing in the neighborhood. This place we visited once before and it was with great difficulty that we obtained a place to remain over night, as they were very hostile to our faith. We were determined, however, that they should hear us. At the first meeting held we met with much opposition, but succeeded in making one good friend, W. J. Barnes. On this our first visit three meetings were held, all of which were well attended. We desired to hold more meetings, but as we would have been compelled to remain with Mr. Barnes we did not wish to wear our welcome out, so left after the gentleman had made us promise we would return.

It was the fulfillment of this promise that caused the second visit. We arrived Wednesday evening, May 1st, and were received by our friend Mr. B. The following morning we separated, each of us covering a section [or in other words four miles], notifying the people of our intention to hold a meeting. Our labors were rewarded by having a house full of attentive listeners. The principles of the Gospel were dwelt upon at length and for one hour and three quarters we had their undivided interest. At the close of the meeting all prejudice seemed to have been removed. Three invitations were received from separate individuals to share of their hospitality for the night. At this our last stay five meetings were held, the result of which afforded us the pleasure of beholding some of the best families engaged in an earnest investigation of our doctrines. One family stated that on our next visit they would be ready for baptism.

After leaving that place, which we did with many a hearty shake of the hand, we wended our way further south some six miles. There our success was very limited. Owing to prejudice, at our meeting but seven persons attended.

From that locality our footsteps were directed northwest to Lone Oak school district. At this place we made a few friends and held two meetings, which were well attended.

Our journey the following Monday was made to headquarters, a distance of twelve miles, which was made safely. Eleven days had been spent on the trip.

Monday, the 13th, we left on another tour; this time traveled northwest to the Faust school district, it having derived its name from the gentleman who kind-

ly entertained us. This neighborhood had been visited about six weeks before. The people had become somewhat stirred after three meetings had been held among them. A few days subsequently a Congregational minister announced that he would expose Mormonism. On the occasion of his exposure of our faith the house was filled, and in the most vile and slanderous manner he scandalized our people. He claimed to be a true gentleman, but at our first meeting he interrupted us several times, which conduct humiliated many members of his faith. This served as an illustration, for he showed himself in his true colors. The gentleman thought his discourse would be the means of inciting the people into taking steps toward ridding themselves of our presence. What the surprise of the gentleman must have been when at the close of the meeting he was told that no honorable man would make use of such language as he had used toward the Mormon Church! In the beginning of his remarks, to show how little he knew concerning our Church, he said he was there to expose the "Mormon Church established by old Joe Smith in 1828." His actions and course not only made for us some good friends, but resulted in his removal from the ministry. He was reported to the officers of his conference by gentlemen who were present at his meeting, with the above result, and his salary of nine hundred dollars a year was stayed. On our second visit we were told these particulars by the people. We were treated very kindly in the neighborhood and a few are seeking a knowledge of our doctrine; after remaining in their midst two days talking over the Gospel, we departed.

Our line of march was next taken eleven miles in a southwest direction, to Oak Grove school district. We were strangers there, none of our Elders having preached in that locality before. On reaching the school house we learned that a prayer meeting would be held that evening, which was pleasing news, as at its close we could announce our meeting for the following night; and the by circulating the news, avoiding us the long, warm and tedious walk usually necessary in order to acquaint the people with the meeting.

At the appointed hour a large turnout assembled at the prayer meeting. We being strangers, they desired to know our business. Their class leader, on being informed that we were ministers, after consulting the congregation, turned the meeting over to us. The offer was gladly accepted. They undoubtedly would have hesitated had they known what Church we represented, for our meeting had been in session but a short time before they learned who we were. On receiving the information a frown could be discerned on several countenances. There were no lamps belonging to the school house, as nothing of any value was secure when left within the building. The house was lighted up by lamps that were brought by the people. At this meeting but two lamps were brought, one being very dismal indeed. One lady, the possessor of the better light, on learning that we were Mormons, abruptly and without any explanation came forward and snatched her lamp, which was on a

table directly in front of us, and a moment later slammed the door behind her. She was followed by a few others. The remaining lamp was so poor, the house was left almost in darkness. After meeting we shook hands with a few of those present and a cold feeling, with one or two exceptions, was manifested by all. We passed the night with a bachelor, who kindly took us to his home, where we slept on the ground floor in a little dugout. He gave us the best he had, but we have seen in our lives cleaner and softer beds.

The following day was spent in reading, as our meeting had been announced for the evening. We were glad when the appointed hour came. On reaching the school house we discovered that the windows which worked on slides had been thrown open. The night before the windows were closed and we could not make out for what purpose they had been opened. If any one had desired to effect an entrance they could have come in at the door, which was left unlocked. On going in we closed the windows and fastened them; the gentleman who entertained us brought a lamp, and when the hour arrived we commenced our meeting.

We had got partly through with the opening hymn, "Do what is right," when the windows commenced to shake, as though they were being wrenched from the casings. What was the cause of the noise perplexed us. We knew it would require considerable strength to push them aside, as we supposed when they had been fastened they were secure. This supposition was incorrect, for in a moment later the windows were slid open, as was also the door. Our suspicions at this juncture were aroused—not quick enough, however—for in an instant eggs thick as hail were hurled at us from every opening. Elder W. E. Newman was struck on the shoulder and just above the left eye and several places on the body. I was the terminating point of several of the missiles, receiving the most pain from a blow on the right jaw, which at this writing is considerably swollen. The lamp was knocked over and nearly exploded, the table was turned bottom side upward and our books scattered all over the floor. We gathered the latter in a hurry and placed them in our grips. Quite a scene prevailed in the audience. Some of the women folks nearly fainted. Several, on getting out of the house, quickly disappeared, making strides for home. When we came out of the house we told the people not to be alarmed and that if they would remain we would hold our meeting when order was restored. Another light was procured. After calling the people inside we continued our meeting, but not until the windows were secured and the table moved nearer to the congregation. Elder Newman occupied the first hour speaking on the persecutions the Saints have had to suffer in every dispensation, and we being members of the Church of Christ had to endure likewise. He was followed by myself and the audience were informed that we had no hatred for those who had given us such a spiteful reception. We would earnestly say as did our Savior, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." For two hours they were held in silence,