

Correspondence.

Branch and Sunday School Organized — Preaching — Character of the People.

VIRGINIA, Aug. 15, 1876.

Editor Deseret News:

Before leaving North Carolina we organized a branch at Toms Creek, also a Sabbath School, that both members and their children might have the benefit of holding meetings and attending to their duties. We have held very interesting meetings, enjoyed much the associations of the people, who have treated us with great kindness, and our labors have been performed with much satisfaction. Elders John C. Harper and Frank Haymour, from Payson, Utah, on a mission to the South, met us at Toms Creek, with whom we had a very pleasant time. We held a general meeting and the minutes of the organization of the branch and Sabbath school were read. We also gave an account of our labors in that field of labor, that they might be able to continue the work. Bro. Harper accompanied us on a visit round where we had labored and assisted in holding meetings, being introduced to the people. Afterwards we accompanied Bro. Harper to Virginia, leaving Bro. Haymour in North Carolina, his native State, visiting his friends. We spent a very pleasant time at Colonel Harper's, Bro. Harper's father, and preached in Patrick, Franklin, and Bedford counties to good congregations, enjoying much freedom, opening new fields, preaching the gospel in places where it had not been preached before, although some who lived there had read some of the works of the church, had been very interested in them, and had desired we should visit and preach to them. The prospects are that some will embrace the gospel and gather with the Saints.

Where we have been traveling has been amongst the honest, hard-working tillers of the soil. Both sexes are very industrious, not only raising cattle and grain, but also spinning, weaving, making cotton and woolen cloth, bed spreads, &c., raising the wool and cotton and converting it into wearing apparel, surrounding themselves with the necessities of life by their own labor, striving to be self-sustaining and independent. The Christian civilization (!) that has been spoken of by some of our fellow laborers in the north, in their interesting letters to the DESERET NEWS, wherein they have remarked the absence of families amongst the married folks, is not so here. When we were in North Carolina we heard of a farmer who went into a store for fifteen hats to cover the heads of his fifteen sons, the storekeeper throwing in one for the farmer himself on the sale. We had the pleasure of an introduction to an old lady a short time since who was in her ninety-third year. She had been the mother of twenty-one children. In one place, where we held meetings in the private house of an excellent man, his wife had been the mother of sixteen children. These children are all raised to labor to make themselves useful, and learn to take care of themselves.

Brother Harper expects to take a company with him in the spring to our mountain home. As a general thing, those who have heretofore embraced the gospel in these States and emigrated to Zion have proved to be very firm in the faith, and patient laborers for the kingdom of God and his righteousness. Let us hope that those who shall hereafter gather may prove to be of like native worth. We believe that those who embrace the gospel to-day, when there is so much prejudice in consequence of the wicked misrepresentation that, by the bye, has always existed in some degree against the doctrine of Christ, are bold, thinking men and women, who think for themselves, and who, when satisfied of the correctness of the principles, dare to take up the cross of Christ, notwithstanding it is so unpopular. Truth cleaves to its own, and it is bound in the end to triumph. Blessed are they who to-day understand the light that now shineth and are true and faithful unto it.

We have had a very pleasant, profitable visit to Tazewell County, and hope to meet with our friends whose acquaintance we made there ere long in our mountain home. God bless our Southern friends.

Brother Winder joins me in kind regards to all at "home." Your fellow laborer,
GEORGE TEASDALE.

Sharp Practice in Beaver County.

Editor Deseret News:

I see by an extract from the Beaver Enterprise, recently published in the NEWS, that the "Liberals" of Beaver county have captured two of the offices of said county by means of a little sharp practice. It seems that the county attorneyship is lost beyond redemption by reason of that office having been created for all the counties at the recent session of the Legislature, and the act creating it published in the papers to give it effect and force for the August elections just past. Thinking, however, that the previous election of that official by the county court (before it was made a statutory office) answered every purpose, and that the people had merely forestalled the legislature, no nomination for such position was made on the People's ticket. The "Liberals," however, thirsting for official positions and spoils, never permit such opportunities to escape; and though their candidate received scarcely a score of votes, as none were cast for any one else, he is technically the choice of the people, acting under authority of the legislature, and their real choice, the former incumbent steps down and out.

In the case of the Postmaster at Beaver, however, the matter is altogether different. He received one vote (and probably cast it himself) for Justice of the Peace. Now his friends claim that there was a vacancy on account of the absence on a visit to Salt Lake of the incumbent Justice, and that, as their candidate received more votes than any one else, he is therefore legally elected. Admitting the vacancy and the majority for the sake of argument, I deny that there is a legal election, basing my opinions on the following clause in the territorial statutes—

"Should a vacancy occur in a county or precinct office necessary to be filled previous to the next general election, the County Court shall fill such vacancy by appointment." * * *

"Annually, on the first Monday of August, there shall be a general election held in each precinct, in the several counties, for choosing all officers not otherwise provided for."

Thus, it will be seen that, if a vacancy in the office occurred on or after the expiration of thirty days from the time of the incumbent's absencing himself, it was clearly in the power of the County Court, and it only, to fill it; the fact of their having failed to do so gives the one "Liberal" voter of Beaver Co. no right to revise their actions or supply their omissions—they still have the power to fill the office and will doubtless do so at their next regular meeting, which occurs this month.

But even if the so-called vacancy had occurred on the very day of the election, I still deny that energetic though solitary "Liberal's" power to make the county whole in the matter of its official corps. There are two general elections in every two years and a different set of officials are elected each year, for instance, the absent justice was elected in August of last year, and this term expires in August of next year, so that the only election, general or otherwise, involving or in any affecting his tenure will be at the latter date.

It is therefore plain enough that the supposedly newly elected justice is not the legal incumbent, and that, so far as he is concerned, the office is and remains vacant.

BEAVER.

The Mountains of South Western Virginia.

WYTHEVILLE, Va.,

Aug. 25, 1876.

Editor Deseret News:

For the last two weeks I have ridden on horseback over the mountains, in many places pathless, of South-western Va., than which none of the Appalachian range are wilder, resting at night in the cabin of some hardy pioneer, who, though he may be nearer the centre of civilization than those who have led the "star of empire" westward, has waged a no less heroic war with churlish nature, on rocky hill sides that do not laugh with harvests from mere tickling with a hoe.

I have been greatly interested with much of the country in this portion of the State. Its geological and topographical formation is, in many points, very singular. Traveling in a north-eastern direction from the Blue Ridge Mountain, and attempting to keep on top of the Alleghany Mountain, one is compelled to travel a due east course, say fifteen miles, and then a reverse track for fifteen or twenty miles, having only made six or eight miles in a straight direction north-east. This of course forms alternate valleys, number 1 with water running west, number 2 water running east, number 3 west, number 4 east, etc., and although these streams thus interlock and are almost within a stone's throw of each other, those running west are limestone waters, while those running east are free stone. Many springs break out so precisely on the crest of these mountains that you can at will, with your foot, turn the stream into the Chesapeake Bay or the Gulf of Mexico.

These mountains are, on the side facing north, very fertile and heavily timbered, while the opposite side is sterile and almost worthless. The lands on the waters flowing westward are excellent for grazing purposes, while those flowing eastward are not generally productive, certainly not of the grasses.

There is an abundant show of water worn rocks on the tops of many of these high mountains, and it is the opinion of geologists that what is now the Kanawha once found its way out to the Atlantic by the present channel of the Roanoke. This would seem an unaccountable freak for this erratic river, were it not patent now on every map that it has defied all laws governing rivers, and from its source in North Carolina to its mouth it has cut its way across range after range of high mountains until the channel is clear for it to disembogue into the Ohio. On opposite sides of this river are now to be seen the strata of solid rock hundreds of feet high, duplicating each other, as if the river had literally hewn its channel out. This is the same through the district ranges known as Mack's, Walker's, Peter's and Sewell mountains, all parallel to each other.

In Tazewell county, some thirty miles north from Wytheville, is a wonderfully beautiful and fertile tract of country known as Busk's Garden, an oval shaped cove entirely surrounded by very high mountains. It is supposed to have been a lake and that its present rich black soil is alluvial deposit. It is indeed a garden of surpassing loveliness, the whole thirty square miles being a carpet of deepest green, and unrivaled, even by the blue-grass region of Kentucky, for grazing purposes.

It was once owned, in part, by the late Governor, John B. Floyd, Secretary of War, during Buchanan's administration, and I doubt if he ever made a greater financial blunder than when he sold it. It is now accessible by a turnpike literally cut for miles in solid rock, and as you look down upon it in any direction large herds of fat cattle are seen on its bosky meads and under its spreading oaks.

Quite as unfortunate was the Governor's kinsman, Mr. Preston, who owned that magnificent estate, the Preston Salt works, and their valuable surroundings, and, during the late war, sold it for Confederate notes, and is now trying to recover it in the courts upon the plea that he had no *quid pro quo*. These salt works are being very successfully operated by Messrs. Stuart & Palmer, the present owners. The former a brother of the cavalry leader Gen. J. E. B. Stuart, of Confederate fame, the latter from New York. The capacity of these works has been greatly increased and the product is enormous.

Immense mines of gypsum are found, and very successfully operated on these premises by this same company. Such is the extent of their operations, that the Virginia and Tennessee R. R. has found it profitable to build a branch road some eight miles in length to this place, Saltville, and to run regular trains upon it.

These men, too, are not so greedy of gain as to lose sight of the comfort of all around them. Their employees have beautiful cottages with adornings and conveniences, also a hotel and a model church building, beautifully finished and furnished, all the property of the company, and so provided on the principle that it pays to have high-toned, gentle and religious opera-

tives. They employ and pay different preachers without reference to their denominational bias, and also employ and pay a teacher of vocal music for the children of the village. While this is not a rare policy in the north and west, it is quite uncommon and noticeable in this latitude, and is worthy of much praise and of being copied by many similar corporations in the south.

THE OSAGE ORANGE.—The Los Angeles Express, urging the cultivation of the Osage orange, says—

"It is hard, durable and never shrinks—and will bear an elegant polish. We have known wagon wheels, made and ironed when the wood was perfectly green, and in seasoning they did not shrink enough to loosen the irons. It is much harder, and equally as springy, as white oak or hickory, and less susceptible to decay. There is no tree in the world, except the willow, easier to raise. It grows rapidly from the seed, and a switch stuck in moist soil will grow as rapidly as if it had been transplanted with roots to it. In addition to all this, we believe it is as rapid a grower as the Australian gum, and as well adapted to a dry climate. In the Southern States it is used largely for hedges, but it requires a great deal of labor to keep it trimmed or topped down, so rapid is its growth. It should be planted at least ten feet apart for timber purposes—and if our farmers would devote each a small strip of land to the growth of this tree, they would soon find it a paying investment."

Rockville, Conn., boasts of a girl in that city, ten years of age, who can converse with considerable fluency in five different languages. But if she wants to marry a sensible man a few years hence, she should learn how to fry palatable slapjacks and patch pantaloons in at least one language. —Norristown Herald.

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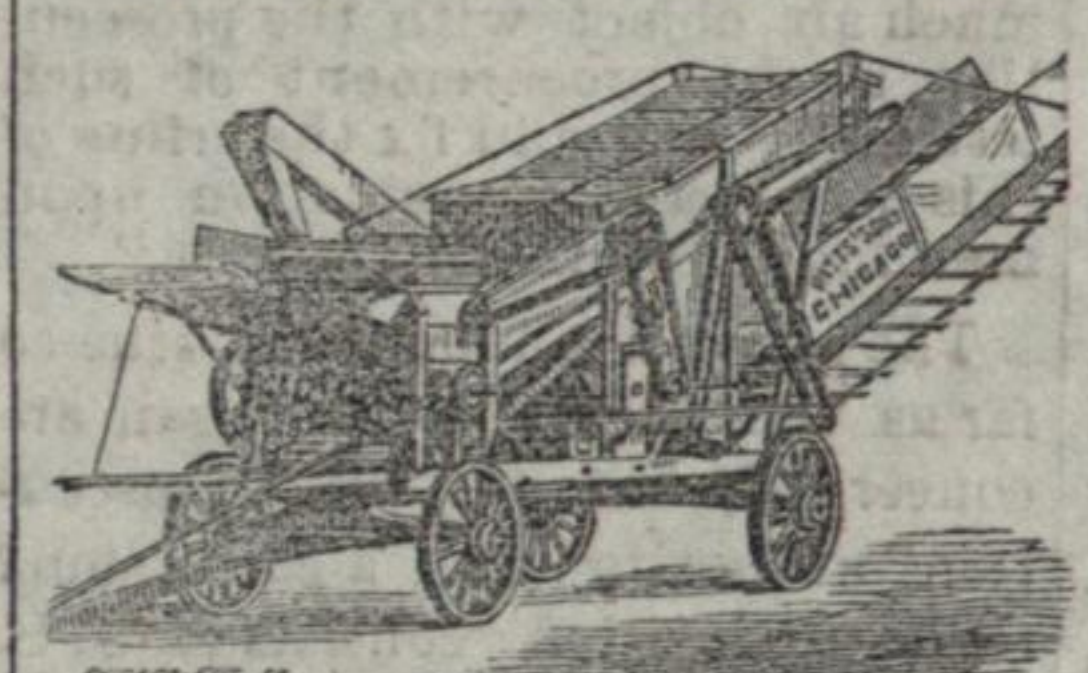
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