

the whistle tree of a pair of horses, or to the rear axle of a wagon. The horses were whipped up, and the skin was either torn in two or torn from the buffalo, with about fifty pounds of flesh sticking to it. This method, however, was not a success, and was soon given up. About fifty thousand buffaloes have been killed for their tongues, no account having been made for their skins. For a long time every skin sent to the market represented five buffaloes, the others having been destroyed. Thousands of buffaloes were killed by firelight and moonlight, the fires in such cases being made for the purpose. During the year 1873 the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe railroad alone carried a quarter of a million buffalo robes, and more than a million and a half pounds of buffalo meat, and during the three years following 1872 more than three million buffaloes were slaughtered by the white men, and of these 1,800,000 were wasted. The great southern herd had been annihilated by 1875. At this time the market had been overstocked with robes, and the hunters got 65 cents to \$1.25 for them.

There was then left only the great herd of the northern part of the United States. Its destruction began in 1880, at which time about 100,000 buffaloes were shipped out of the country every year. The Indians of the northwestern territory marketed about 75,000 buffaloes a year. As soon as the railroad came into the country the hunters came in, and in 1882 there were 5,000 hunters and skinners at work. They killed the buffaloes by the thousands for their robes, getting from \$1.50 to \$3.50 apiece for them, and within about four years this vast herd was wiped out. In 1876 it was estimated that there were a half million buffaloes within a radius of 150 miles of Miles City. In 1884 the last carload of buffalo robes ever shipped to the east was sent over the railroad.

The hunting of the buffaloes was immensely profitable. According to the figures of Mr. Hornaday, hundreds of thousands of dollars were made out of the slaughter long before 1840. From 1835 to 1840 there were five expeditions, which killed buffaloes, worth more than a million dollars, and the buffaloes killed up to that time within twenty years realized a sum of more than \$3,000,000. There are records of single fur firms who handled hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of hides. Joseph Ullman of New York and St. Paul in 1881 bought about \$90,000 worth of buffalo robes, in 1882 an equal amount, and about \$120,000 worth of buffalo hides. This firm within four years paid more than \$310,000 for buffalo robes and hides, and, in connection with one other firm, they sold enough skins to bring in about \$2,000,000. There were a number of other fur dealers who made money out of the business, to say nothing of those who got rich off buffalo meat and buffalo bones. In a trip which I took over the Canadian Pacific road a few years ago, I saw mountains of buffalo bones at many of the stations. The railroads shipped them east by the millions of pounds. In 1872 more than 1,000,000 pounds were shipped over the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe road, and this road in 1874 handled nearly 7,000,000 pounds. The bones were sold by the ton, to be ground up for fertilizer. In some cases they were crushed before shipment, and crushed bones were

worth \$18 a ton, while the uncrushed sold for \$12 per ton. The meat of most of these buffaloes went to waste. It seldom brought more than two or three cents a pound, and it was chiefly of value when dried or jerked. Jerked meat sometimes brought as high as ten cents per pound, the tongues being worth much more.

It will be surprising to many to know that the buffalo can be domesticated. Had the government prohibited the killing of wild buffaloes years ago and provided in some way that they might be captured and bred for domestic uses, the United States would today be hundreds of millions of dollars richer and there would be a new breed of cattle used by man. The male buffalo crosses readily with the opposite sex of domestic cattle, and it is shown that the half-breeds are much hardier than the ordinary stock, much larger and that they produce good meat and milk. Buffaloes have been used as oxen. They are easily tamed and they could have been of great value in logging camps and for the hauling of heavy burdens. They do not need much to eat, subsisting on the same things as other cattle and being much faster and more active than the ordinary ox. Half-breed buffaloes can stand the cold of the open prairie during our severest winters where the thermometer is from thirty to forty degrees below zero. They are very prolific, the cows having calves every year. Such animals are almost as large as the buffalo, being covered with the same woolly hair, though the hair is not so long nor so thick. When it is remembered today that a buffalo hide is worth at least \$100, it can be seen that the having of a herd of buffaloes, of which the increase would be regularly estimated, would be of no small value to the owner.

The bringing of the buffaloes to Washington will be a very good investment for the government. As they stand they are worth a thousand dollars apiece, and there is no doubt that any increase of the herd will bring this amount from the Zoological Gardens of this and other countries. The buffaloes which are already here have shown by their increase that the climate of Washington is perfectly adapted to them. They are thriving and with the addition of those in the Yellowstone it is believed that the herd can be perpetuated. Such action as Congress takes upon the matter, however, should be done at once, as a single party of vandal hunters may wipe out the herd at almost any moment.

*Frank G. Carpenter*

#### LABORS IN VIRGINIA.

COURTLAND, Southampton Co., Va.,  
January 27th, 1896.

We desire to offer a few words of thanks for the very valuable paper which we receive weekly. Its contents are very eagerly read and are the means of furnishing information both interesting and beneficial. After perusing its pages thoroughly we present the paper to others who, if not entirely dead to their own surroundings, will also regard them as treasures of spiritual food.

In addition to expressing our sincere thanks for this very welcome visitor, we desire to give a brief account of our labors here in this locality, thinking

perhaps it will be of some interest to the many readers of the News, and that a place might be found for it in its interesting columns. This account will embrace some of the most important events occurring from October 16th 1895 up to the present time, previous to which I had been laboring with Elder Samuel Jackson of Manassa, Colorado, revisiting Saints and friends in the counties of Newkent and James City. Our labors in that capacity had not been completed before we received instructions to return to the Bandana branch of the Church in Hanover county, to await the coming of new Elders. On their arrival Elder Jackson and I were separated and assigned different counties, each taking a new companion. Elder Thomas C. Romney of Juarez, Mexico, and I were appointed to labor together and assigned the county of Southampton as a field.

This county so far as we have seen, is level, comparatively, with only here and there an undulation. It is well timbered, but the saw mills are doing their work of destruction and the crash of falling monarchs may be heard on every side. None are left standing that have a diameter of twelve inches at the base. The Surry Lumber Co., under the control of New York men, have previously bargained for this fine timber at the rate of from \$150 to \$200 per acre and in many instances have purchased the land in order to get the timber, and consequently are real estate as well as saw mill men. The country in many places, by reason of saw mill work, presents the appearance of having been "picked" and much of the land is rendered unsaleable on account of the lack of timber for fencing purposes. This idea may seem to be an absurd one but it nevertheless exists and is occasionally breathed forth by the sturdy Virginian. I sometimes wonder how it is that the western farmer prizes his land so highly when he is under the necessity of hauling his poles and posts from twenty to forty miles, and this country is yet a forest comparatively. The soil in this country is very sandy and light and not over productive. It is almost worn out and in reality the timber which it supports is of the greater value. The soil is almost altogether adapted to corn and peanuts, the latter bringing only from one and a half cents to three cents per pound. Sweet potatoes are raised quite extensively. The reason for the depreciation in value of lands after the timber is taken is very plain. The climate so far has proven to be very favorable to pedestrians; indeed we have scarcely had muddy feet since we came here, though a few days ago we had a light shower. The people in this locality have been suffering somewhat on account of the very long drought, which began about June 1895, and lasted until recently. Their wells began to go dry and it was difficult to get good water for domestic purposes. We have had but little snow.

Our opportunities for sowing the seeds of eternal truth in this country have been good and we have taken advantage of them all. We have held twenty meetings, all of which were well attended and we still have appointments to fill. Among other questions asked at the close of our meetings we generally find one in relation to our next appointment, and we always tell them our next appointment depends to a very great extent upon the kindness and liberality