

PREACHING IN MISSOURI.

WILLOW SPRINGS, Howell Co., Mo.,
March 15th, 1897.

It is with great interest that we read the many interesting letters from the missionaries in the various parts of the world, as they are published in your paper. They are indeed a source of spiritual food to us; and, thinking that others might like to hear from us, we send this communication.

At our last conference, which was held at Unionville, Putnam county, November 28th and 29th, I was assigned to labor with Elder Alexander Watson, at Nevada, Vernon county. We arrived there December 8th, and labored together for a month and a half, when, on the 25th of January, we received a letter from Elder Burton, the secretary of the mission, stating that Elders S. S. Humphreys, of Paris, Idaho, and Jesse L. Mortenson, of Sanford, Colorado, would arrive there that day. I was directed to labor with the latter at Willow Springs, and the former was to take my place at Nevada. Enclosed, also, was a letter from Elder J. J. Darius, of Chicago, directing us to one Andrew Christensen, of Willow Springs, who was favorably impressed with the Mormons. We met the Elders soon after. Elder A. Reiser, of Salt Lake City, came with them on a visit to Elder Watson.

We spent several days together, and tried to get the court house and two churches to hold meetings in, but without success. We all went to the photograph gallery and had our pictures taken together; and, on the 29th, Brother Mortenson and I left Nevada for Scott Junction, where we purchased half-fare tickets over the Memphis road for Willow Springs, arriving there at 10:10 P. M.

We did not know where to go, as we were strangers; but we had asked the Lord to open up the way for us, and we believed that He would do so. Therefore we were not uneasy about where we would stop. We had made up our minds to go to the best hotel and introduce ourselves and make our wants known, but we did not have to do that. As soon as we got off the train, a man came up and invited us to go with him to his hotel. We went on a few steps, but he followed us up, insisting on us going with him. We asked where his hotel was; and, after learning that he was the proprietor, we introduced ourselves to him and told him that we were traveling on the ancient apostolic plan—we were depending on the charity of the people for our entertainment while in their midst, adding, that we would be pleased to go with him. He then dropped his head and began making excuses. He tried to send us to a Josephite, who also keeps a hotel near by, but we explained that we did not affiliate with them; so, he finally said: "All right, come on, and if we have room, we will keep you." He took us and gave us a good room.

Next morning, after eating breakfast with Mr. Roberts, the hotel keeper, we went to the postoffice and made inquiries about Mr. Christensen. We were informed that he lived in the country, but could not find out in what direction. About ten o'clock we went to the Josephite's to make inquiries of him. We met Mr. Lay, the proprietor, in the office, and he received us very kindly, supposing that we belonged to

their church, and introduced us as a "couple of brethren," to his wife and her mother, who also received us kindly. We gave them some of our tracts and explained the difference between us. We expected to see a change come over them, when they found out that we were from Utah, but we did not notice such. They treated us as brethren. We ate dinner and supper with them, and they furnished us a nice bed and breakfast. We had some very interesting conversation with them; gave them a Voice of Warning, and left them several other books to read, among which was the Succession, Life of Joseph Smith, Outlines of Ecclesiastical History, Doctrine and Covenants, etc.

On January 31st, we found out from a butcher the direction to Andrew Christensen's, and started out to find him. We took the road running west until we came to the Pine Grove schoolhouse, and then followed the right hand road north. We stopped several times and made inquiries; traveled over hills, through the woods, crossed Indian creek; and, after traveling about two miles out of our way, came to his place, about seven miles northwest of Willow Springs. He received us kindly, and made us welcome to stop with him as long as we wished. He had a family of eight children, six boys and two girls. His wife was a stout, healthy woman. She was somewhat prejudiced at first, having heard so much evil spoken against the Mormons, but she proved to be a good, steady woman. Their children were all healthy, except their eldest son, who had recently returned from Kansas sick. There was plenty of good clear water here among the hills, which we appreciated after leaving Nevada, where the water is very poor.

We saw the trustees and obtained their consent to hold one meeting in the schoolhouse, which we did; and, although it was snowing, there were eight or ten came out to hear us. We spoke upon the subjects of apostasy and restoration. We held four other meetings at Mr. Christensen's house, and spoke upon the subjects of the atonement, faith, repentance, baptism, Holy Ghost and divine authority. Mr. Christensen said that that was the first time that he had heard a true Gospel sermon. Another man, who had attended our meetings, said that he was surprised at us; he had expected to hear us run other denominations down; but, he said, you don't do that. We told him that that was not our object. We did not wish to tear any man's religion down; but we would build our own up, and people could then either accept or reject it, as they pleased.

After spending two weeks in the country, we returned to the city to canvass there. We visited the mayor and gained his good will and consent to canvass the town. We went to Mr. Lay's and got our dinner, and there met Mrs. Tucker, also a member of the Reorganization, who invited us to take dinner with her the following day. We started out to find a place to hold meeting, but were unable to find such a place that night. We made several inquiries for accommodations to stay over night, and were refused seven times, but finally came to a poor man, who professed no religion. He excused himself at first, stating that he was too poorly situated to keep us; but after considerable explanation, he took us in and made us welcome to the

best he had. We told him of the testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith, and the Book of Mormon, and gave him a Voice of Warning. He took great interest and replied that "perhaps this is just what will suit me." He had an organ, and Brother Mortenson played and sang some songs; and, in the morning he got his violin out, and we had an enjoyable time. Ever since this, when we would go in town, he would come to us and ask us to go home with him; and when he would get in conversation with his stepfather, he would take up our side of the question.

On February 14th we went to Mrs. Tucker's, as per invitation. We found her to be a very interesting and fair-minded woman. After dinner, we talked with her, until, before we scarcely realized it, it was supper time. After supper we got out our hymn books and sang a few songs.

After breakfast the next morning, and after reading some Saints' Heralds, we started out again to find a place to hold meeting. We saw the trustees of the Grand Army hall, and engaged that place for four nights. We then saw Mr. Tucker, and asked the privilege of stopping with him while we were holding meetings, which was willingly granted to us. We distributed tracts during the day and held meeting in the evening. After we got through tracting the town, we went to Mrs. Lay and thanked her for her kindness to us, and then to Mrs. Tucker. She told us we were welcome, and asked us to call again when we came to town. She said that as long as she was there, we would always have some one to cook for us, and as long as they had anything to eat, we were welcome to part of it.

We next went out to Mr. Christensen's, where we were warmly received by the whole family. We held several meetings and conversations. It is difficult for Mrs. Christensen to read English; so we would read a great deal to her from our books. She always manifested a deep interest although it was hard for her to understand some things, and when we left on March 5th, to go to town to make a few visits, she asked us to come back and baptize them.

On Sunday, March 7th, we arrived at Mrs. Tucker's in time for dinner. After this was over with, she told us that she had had a dream while we were away; and, after she got the dishes washed, she would relate it to us, for she desired to know what we thought of it. We went to the postoffice and mailed our letters while she washed her dishes, and after we got back she related her dream to us. It was as follows, as near as I remember it: She dreamed that she was standing on the edge of a pond of water, and on the opposite side were two men, one of them holding an iron rod in his hand. She said her little girl was out in the water a little ways, when a large serpent started across the pond toward her girl, when she jumped to catch her, but, instead, she caught the serpent around the neck with both hands. It was a very large serpent, but she held it fast and prevented it from biting her or poisoning her with its fangs. Then, she said, the men from the opposite side of the pond came over and asked her to let them take the serpent and kill it for her. She was very glad to get rid of it; and the one with the iron rod took the reptile just below her hands and killed it with the iron