

the train at 5:40 p. m., and taking them back again to the next 5:40 train, if they will notify him a day or two in advance, and take it out in preaching. On the 4th we took train to Mesa City. We passed over the Gila river on piles—a broad, flat marsh and only a little water. This was a rather uninviting saleratus country until a very pretty open country comes to view. Then we reached what I choose to call the cactus trees. Here and there they stand as sentinels, reaching ten to twenty feet high. I have a picture of one that reaches forty-five feet high. These trees look lovely when in bloom.

After waiting for two changes, firing one almost out, we came to Mesa City, a land of oranges, lemons, figs, grapes and many good things. I took part in a Priesthood meeting in this city of Salto, and on Sunday held four meetings, including a Seventy's meeting. On Monday I am to ride in a carriage eighteen miles to Phoenix—a neat city of about 5,000 or 6,000 people, of which, with the numerous canals and great Salt river valley and one grove of the cactus trees, I will have more to say hereafter. EDWARD STEVENSON.

THE HOLIDAYS IN FLORIDA.

GREENVILLE, Madison Co.,
Fla., Jan. 9, 1896.

Florida is not always a bed of flowers, yet but few months pass which do not see her clothed in green and crowned with nature's smiles, wild flowers. Just now the pleasure of this land is not in green fields, flowers and songs of birds, but rather within doors and around the blazing fire, especially where are to be found attentive listeners to the earnest words of the Elders as they portray the beauties of the Gospel.

Christmas time has come and gone for the year now past, and with it the attendant joys for the children and its quota of cares for the older heads. The old adage is verified, "no excellence without labor," for as with the family of the West so also with the family of the South, it takes an effort to make the holiday equal to the past events of which it is a memorial. Long established custom has made this particular time one when families unite in the festivities of the occasion and many are the thoughts concerning the absent one; still more fervent are the desires for his welfare cherished in the heart, while the absent one recalls the happy scenes of the home circle; does not this come home to the Mormon Elder? Be that as it may, memory is still fresh of the happy times just passed, and though they be far from home they were made dear by the kindness tendered us from warm heart.

Christmas day found gathered at Greenville, in Madison county, Fla., seven out of our little band of eighteen having met by chance; Elders Jos. A. West and Wiley Nebeker had just come from Leon county the day previous; Elders F. Cutler and F. Smith had returned after a two weeks' tour, to spend a few days among friends; Elder E. L. Black, who was awaiting the recovery of his eyes; Elder H. C. Blood, who had arrived but a few days previous from Utah, and Elder L. W. Lund, who had arrived but the day before from the same place, participat-

ed in a hearty reunion. A Priesthood meeting was held, the feelings of the Elders were sounded by the expression of their sentiments, revealing a healthy and growing interest in the work. Captain Griffin's hotel received our attention next; it was a matter of business, strictly so. The roast turkey soon looked the worst for the warfare but it remained an unsettled question as to who suffered most in the end. The next day brought business, but I have not told you all yet. The following Sunday two meetings were held, at which were good audiences. The principles of the Gospel were dwelt upon; the result was an addition to our list of friends, thus fortifying our cause.

On December 31st President Jos. A. West and Elder Frank Cutler left Mr. Aaron Lovett of Jefferson county for Mr. Wm. Bradley's, of Leon county, Fla., some thirty-seven miles distant. On the eve of the New Year two more Elders joined the circle around Mr. Wm. Bradley's cheerful fire, which circle had already been increased by the presence of Elders H. C. Blood, Wiley Nebeker, Jos. Larson and C. H. Gibson. This meeting was not unexpected, for previous to this our host had exacted the promise of some to spend this particular day with him. The only shadow which seemingly could have lingered upon our worthy friend's face was that more had not come.

That New Year's day, so full of joy, merriment and delight, is not soon to be forgotten by those present. Hunting? Yea, and preaching, too, were indulged in, while the night was carried with a high hand. The crowning feature of the day from which was dated all the day's proceedings was the dinner, a table lavishly spread with all that one should wish for.

Elder Joseph A. West, the president of the Florida conference, is traveling from county to county visiting with the various Elders, giving counsel and strengthening them and holding meetings. Prior to October 1, 1895, this was a branch of the South Alabama conference, and all Elders assembled at Crenshaw county for conference on July 20th and 21st.

Between the above named dates 74 baptisms were performed, Crenshaw county, Ala., seeming to be the centralization of both good labors and good fruits, for of the 74 baptisms she claims 26 as her portion, besides 17 children blessed and one Sunday school organized. In connection with this labor it would be unjust not to mention Elder Joseph S. Geddes, president of the South Alabama conference, as also Joseph A. West whose untiring efforts are commendable.

From a branch whose life and health are so apparent was clipped the Florida twig. She embraces all western, central and eastern Florida and the southern part of Georgia. One branch of the Church is already organized in Liberty county; eight new counties have already been opened and the work is steadily advancing. Elders Jos. Larson and C. S. Gibson have baptized two persons and have some other warm friends; likewise are the Elders of Jefferson and other counties blessed.

We are not as old as our sister conferences but hope by dint of labor to prosper. We feel that God is over all

and that He blesses His servants who are humble. Persecution follows us closely but "as persecuted they the Prophets" before us. Concerning the opposition manifest toward us many reports have gone out. Rumors have reached us that Elders Cutler and Smith, of Madison county, were mobbed and ridden on a rail out of the county. This and all other reports implying harsh treatment are untrue as far as the writer's knowledge extends. Nothing greater has happened than a threatened disturbance of one of our meetings, which was quelled by our friends.

This field has suffered one severe blow which has hurt us throughout the whole conference; two Elders have been forced to postpone their work and leave the city of Tallahassee. This was on the alternative of a fine of \$200 and imprisonment. The sentiment of the citizens could scarcely be in favor of the action, in fact, from what we can learn, it is not so. We yet entertain strong hopes of finishing the work and gathering out the honest in heart despite the powers of darkness which seem constantly alert. God and one man are a majority, and before the great and dreadful day of the Lord comes the warning will be carried to all. Earliest labor brings sure reward; the fruits of individual effort are gratifying to every servant of God, and to be an instrument in carrying salvation to honest souls is a crowning joy; for he then shall be counted a savior on Mount Zion.

Your collaborator in the cause of truth,
FRANK CUTLER.

A CALIFORNIAN ON PROHIBITION.

DRYTOWN, Amandar Co., Cal.,
January 13, 1896.

As the first ruler under the constitution of the State of Utah will have much to do in shaping its future, I wish to say a word to those interested in that important duty—what we have had to contend against out here in the Golden State the last forty-five years, because we did not start right. We had read that wine is a mocker, and strong drink is raging, and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise, but the old pioneers out here thought it was a mistake, so thousands of our best valley lands went into vineyards, and millions of money was invested developing the business, the effect of which is now found in every home in this state. According to the reports of our criminal records; the source of a vast amount of expense and human sorrow, is the use of strong drink, causing ninety-five per cent. of the crimes and sixty-five per cent. of our taxation.

As to the constitutionality of prohibition by the will of the people, there is no further doubt after reading the decisions of the different supreme courts ruling on the case. And now, in behalf of the millions who are watching to see what this new State will do with the most important of all questions—for I know that humanity, with all its fears, with all its hopes of future years is hanging breathless on its fate. Some might say it failed in Maine, although James G. Blaine, in a speech in Congress, said prohibition in his state had emptied the jails and poorhouses, and that is what it has