

munity and have promise of doing a good work. They have undertaken open-air meetings with very good effect, and hold three every week. Attempts have been made to drive them out.

We have begun holding open air meetings here in Brisbane, and I am doing my utmost to devise means of getting the truth before the people and to accelerate the progress of the work here.

I am just now getting things in shape to return to Sydney, having, on the 19th inst., received an appointment by the First Presidency at to succeed Andrew Smith Jr. in presiding over the Australian mission. My address hereafter will be Newtown P. O., Sydney, New South Wales, Australia.

Some of the ideas of professed Christians seem so peculiar and frivolous—even sacriligious sometimes—that I am tempted to give an example. It is an episode in my tracting experience, and may illustrate that also: Having about a week previously called at a house of some pretentious appearance and left a couple of tracts, marked "to be called for," and containing directions of our meetings, which were received with courtesy as usual, I called one afternoon at the gate, when the following conversation, condensed but reported with substantial accuracy, occurred:

Mormon Elder—I believe I left a couple of tracts for you to read the other day?

Mr. Householder—Yes, I was reading them, but I didn't see much good in them, anyway.

M. E.—Oh, may I leave you another tract to read, which may be of interest?

Mr. H.—Well, I don't think you need waste any papers on me, or words either, but come in.

M. E.—(Entering, and seating myself in the parlor.) Thank you, it will be pleasant to have a little chat on what may please you in religion, if you wish.

Mr. H.—I've got a religion of my own—I am a Presbyterian.

M. E.—Oh you are a follower of the learned and virtuous John Calvin?

Mr. H.—I am a follower of Jesus Christ, sir, and I don't see anything in the religion you've got there.

M. E.—Have you a Bible we can consult in discussing these things.

Mr. H.—Yes, sir; I could gather up thirty Bibles in this house. (Gets two Bibles, and resumes with one in his hand and one in mine).

M. E.—You profess to be a follower of Jesus Christ: how do you follow him?

Mr. H.—By the shedding of His blood I am saved, sir.

M. E.—Without anything done or attempted on your part?

Mr. H.—Why, he has done it all; there is nothing left for me to do, but to confess him doing it for me.

M. E.—In other words, you believe you are saved by faith alone?

Mr. H.—Just what I said to you, sir.

M. E.—Well, you remember James, here in the New Testament, sets forth that works are necessary to make faith perfect and operative (reading), and adds, "faith without works is dead, for as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." And Paul, in Gal. iii, says "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, for as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Thus connecting faith and baptism, which I claim to be one of the works necessary to salvation.

Mr. H.—Don't waste your breath over that. You talk about your baptism; I would like to know if you can find anywhere within the Hds of the Bible anything about baptism with water.

M. E.—I think I can. Jesus said, "Except a man be born of the water

and of the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven." Paul and John show the connection between the birth and baptism, and your men of learning, including those who wrote the references to the Bible make them one. John also said, "I indeed baptize you with water, but there cometh one after me—who shall baptize you with fire and the Holy Ghost."

Mr. H.—But do you know what that word "baptism" means? It means "coming into."

M. E.—Where did you get that idea? Will you produce your authority for that?

Mr. H.—It might read that in there, you know, where it says "baptize."

M. E.—You mean that would be a proper translation or rendering from the original. Let us try a few passages where it occurs. (Reading from Bible.) "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him—to become into of him(?) Buried with him in baptism—buried with him in coming into?"

Mr. H.—O, don't waste your breath on them. Do you know what the water was that that means?

M. E.—The water of the river Jordan in most cases.

Mr. H.—Hold your breath there on that. I'll tell you who was the water; is was Christ Himself.

M. E.—Will you bring me proof of that? I never have heard before that Christ was water in which we may be baptized.

Mr. H.—Fourth chapter of John.

M. E.—You mean Christ's words to the woman at the well?

Mr. H.—Yes.

M. E.—He told her he could give her water, after drinking which she should never thirst.

Mr. H.—He said he was the water of life.

M. E.—Also that he was the bread of life; had that anything to do with your baptism?

Mr. H.—He was the bread and the water and the blood.

M. E.—John said, "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word (or Christ) and the Holy Ghost," and "there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, the water and the blood." Now is Christ at the same time one of the witnesses in heaven and two of the witnesses on earth—the water and the word? Again, was Jesus the water in which John baptized Him? When Christ baptized more disciples than did John, are we to believe that Christ through His disciples baptized them in Himself as water? Before John knew Christ, when He baptized all the people of Judea and regions round about, did He baptise them in Christ as water?

Before my friend had time to answer the last interrogatories a woman rushed into the room from one of the rear apartments, where she had been impatiently listening; and glancing at me in an insulting way, said: "I don't see what you want in here anyhow; I wish you'd go away." She then grabbed the Bible I held out of my hands, saying, as she rushed out with it, "You had my Bible too, and I don't want to have it used in any such way."

Mr. H. first tried to apologize for his "Missus," and continuing the conversation, but she would not permit that, so I followed him to the door, and as he stood on the porch, quietly bore my testimony, and departed. It was the first experience bordering on insult I have had, though such is not very uncommon here in the experience of the Elders.

I have now had the privilege of witnessing the fruits of my labors with those of my associate Elders in this conference. I have also witnessed manifestations of the gifts and graces of the Gospel, healing, prophecy, etc.

Among others, my testimony was strengthened by a very faithful lady (non-member) testifying to myself and many others that she saw me in a dream sitting in her house, Bible in hand, explaining the Scriptures to her, sometime before she ever knew or heard of me. She was then given to understand that I had the truth for her. She told the dream in the morning to her daughter (13 years old) and to a number of others. When I entered her house with another Elder of her ward, she was very visibly affected. She had also described me to her daughter so minutely as to complexion, etc., that the latter on seeing me ran and told her mother "there is the young man you saw in your dream." She had already realized it and it nearly overcame her.

F. E. BARKER.

Branch Conference.

Westville, Holmes County, Florida.

May 30, 1898.

We have been engaging in Sabbath school work for more than a year, and have accomplished much good towards the advancement of the cause of truth. Still there is a great chance for improvement among us yet. At the time the Sunday school was organized we belonged to the Florida conference of which Elder Frank H. Cutler of Glendale, Kane county, Utah, was president. He also, in the latter part of 1897, organized a branch of the Church with us, known as the Westville branch.

At the conference held at Sanderson, Baker county, Florida, on January 1st and 2nd, 1898, all the territory west of the Chattahoochee river in Florida was given to the South Alabama conference, of which Elder D. U. Thomas is president. Owing to the greatness of the harvest and the small number of laborers, we have not been visited by any Elders this year until a few days ago. On the 8th inst. I received a letter from President Thomas stating that there would be present with us on the 14th and 15th two Elders for the purpose of meeting with us in a conference capacity.

On the evening of the 13th there arrived in this neighborhood Elders Martin A. Beckstead of Gale, Salt Lake county, and Hyrum Baird of Syracuse, Davis county, Utah. They preached to a small congregation on the night of their arrival. Next morning being Saturday and the 14th, we gathered to the place which was prepared, where we convened in our first branch conference. The meeting being given out for ten o'clock, the people were prompt and we began on time. We had a good attendance at each meeting through our conference, which consisted of three meetings each day, Saturday and Sunday.

The Elders had the Spirit of the Lord to preach and the congregation to listen and we all had a time of rejoicing together. All present seemed to enjoy themselves as well as I ever saw people.

The Elders have done a good work since they have been in our midst, they have baptized five souls into the fold of Christ and ordained three young men to the Priesthood. They are taking their departure this morning, and I can say they are leaving the Saints feeling better than they found them, and are leaving friends somewhat encouraged, and no doubt some who were enemies have become friends.

It is easy to discern the hand of the Lord in this work and to see that He is putting forth His hand to soften the hearts of His enemies and raise up friends to His people.

I can say that the Sabbath school work is one of the greatest institutions ever organized for the moral training and spiritual cultivation of the young, if those interested will just strive to make it what it is intended, and to fol-