

MISCELLANEOUS.

Written for this Paper.

LETTER FROM A MISSIONARY.

The following is a letter written by Elder Alfred L. Booth, from Liverpool, England, to the Forty-fifth quorum of Seventies:

I am thankful to say my health has been very good all the time since leaving home. The trip here on land and sea was very enjoyable. I went to Independence from Kansas City, and viewed the temple site, stayed in Chicago a few hours, called at Niagara Falls and stepped out of the United States for the first time in my life, by crossing the suspension bridge into Canada. Visited several places of note in New York during nearly two days, and set sail a week after leaving Salt Lake City. Was not so sea-sick as to prevent me from laughing at other people who were worse. It is comical to see people so generous that they wish to give their breakfast up to the fishes—that is when you don't happen to be the generous one, but after a few days it gets a little tiresome, and the people quit it. Then it is that the steamship company has to suffer, for the passengers try to make up for what they have lost, and eat a double quantity. It doesn't end there, for nearly every Elder is hungry for two months after landing. I have known them to be staying at a hotel and between breakfast and dinner go out to a restaurant for a meal because they were ashamed to let the hotel keeper see what a ravenous appetite they had.

On landing at Glasgow we were taken into the customs house and searched. The officer came and asked if I had any dutiable articles. I told him I didn't know what things were dutiable, and he said: "Have you any tobacco, or spirits or scents?" "No," I said. Well, he looked and found a Bible, Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, Ecclesiastical History and a few other books, and some clothing. There were twenty-one of us and I don't know of a penny that we paid out for duty. A great part of the revenue of England is obtained from the articles I first mentioned. We were the first company of Elders who came via Glasgow, and hence the officers' surprise at finding so many who neither smoked, drank nor needed perfuming. I suppose by this time they are beginning to recognize our Elders, for they have been coming that way since then.

The country looked very pretty, it being the 2nd of May when we landed at Glasgow, coming to Liverpool that same night. I was appointed to labor in the Liverpool Conference, and went to a little place called Chowley for a month. The country did not seem so strange to me, on account of having read so much before coming. The crooked streets were a little perplexing at first, but a person soon gets accustomed to them. The weather is more nearly equal summer and winter, but there is a greater difference between the long and short days than at home. I remember in June reading without artificial light until half-past nine o'clock. Now it gets dark about four. In the summer the sun gets up so early that only a few people see it rise, and in

the winter there is so much mist that you can't see it until an hour or more after it reaches the horizon. I have seen two or three sunsets, but that is all, since the middle of last April.

It made me tremble to think about tracting and holding open air meetings at first. It makes me smile now when I look back at the first morning I started out with fifty of Brother George Teasdel's "Glad Tidings of Great Joy." I had been shown the street where I was to commence, but could not find the number of the door; a part of the street had been visited, and I was to finish it. It seemed to me that any other doors in the world would have been easier to knock at. I kept on walking along till the end of the street was reached with out venturing to stop at any door. The houses there were just the same and it looked as though I would have to begin somewhere, so I determined to make a start. The first door was opened by a modest looking servant girl, who thanked me for the tract and it didn't seem so bad after all. My fifty tracts were gone in a little while, but no one had asked me who I was, nor had I obtained an opportunity of talking on the principles of the Gospel. I was told by Elders that very few conversations were had in taking round the first tract, but I could expect none with the second. Before taking the second one, however, I was moved to the conference house at Preston, and appointed clerk of the Liverpool Conference.

Preston, as most of you are doubtless aware, is the place where the Gospel was first preached in England, by Heber C. Kimball and others, in 1837. I visited the Vauxhall Chapel where the first sermon was preached, saw the ruins of the "cockpit," where the first conference was held, and the river Ribble, in which the first Latter-day Saint baptism in England was performed. Also the house where the Elders had such a contest with evil spirits at the beginning of their labors. There is nothing extraordinary in the appearance of any of these objects, but they bring a train of reflections to a person's mind.

The first meeting I attended there were only about fifteen present which seemed a small number to me. There was also a little Sunday school of seven members, and the contrast was very great, as I had been accustomed to seeing two or three hundred at home. A little time accustomed me to the change. The Sunday schools and meetings were held right in the conference house, and we could at least say our meetings were crowded. I found among those who occasionally attended meeting was an uncle to your secretary, Brother Hugh Clayton. His work was in another place and he could not be present very often.

It has been a question in my mind which feeling was worse, that occasioned by the thought of first going out tracting, or that brought on by thinking of the first open air meeting. I had had enough practice not to get unusually afraid of talking to any audience when in the house, but the idea of hunting a congregation by going into the street and beginning a hymn was awful. It had seemed all right to hear the re-

turned Elders tell about it, and so long as it was in the distance there was no particular dread of it, but when we were walking down the street with the intention of doing that very thing, it seemed to me that everyone on the sidewalk could recognize what we were contemplating. It is a good thing that the other two who were with me had gone through it before, or I am afraid we would have kept on thinking we could find a better place. When we would see a good place I would feel that there were not enough people, and when the people were in sight they would look different from those who were not there.

We finally came to a good place where three streets meet, and a good strong lamp post in the center. There was a Methodist church on one side of us, a row of business houses on another and a public house on the third. We faced the latter, pulled out our hymn books and began. Two or three little boys left their play to see what the noise was. One of the brethren offered a short prayer and that attracted two or three grown people. We sang again and an Elder pulled out his Bible and commenced preaching. They kindly left me until the last, and as we had no set time for closing, my remarks were very brief. It seems like a dream to me to think of that meeting. But the next one was harder.

The president of the conference had put me with a man who had not been much in favor of open air meetings. He came about eight months before I did, yet had been to but one or two meetings out doors. My instructions in Salt Lake City by the Apostles, in Liverpool by President Lund, and in Preston by the president of the conference, were to hold all the open air meetings we could conveniently. My companion had not received them, so he said, but I had been told at Preston to get him out by all means if possible. Now you can imagine how a young man just come over would feel in dealing with one who presided over him, and was old enough to be his father. He told me if I would talk first he would go with me. He would pray and introduce me to the people, but he couldn't talk much. I agreed to all he asked, and we appointed an evening that we would go out. When the time came it was raining and I don't know which one of us was the more thankful for that rain, but I didn't tell him I was. We did not appoint any other time, but waited until a fine evening came and I asked him to go out. He consented under the conditions mentioned and down the street we started.

The location was similar to the one at the first meeting, though in another town. There were two or three men standing around the lamp post, and as I walked up to it I thought of the people in Preston, where I had before preached, were not half so formidable looking as those close to me. We tremblingly asked if they knew of any meeting appointed for that evening and were informed that the place was ours if we wished it. This time I had to commence the singing, my companion having a good voice but not venturing to start a hymn. I happened to get it about the right pitch and when we had sung two lines I was no more afraid than I am now to tell you about it. Both of us seemed to sing better than I