

## ELDERS IN BIRMINGHAM, ALA.

The following is from a letter written at Birmingham, Ala., by two missionaries, to Elder Elias S. Kimball, president of the Southern States mission:

We take pleasure in submitting a few items of our experience in the magic city, Birmingham, Ala. Elder Matheson, president of this conference, and Elder Nels P. Nelson, president of the Middle Tennessee conference spent one week here in visiting public men, editors and ministers, inquiring for places to preach. They received cordial treatment; and, although public buildings were not at their disposal, they received hearty assent and approval from Mayor Evans, who gave them permission to canvass the city and use the street corners at will. The court house is in constant use; and although Sheriff O'Brien was very friendly, we could not get it. The news man interviewed us, explaining through his paper that we were not teaching polygamy, and also that we desired to establish ourselves here and not take our converts to Utah. It did us a great deal of good.

We attribute our success not to the efforts of one or two, but to the united faith and prayers of our brethren. We fasted two days and prayed, as a conference, months before this place was opened. The brethren who came here first exercised the same privilege of a two days' fast when they dedicated it, and after Elder Nelson was called away, Elder Matheson joined us.

Three years ago, Elders F. M. Belnap and Alexander Campbell came here to canvass the city. They stayed at the hotel, but paid for it; now we stay at the hotels gratis. They were put in prison with negroes and had to pay about twenty-five dollars to get out, for carrying a Gospel tract to a citizen's door; we are invited into the parlors to explain our teachings; to sing, preach and pray, and then they give us needed money before leaving. God is softening the hearts of the people.

You may be assured we would not dare to be in this large city and break the "purse and scrip" commandment. We made no preparations for money; yet we have not wanted for anything; laundry, ties, collars, hats, have all been provided as we needed them. It gives us pleasure to go up to the hotel proprietors and tell them that we are servants of the Lord, traveling without money. We are seldom turned away. All the time our brethren were here they stayed at a \$3 hotel free; and since we have been here we have stayed sixteen days in twenty-three, at hotels or public boarding houses. They usually say, "Come again, when you need a place to stay;" or, as Mr. Gelders, the restaurant man said, "We don't take thanks. Just come any time you get hungry." At the Florence hotel we have a room which is ours as long as we want it. We could relate many instances, but, to say much in little, we are cared for in Birmingham, a strictly modern city of 60,000 people. An engagement for dinner is now waiting us and we must hasten to meet it.

Elder Matheson opened in this place by preaching on our mission here, as a theme. The Twentieth street and Sec-

ond avenue was full of people to listen, and he spoke well. To gather a crowd we began to sing and pray. It doesn't take long. We always try to explain the Gospel, and have spent most of our effort on the principles of faith and repentance, because our crowd was changeable and unstable. We usually explain our mode of traveling with relation to money; and when we are in need of money, we never fail to get it. More than fifty persons have given us money. And even the darkey says, "That's Gospel; help dem men along".

Well, dinner is over now, and we are safely lodged for the night. We dined with Mrs. Baldwin and son, and tonight we are at the residence of Dr. Charles Whelan, an eminent physician, proprietor of the large opera house and hotel, and a prominent citizen. He kindly invited us to supper; and, after spending a pleasant evening, he simply said: "Now I will show you to your room," before we had hinted our desires.

The Elders in Lynchburg were met by a friend when they were in need of a place to stay; ours is a hotel awaiting us. We don't know how to express our gratitude. We only wish that we as well as all our Elders could trust the Lord more perfectly.

We hope for a branch of the Church in Birmingham. We would not have so many rejected testimonies to report, but there are a great many Jews here, and they reject us because it is Christianity. We average a conversation once in three. How joyfully we anticipate our conference in August. To say that we were sorry that we did not meet you here as you wired us, en route to Florida, does not express our feelings.

CHARLES L. HAIGHT,  
GEORGE T. WRIDE.