

IN THE BEGINNING.

"In the beginning, God". This was the first thought that came to me when I received the message from our Secretary, asking me to respond to this sentiment--"In the beginning, God."

Sometimes we hear people remark, "That God forsaken land was given to the Indians";-- "The country God forgot." Shall we not rather say that from the beginning God was working His purpose out to bring to a knowledge of Himself, not only our Red Brothers, but the hosts who should afterward people this Beautiful Land of the Red People.

True there have been, because of the greed of gold, injustice and wrong committed, but our God can make even the wrath of man to praise Him, and tonight, as we meet, a host of Christian women, part of the great Baptist constituency of our new state, we can say and do say it reverently, "In the beginning, God."

In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth to become the home of the human family. Here in Oklahoma, amid scenes of wonderful beauty, boundless prairie, beautiful hills, rich mines, and valuable forests, He has placed us, servants of His, handmaidens of His, to do His bidding, "fellow helpers to the truth." Shall we not be grateful, always, that to so many of us has been given this sweet privilege of serving Him here, "in the beginning."

Out of the natural chaos, when the earth was without form and void, came an Eden of beauty and rest. Out of the turbulence and turmoil, out of the sacrifice and sorrow, out of the toil and trouble of the beginnings have come the civilization and Christian citizenship which we now enjoy every where in this new state. Out of the moral waste of those beginnings, when Satan held sway, have come the family of God, men and women seeking to know and do His will.

The beginning of all things is light. God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. From the far east came the heroic figure of Isaac

Mc Coy, whose labors we reverence, and whose faith and effort have given us such inspiration. From the far away valleys of Georgia came another whom we all delight to honor, Dr. J. S. Murrow, bringing the light.

"Send the light, the blessed Gospel light" found echo in their hearts, and soon went out the message, "Those who sat in darkness and in the shadow of death, unto them hath the light shined."

There were giants in that early day, heroes, men of faith, patience, and perseverance, who gave freely of themselves that the wilderness might blossom as the rose. Later came that "Man of God on the Frontier"

L. L. Smith, whose heroic courage and loyalty to truth is yet an inspiration to us all. Time would fail to mention all the names of these heroes of the faith who toiled with God in Oklahoma in the beginning.

Is there not laid up also a crown of rejoicing for our Heroines of the faith who toiled at home through lonely hours? Those wives of our pioneer preachers and missionaries, those heroic unmarried women who came early in the work to hard and lonely fields among the Indians and negroes? "In the beginning, God". What else could have stayed the heart and given sublime courage to Mrs. Bond, Mrs. Murrow, Mrs. Holt, Mrs. Deyo, Mrs. Hicks, Miss Reeside, Miss Ballew and others of that elect company?

God gave us in the beginning, loving and loyal helpers in our foundation work. We lovingly remember the sweet earnest words of comfort and admonition given in our meetings by Miss Armstrong, the "Miss Annie" whose efforts in their behalf, meant so much to our frontier pastors and their families. And, too, our dear Miss Burdette, our little "Apostle Paul", who counting not her life dear unto herself gave of her strength so unselfishly, that our work might become the strong and stable organization it is today. I can hear her say yet these words, "The whole body fitly joined together," which was her ideal of the church, men, women, boys and girls, all working together for the coming of the kingdom.

Our beginnings, I say it reverently, and with deep gratitude to God, our foundations are cemented with the life blood of these noble men and

women, for they have helped us to make wise beginnings for the work that was to follow.

"And God saw that it was good." As we look back at the beginnings in 1832 up to this present time, we can see God's smile of approval. He has prospered our efforts up to this good day. His blessing has been upon us. We women have been permitted to have a part in His work, in carrying out His plans for the salvation of the world. As we look at the beginnings of our work, and then at the present we can say in the words of another,

"I am so glad we can forget the failures of the past,
 The tears that once our eyelids wet, the skies once overcast.
 I am so glad that all the grief of all the far-off years
 Has found in time a sweet relief, or vanished with our tears.
 I'm glad the troubles we have had no longer make us sorrowful;
 I am so very glad.

I'm glad that we cannot forget the blessings of the past,
 The faithful friends that we have met- the days that always last.
 I am so glad that olden times fill us with new delight,
 That roses of remembered Junes continually are bright!
 I'm glad the pleasant things we've had, grow every day more beautiful;
 I am so very glad.

I am so glad that ill or good is from the Father's hand
 Dropped down. I would not if I could reverse what He has planned.
 I'm glad that One who knows the way is marking it for me,
 And that He does it every day, just as it ought to be.
 Though future days be good or bad the plans of God are wonderful,
 And I am very glad."