

17-11-11, 11-11-11
Battle Creek, Mich., U. S. A.

Dec. 7, 1902.

Eld. F. M. Wilcox,
Colorado Sanitarium,
Boulder, Col.

Dear Brother:--

I have just received Your letter of the 4th instant, and will reply at once. I am not surprised to learn that "some very strange rumors" are in circulation in regard to the recent General Conference Committee council. Of course I do not know altogether what these rumors are, and it would be difficult for me to give you a complete view of the situation, without having a long personal interview.

We had a most trying time, and yet I think that the members of the Committee as a whole, were more closely united in the work, and of better courage, at its close than at its commencement.

I can make a very definite reply to the question which you ask concerning the position which Elder Daniells and I have taken concerning our institutions. I think the action of the Committee in the council, as shown by the report in this week's REVIEW, to raise \$20,000 with which to erect a Sanitarium in England, (I made the motion for this action myself, in the Committee) will indicate our position as well as anything I could say. We certainly have not taken the position that "the time has been reached in the history of our work when institutions as such have no place or part in it."

The position which we have taken may perhaps be stated in brief as follows: That in starting our institutions we should not involve the denomination in debt; and that it is not wise to attempt to pioneer our work in new fields by first erecting institutions.

That the first step is to teach the message, and create a constituency, and that then it may be wise in different countries to have one or more centrally located institutions as a special means of giving strength to the work, and for the training of workers for the field.

I could say much more with reference to this matter, but perhaps what I have said will indicate our position, and I am sure you will not disagree with it.

You say further "that a strange rumor is afloat as to the work at the council, particularly as to the position taken by yourself, and as to the position taken by Doctor Kellogg relative to the testimonies." As you do not state further what the position I have taken, except in regard to the institutions, is, I cannot reply to these rumors.

As to the position which Doctor took with reference to the testimonies, he stated publicly that he had not changed his view of the testimonies, but stood where he had stood for the last 20 years. In this I think he is correct. But his position practically is that each one must judge for himself whether a testimony is correct or not; and this I understand also to be his position practically concerning the Scriptures. He has stated in a semi-public committee meeting that quite a goodly number of the things which Sister White has written during the past year or two concerning him and the sanitarium work is utterly false, and he has spoken in very strong terms concerning it. I have a full report of these things in writing, as taken by a stenographer, and so am not speaking from a mere general impression.

I think this General Conference Committee council marked a crisis and a turning point in our work, and I believe that positions were taken then which will tell very much on the future work of those who

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took them.

The brethren here who have to bear the weightiest responsibilities are better united than ever in the spirit of the message, and the work, and I believe we shall see new results attending the work.

Nearly all the brethren from the field who were present at the council take the same view. There were some who seemed to look at the matter more from the standpoint from which Doctor Kellogg viewed it, and I suppose they could not agree with me in this statement of the situation.

I hope we may all be guided in wisdom in knowing how to carry forward the work to the best advantage.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "W. W. Prescott".

Me.