

The General Conference

OF

Seventh-day Adventists

Cable Address: "Adventist."

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W.A.S.P.
TAKOMA PARK STATION
222 North Capitol St., Washington, D. C.

July 31, 1905.

Elder W.C.White,

Sanitarium, Napa Co., Cal.

Dear Brother White:--

For a week now I have been trying to find opportunity to reply to your letter of July 18, in which you enclosed a copy of your letter of July 17 to Brother Butler. In Brother Daniells' absence I have been asked to serve as temporary chairman of the school Board, and also of the General Conference Committee councils. This necessarily takes considerable of my time, in addition to the regular demands for the Review office and the editorial work. Besides this I have not felt at liberty to dictate my letter to my young stenographer, who is unfamiliar with our general situation. These reasons have combined to delay my reply.

I have been somewhat perplexed to know whether I ought to try to lay before you our exact situation, or to let matters pass with a brief response to your letter.

You express disappointment that there has been nothing more vigorous done in the effort to raise funds for Nashville. Let me tell you something of our experience. The meetings of the various boards and committees after the General Conference, continued so steadily and so long, that, coming immediately after the strain of the General Conference, it was almost too much for some of us. Brother Daniells became so weak and nervous that it was almost impossible for him to get through with these meetings. At one or two of the last meetings he almost collapsed, and I was obliged to take charge of the meeting in order to finish

up our business. It seemed a pitiful thing to ask him to attempt anything more than he was attempting.

I wrote Brother Butler about the situation, and told him that I had no doubt Brother Daniells would have written an article in behalf of the needs of the South if he had been in any condition to do so. I have printed what Brother Butler has written and forwarded for the REVIEW, and wrote what you term "some very brief editorial references to them." With the lengthy articles that were appearing, I thought these briefer articles would be more effective than to write at more length just then.

Last week Brother Evans had a good, earnest article, which we illustrated with views of the church building. This week Brother Irwin has a long article, and another one next week. In addition to this, in this week's paper Brother Evans has a brief note, and we have taken up special collections in behalf of the fund at the General Conference office and the Review office. With what has come in otherwise, we were able to acknowledge the receipt this week of \$100 at this office. You will therefore see that your theory of the case, namely, that we were holding back for fear that we might divert the funds from Washington, was not correct.

We have, of course, known all the time that just as soon as we opened a strong campaign in behalf of donations for any other field, the donations for Washington would largely cease; but this has not prevented us from taking hold of the recommendations for the work in the South just as heartily as we have done for the work in Washington.

Now, after having placed fully before all our people the recommendations of the General Conference concerning the overflow of the One Hundred Thousand Dollar Fund, and the raising of money for special enterprises in the South, and having attempted to put the whole situation before our people in the best light possible, we are in receipt of the

communications which your mother has sent, and which you doubtless read, in which we are instructed that the overflow from the One Hundred Thousand Dollar Fund should be sent to the South, and that the amount required for the purchase of the church in Nashville should be sent there without delay.

I think you will easily appreciate the fact that this has thrown us into much confusion. What shall we say to our people? How shall we explain the fact that we abandon the plans adopted by the General Conference, and fully placed before the public? What will the Review and Herald Publishing Association do now?

You know that you were perhaps the most urgent one in the committee recommending that the Washington fund be continued until \$15,000 should be raised for the Review and Herald. This recommendation was adopted by the Review and Herald constituency, by the General Conference Committee, and by the open Conference. In view of this recommendation the Review and Herald Association has voted to release the General Conference from the payment of the \$15,000 due to it from the International Training-school Association, on account of the old Battle Creek College debt.

We have not been able to realize anything from the property at Battle Creek as yet; while, on the contrary, we have been obliged to borrow and send thousands of dollars there in order to keep things going.

We have been urged to build here, and have already gone too far to retrace our steps. The only thing left for us to do is to borrow the money with which to build, and then carry the obligation.

There is also another feature of it that troubles me. Some years ago the Sabbath-school donations were announced as being taken for the work in the South, and it was afterward claimed that those funds were used in another part of the work. There was a most vigorous protest

made, some very sharp reproofs were administered, and the burden of securing and restoring the money to ~~where~~ the work in the South was laid upon the general Conference management.

Now the people have been urged to donate for the work in Washington; and just recently they have been asked to continue their donations specifically for the building of the Review and Herald office, after the matter had been most carefully passed upon by the highest ~~body~~ authority in the body.

Now we are instructed to send all this money South, for an entirely different purpose. When money ostensibly raised for the South is used in the North, it is regarded as robbery of the field, and a restitution is required. What shall we say about money donated specifically for the North, and then sent South? How can we possibly make these things look straight to those who are watching for opportunities to criticise our course?

So far as I am concerned personally, it does not make any special difference to me where the funds are used. It was no personal plan of mine which brought me to Washington, and placed me at the head of the Review and Herald Publishing Association. In making the call for funds to be sent to Washington I have never felt, and do not now feel, that the people were donating in any way for my benefit. I have tried to bear my share of the burden both in financial donations and in doing the work of two or three men, in order to carry out the definite instruction which was given to us with reference to our work here.

I can not see that the people of the North, the West, or the South have done any more or sacrificed any more to build up the Washington work than those who have been carrying the burdens here. The whole move is a denominational move, in which there is no personal element. We have endeavored to appreciate what has been done by the people in behalf

of the work here, not because we were here personally, but because it was for the best interests of the denomination as a whole.

Now I shall not make any objection whatever to diverting the funds away from the Review and Herald, even after it has all been planned and agreed upon by the whole body of General Conference Committee men and delegates. But at the same time I am somewhat confused by this way of directing our affairs; and when the time comes that a statement of the Review and Herald affairs should be made to the constituency, all these facts must be made clear to them.

We have a very hard situation to meet to erect the new building here, and move the plant from Battle Creek, without a dollar of help from the denomination in doing it. It seems to us the way matters have turned that the Review and Herald would be just as much entitled to some assistance in carrying out the instruction given concerning its work as any other institution; but now it is left to provide its own funds as best it can.

We shall, of course, make no further call for any funds for the Washington work, and leave the people free to make all their donations to the work in the South. At the same time, it will be absolutely necessary that something should be done in behalf of our mission funds, as we have already been compelled to use thousands of dollars of trust funds in order to keep the work going thus far.

The money which you called for on the Vickery note took practically all that the General Conference Corporation had on hand, and we were seriously alarmed when your mother followed this with the announcement that she might call for another \$5,000 by telegram, which was to be forwarded without delay or question. It sometimes seems that those who are away from this office hardly appreciate the embarrassment which they can cause us here by making such preemptory demands, without leaving us any opportunity of choice or judgment in the matter.

From your letter to Brother Butler I see that at the time you wrote it you were still in favor of raising the \$15,000 for the Review and Herald building. And it may be that you have been thrown into as much perplexity by the instruction concerning the handling of this money as we have been. I have hoped, that, knowing what your mother has written, you might write us something that would possibly help us in the understanding of the situation. And if you have not already done so, I should be glad to hear from you, with any help that you can give us.

I may add, that, with all the rest, I have for several weeks had all I could do to keep up, and sometimes have been practically unable to do anything one or two days in the week. The strain has been so terrible for two or three years that it has brought me almost to nervous prostration, and I find that I can not rally with a little rest as I used to do. Considerable of the time I am unable to sleep well, and my head gets very weary. You may have perhaps guessed this already from this letter; but if I wrote you at all, I knew of no other way than to let you see just the situation we were in, and the effect that it has upon us.

Our financial affairs seem terribly perplexing and wearing. The REVIEW seems to be looked upon as the special medium for urging our people to give money, and we are called upon from all quarters to solicit funds through its columns for various enterprises. The leaders of the work in various places are so occupied with these financial affairs, and feel so much the burden to write on those subjects in order to raise funds, that they write very little upon any other subject. I fear the people are getting tired of it. Is it not possible that there is some better way of managing this matter? While you feel disappointed because some of us here did not write in behalf of the Southern funds, Brother Butler wrote me of his disappointment because Sister White did not write in

behalf of ~~the~~ ^{some} fund, as she had promised to do. You know very well why she did not do it, with so many demands upon her time and strength. Perhaps you can guess why some of us were not able to do it.

Well, I have written enough, and I presume much more than you will care to read. I suppose these matters will all adjust themselves in some way; but in the meantime, our plans are thrown into some confusion. We propose, however, to do as we have tried to do in the past---follow the counsel which is given us, believing that the Lord knows more about his own work than we do, and we must therefore leave its guidance with him, and depend upon him to make the results what they ought to be.

Hoping that I may hear from you soon, I remain, with kind regards,

Yours faithfully,

R.

W. W. Prescott

P. S. - We have a joint meeting of the Revision and Thrall Board and the Gen. Conf. Com. ~~will~~ ^{will} tomorrow morning to consider our situation and to determine whether we shall go on with our publishing or defer it indefinitely. We are in great perplexity, and I hesitate to borrow so much money under our present circumstances, even if we are able to do so. The outlook for the Revision & Thrall seems anything but bright ahead.