



**SOUTHERN
MISSIONARY SOCIETY**
OF THE
YAZOO AND MISSISSIPPI VALLEYS.

Missionary Steamer "Morning Star," J. E. White, Master and Chaplain.

Incorporated 1898.

Vicksburg, Yazoo City, Mississippi, Dec. 21, 1896.
Wd. Geo. A. Irwin,
Battle Creek, Mich.
Dear Brother:-

Since you left the boat, history has been making pretty fast. In the first place, I was sick a number of days with malarial fever, but am better now. In the next place, we found after you had left, in fact the next Monday, that there was between four and five feet of water in the channel leading up to the lake, and that fisherman who we talked with simply lied to us in regard to the depth of the water. So, Monday morning, we stepped up and ran into the lake, and are here quite comfortably located. I have felt very sorry that we did not know this before, so that we could have been here when you were with us.

But the greatest matter of interest is that which I inclose in regard to the difficulty at Yazoo City. Of course, we have not all the particulars yet and do not understand the situation as fully as we would like to; but we know that there is trouble brewing there. These lawless people went down to the river to blow up our boat, but it was after we had gone, and we feel that it was in the providence of God that we were away from Yazoo City at that time. Now, if there is any disturbance, it is likely to come at the holiday season; it generally does in this part of the country. We have decide to remain away with the steamboat until after the holidays. During this time, we expect to print the extra edition on the Gospel Herald, as mentioned in one of the letters inclosed. I have already written for engravings of our leading institutions, so that we can get out a 12 page extra, chuck full of pictures of our leading buildings, and then we will explain in the paper that our work is a world-wide work, and that these institutions are engaged in carrying it forward to every nation, kindred, tongue, and race of people, and that our work down here is simply in the line of other work of our denomination; and, also, that we are not connected with politics in any way and do not intend to be; and, further, that we did not come down to combat the prejudices or customs of the people in any way. Further than this, I understand that we are reported as being Mormons; I have had this to meet at one time; this can also be met in this paper, and explanations made that will place us upon a proper basis with all well-meaning people. After the holidays, my idea is to go up and then circulate these extras of the paper into every house in Yazoo City. There is considerable freight for us there and we will take it on the steamer. We will see the leading officials of the city, and if it is thought best, we will not stay there long, but go on and work down the river with the boat, where we can accomplish just as much as we can in Yazoo City. We shall leave Brother and Sister Galladay there, and plenty of force to take care of the school both at Lincoln and Tilsania. We will yet have force enough to run as much as necessary, and we will not be hurried as we have been in the past but will stay long enough in a place to accomplish more work than we have ever been able to accomplish before. I do not think we will gain anything by attempting to antagonize these people. It seems to me that it takes great wisdom at such times as this. We are crying earnestly to God that He will guide us, and we have faith to believe that He will do so.

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Now, as you know, we had quite a company of people on the boat when you were here. As I stated to you, these were largely gathered within a very short time for the purpose of fitting them for different branches of the work. Since you left, I have been impressed with some arrangements in regard to this company, and I will state to you something of the impressions as they came to me, and they seem to meet the minds of the others who are on the boat. When we open the school at Wilsonia our plan is to have Bro. Bryant, the young colored man who was with us on the boat, teach in the school in Wilsonia. He is abundantly qualified to do this, and we feel sure will give good satisfaction. Then Bro. Halladay can arrange his work so that he can give at least two hours a day to this school. Then, Bro. Rogers can give this school probably one hour a day, leaving his school at Lintonia in charge of his wife while he is attending to the school at Wilsonia. This you see provides for the two schools at Yazoo City. There will also be force enough there to run night schools there at both places two nights a week.

Brother Isaiah Moore will also remain at Yazoo City to attend to the health food business. He will be assisted in his work by the other workers who remain there, so that he will have plenty of counsel and aid in this.

Then there is Bro. Stephenson; you remember him, of course. We have arranged now to build an addition to the chapel at Calmar, and Bro. Stephenson will go into this at once, open a school in the church there, and spend the rest of the time in holding Bible readings and working among the people. With the help of Bro. Olevin and Bro. Casey, I think a good night school can also be started and carried on at that place. Now, I ask you to look over this plan carefully, and then write how it strikes you. You will see that by carrying this out we will be enabled to place a good many of the workers in active fields. More than this we are able to open school in different places without bringing in other help than we have on hand at the present time. As I have presented it to others it seemed to meet their ideas wonderfully, and it has brought great relief to the work here. I want to say that we feel that the Lord has been with us particularly of late. The spirit that has been among us here somewhat of lightness and trifling is sobering down into earnest dignity of Christian work, and we thank God for the change that is taking place.

Now, in regard to the steamboat. You know I mentioned a small despatch boat which could be run at small expense, and the big steamer left as head-quarters. This does not seem to be the best thing at present. Our ability to secure fuel in the way that we have done it of late enables us to run this boat at a very small expense. I can be done so, provided we do not have to have half so many people with us. Now, when we have taken out the number I have mentioned, there are still sufficient left to manage the "Morning Star". There will be Mr. Moore as pilot, myself as engineer, and there will be the printer and Bro. Schramm to help in other parts of the work. More than this, I shall train the printer in the engine room so that he can attend to the work under instruction. Alas Bro. Schramm is a very good hand in the pilot house, and so he can take the XXIX wheel many times while Moore, who is the real pilot, can be taking care of lines and other matters of this kind.

As Bro. and Sister Halladay leaves the boat, of course, we shall get some colored woman to come in and attend to the cooking; but our family will be small, and the burden will not fall very heavily on my wife, and she can attend to my correspondence as I dictate to the graphophone.

With such a company as this, we will not have to be in such an awful hurry as we have been in the past in going from place to place. Previous to this time on every trip, Bro. Halladay has felt that it was necessary for him to get back to Yazoo City as quickly as possible, so it has been hurry and rush and crowd and jam so that the navigation of the

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boat has been very unpleasant and difficult and with a good deal of hard work connected with it. Now I have planned to have all my wood cut before we load it, and properly split, all ready to use in the furnace; so, all we will have to do is to load up from time to time, and then take our time to drop down to where we are at work, and then we can tie up and remain there a week at a time if necessary, just as long as the work requires our attention. When the time is up we shall go on to another place. This will enable us to spend as much time as we need at Calmar, and as much time as we need at Vicksburg, and also at Palo Alto and Yazoo City. We feel that these plans have brought relief to the work, and that the situation is changed so much for the better, that the work will go forward with much greater rapidity. We believe that by these plans two or three times as much work will be accomplished as has been in the last few weeks. Now, please understand me that it was never my intention to have all the hands that were on the boat when you were here continue to be with us. They have been collecting for just such pieces of work as this, only the plans had not been arranged and laid for their work. We feel that the Lord has guided in these plans and that He will bless them to the carrying of his truth to others.

But, now my brother, I feel that the time has come to open up another phase of the work. It is the financial part of it. I want to say that when I heard of your coming here, I looked forward with a great deal of interest to the visit of yourself and Eld. Evans to us on the boat. I wanted you to be here and see the situation; I wanted you to know what we were trying to do; I wanted you to see something of the necessary expenses of the work. I wanted all these things to come out while you were here, so that you would be able to judge intelligently of the needs of the field, and that you might be able to aid in providing these necessities for this great work. As you of course know, this field has been hampered for lack of means from the very start of the work. Those of us who have been in the field have done to the very best of our ability, using our own means and funds in carrying it forward; but the time has come when the work must go in different shape, and some different kind of interest will have to be taken in this work if it goes forward. I will mention one instance. The Testimonies state that the workers should not be sent down into this field empty-handed. There were poor here who would have to be taken care of; that help would have to be given to different people in this field; and yet, never has one dollar been appropriated by the General Conference to this line of work, which the Testimonies said it should attend to. For seven years the General Conference has been reproved for not attending to this line of work, and yet, so far as this part of the field is concerned, it has not lifted a finger. There are those right in this little company at Vicksburg that I understand go hungry often for something to eat. I am very anxious to aid and assist them, but I want to tell you that the limit of my money at the present time is less than two dollars. I carry the burden of this work upon my shoulders, hoping against hope that either the opposition to it would cease with our publishing houses, and they give us the opportunity of going ahead, and hoping that they would get a little generosity worked into them some way, or that means would come from some source to carry it forward. I have also hoped that the General Conference would see the needs of the field and would help in some of the expenses down here, but it seems that this so far has been all a vain hope. During the past season our expenses have been considerable in several ways, particularly in the way of fuel. One hundred dollars will not cover the fuel expenses of this boat for the present season, and I want to ask why it is that I should pay the expenses of our work here when all other ministers have their expenses met? I will say more than this, that all the traveling expenses I have had since first starting for this field have been met by myself, with the exception of perhaps \$15.00 when we came to the field

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we paid our own expenses. Every season that we have gone North we have paid our own expenses. Now, if we could have had liberal treatment from the publishing houses, this would not have been a great burden. There were also some accounts left over from last season which I have had to take care of this year. Now, I will tell you what I have had to do. In order to make both ends meet and get along, I have recently mortgaged the printing office for \$250.00. The money has come, and I have been using it in paying up bills, in getting supplies, and matters of this kind. My freight bill alone on fruit brought from the North has been over \$50.00 in the last two or three weeks. I have also mortgaged the steamboat for \$350.00, but the money has not come yet. I will say, however, that when it comes it will take the most of it to clear up affairs and place the business in good shape so that it can go forward.

All this would not have been necessary if proper effort had been made to handle the new book, "Coming King." As Bro. Evans said, he expected this book would have had a sale of 100,000 copies this season; such would have been the case if our publishing houses had treated the matter rightly, but I will not go into this here. I will say that, instead of that it has sold only about 30,000. It has seemed that whenever I have brought out anything to help carry forward the work here, that some block is put in the way of it in some way by some of our publishing houses. I have met with absolute opposition and insult from some of the managers of different branches of Pacific Press; and, as Jones wrote me himself, the book was held back ~~at~~ at first until they could get all the agents appointed on their own book, "The Story of Redemption;" then, of course, after the agents were all put on, what show was there for my book?

Then comes to mind the iniquitous work that was done by the Review & Herald office in regard to the "Primer" when we had that, and were trying to get a support from it. Of course, you remember how this was written about in the letter of which I gave you a copy while you were here from Australia.

Now, when it comes to mortgaging my office and my boat in order to meet the expenses of the work, I feel that it has reached the limit, and I do not think it would be right for me to go any farther in these lines. If my books were paying what they ought to pay, then there would be something to work upon, but the income has been very small, and it is taking a long, long time to pay up the cost of bringing out the book, which I brought out last winter.

As it stands, I find myself with my health failing. I feel that I am growing old fast. I have had much to meet in the field here that has been difficult, but this has not been one half as difficult as the indifference, enmity, and opposition that has been to our work at that end of the line. I feel that I cannot carry on the battle along these lines any longer as I have in the past; I do not think the Lord wants me to do so. If the labor we are doing down here is in the line which God has pointed out, then He has also pointed out that this work should have some sort of support. If it cannot have, then I do not think that it is my duty to remain connected with it.

Now, I can see some hope, provided proper attention is given to the instruction which has come in letters which have come, such as I gave you when you were here. The fact in the case is that, in regard to the "Primer," thousands of dollars were taken away from this work by the Review & Herald office in the sale of the "Primer."

Now, this taking away from us ~~xxx~~ on the "Primer" did not bring any extra profit to the Review & Herald office. It was simply a matter of spite; it was simply a matter of hate, that was expressing itself in that way, for, although, they brought out another book, "His Glorious Appearing", and took a book of my father's and worked it over as a club to beat my brains out with, yet they put the prices and discounts at such a

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rate that they did not make as much money on this book as they did on "Gospel Primer", after paying us the royalties. So, you see, their on- nity was all gratuitous, without bringing any extra returns to Review & Herald offices; we brought out that kind of a book. We were engaged in ar unpopular difficult work; now, why should not they have tried to en- courage this and help along in this work, and do what they could in try- ing to circulate the book, instead of trying to bring out everything they could think of to oppose it, and to kill it if possible? I want to say that at that time the General Conference, the International Tract Society and the Review & Herald were all opposed to the book, and opposed to our work, and were doing everything in their power to put it down. As stated to me in the talk I had with Bro. Nelson, he stated to me that if I had a single friend to me or to the work in which I was engaged in Battle Creek, from the General Conference offices down, he did not know who it was. What kind of a state of things does this represent?

Now, my brother, if the Review & Herald office feels like mak- ing the best right, so that some restitution shall be made on this that will place me in a position where I can pay up those debts and get where I can be free to work, I shall be very, very glad to remain in the field. At the same time, it seems to me that the General Conference should show a greater interest in the work in this part of the field than it has ever done before. The injustice of taking the \$10,000 given by our Sabbath schools and appropriating it elsewhere was a grievous wrong on the part of the General Conference in whatever way it occurred. The Lord calls for this to be made up. I want to say here that since that time at different times funds have been raised for the colored work in the North. These have been appropriated to other places. Two hundred or \$250.00 was put into building up one school, and yet I want to say to you Bro. Irwin, not one dollar of any such fund whatsoever, raised by the General Conference has ever come into this field. I tell you plainly, I cannot help thinking of such things as this, and feeling that no matter how much I may sacrifice, no matter how hard I may work, and I may break down all in this work, no attention is being given to it whatever, so far as any relief is concerned, and if anything comes in for the work it all goes to some other part of the field instead of coming here. I want to say that it is for this reason that I started the Gospel Herald, and I made up my mind that I should go straight to the people. Since doing that we have had some relief. But, as you know, it has been a principle with me never to use one dollar of such funds in paying the running ex- penses of the work. Not a dollar has gone into fuel; not one dollar has gone into feeding the people on the boat; not one dollar has gone into anything except on real estate on which to build school houses and church es; and in the expense of building such structures as you saw when you were down here. So you see that such relief did not materially make my burdens less. It simply enabled us to hold a little more real estate, and prepare a little more buildings for the carrying forward of the work. Now, permit me to say that I can see no reason why General Conference should not meet the fuel bills of this boat for the past season. I will say, to bring it very small, that the fuel bills have been \$100.00. I do not think the Lord would be displeased to have this means allowed to this company as part of its running expenses, and that a \$100.00 draft be sent to cover it. It would be done with other ministers. I want to say that there is no field among us as a people that has been opened as this field has without its being a bill of large expense to the General Conference; but in this field, outside of the matter of salary, the General Conference had no expense to make whatever, not even the traveling expenses of the people in the field.

Now, my brother, I think I have quite thoroughly stated the sit- uation as I see it. I know my letter is a long one, but I have much to

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say and my heart has been full. I think I have never felt such utter desolation, and almost hopelessness as I have felt for a few days after you left. Sick, and discouraged, falling in health, money gone, own mortgages on the property, no financial interest of any particular note from General Conference, opposition from publishing houses, and then the care of all this great work. I want to ask you if you think this is right.

I must say that the worst thing that I have had to meet for some time was when I wrote up to the General Conference a statement of the situation here at Vicksburg. I stated that the church here had no lease, but that if we could pay \$55.00, the people would take it and give us a receipt for the money, and it would count the same as a lease. I asked General Conference to advance the money and let the church pay it back. Now, I want to say to you, Bro. Irwin, that this church has put hundreds of dollars of tithes into the treasury at Battle Creek; I mean at the head-quarters of the General Conference. Now, the church was in a difficult place; it was a General Conference territory, under General Conference supervision, and when such a thing as this came up, when all the tithes had been forwarded promptly, it seemed to me that it was the bounden duty of the General Conference to undertake a matter of this kind, but what was done? The money was drawn on my account and charged to me and sent down. I want to ask, Bro. Irwin, if this is a J.E. White mission down here? Is it J.E. White's cause? I tell you plainly, this was one of the most difficult things I have had to meet and contend with for a long, long time.

Now, Bro. Irwin, my mother has invited me several times to come to Australia. In one of her letters, during the time there was opposition to my work here, a letter came from mother, stating that the time might come when that we should be absolutely driven out of the field for lack of means to carry forward the work on account of the opposition at head-quarters, and that when such a time came that there was a field open for me at Australia. To be plain with you, I want to say I have been looking over this statement quite carefully of late, and it is having its influence upon my mind. I want to say that I cannot go forward with the work any longer in the way I have gone in the past. I cannot write books and bring them out to be misused and mistreated as my books have been by the publishing houses. I cannot rely upon this for my support any longer and for the support of the mission. I will do what I can to bring funds into the work. I may bring out other books in time, but I shall be very careful where I place them. Further than this, I shall see that my debts are all paid up as quickly as possible and my affairs straightened out. I must say that in taking the matter to the Lord and thinking it over carefully I have come to the conclusion that if there is not relief to be had for this work, so that I shall not be necessarily driven to the place which I have been of late, I shall feel compelled to sell out the facilities which I have here to the very best advantage I can, pay up my debts and accept my mother's offer to go to Australia. I say this to you privately, but I say it as a candid opinion which I have after long considering the subject.

But, my brother, I hope some change will be made in this matter. I hope the Review & Herald office will consent to do simple justice, and to carry out what has been laid out to them in the letters that have come through the Spirit of God. If they don't, I will pity the future of that institution. I also hope that a deeper interest will be taken in the work by the General Conference, and that they will not allow burdens to fall upon us as they have in the past. I ask you to consider these matters and when you write me right plainly what you think in regard to it. I know that some mistakes have been made in the past in the work down here; I know that I have not always financed as closely as I might, but while this is the case, it has been my money that I have used, and without

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this is the case, I feel that I have learned lessons from it which will aid very much in the work for the future. We have learned to be more economical here; we have learned to carry forward the work in different lines, and, as you will see from the present situation, it looks as if now we should be able to push the work forward into new places, opening up new fields, caring for these we have much better and to greater advantage than we ever have in the past. I feel like it would be almost like taking my life to leave this work, and yet, with my falling health, on account of the heavy burdens which I have borne, with the little encouragement I receive from the care that has been taken in circulating my books, and from the almost utter indifference, I do not feel it my duty to remain in this field unless there is a change. May God help that these things be done according to his will and that his plans may be carried out.

Yours very truly,

3.-- There is one little matter which I nearly forgot, and that is the expense of bringing out the Gospel Herald extra, in order to meet the present difficulty at Yazoo City. I have written to Dr. Kellogg for a number of cuts which he controls, and also to the Review & Herald for a number which they have. They will all have to be electrotyped, and then cut down to smaller sizes, as small as possible, so that we can get them in the paper. Now, the expense of bringing out this extra will not be less than \$25.00 each paid out for papers and other matters connected with issuing it. This is in addition to whatever the Review & Herald office shall charge for the illustrations. Now, if this plan I have proposed is right, I see no reason why the General Conference should not foot this bill, do you? If it is wrong, then of course I am prepared to stand the expense of it. I simply suggest this to you for your consideration. J.E.W.