

Mar. 28, 1905.

Eld. A. G. Daniells,
Tacoma Park Station,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Brother:-

I have your communication of the 10th inst., and was much interested in reading the whole communication. In reply I think I can state my position in a very few words; at least I will try to do so although I may not succeed. As a member of our denomination I am, of course, interested in foreign missions, and have always appreciated the fact that this gospel must go to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. Of course I realize that the support of all these missions is a very difficult matter, and require a great many "frantic appeals", and we receive many of them ourselves, and we are only sorry that we cannot respond more liberally to them all. Of course, I have a theory in regard to the importance of the special mission work with which I am connected. This theory is based upon the instruction we have been receiving for fourteen years from the testimonies. As to the importance of immediate, prompt action in this field, there *action* is nothing I can add to what has already been written. But this *prompt* ~~does not come~~ in response to the call from the Lord. And word comes to us even at the present time that we have scarcely touched this work with the tips of our fingers, and while we see the fields of the Eastern world opening to the gospel, we are in

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a field which is rapidly closing to the gospel, and from what I read in the testimonies and what I see from my own observation, I am fully convinced that this work for the colored people is the field that will close first of all mission work for our denomination. If the expenditure of five or six thousand dollars a year among eight millions of people of the South, who have never known this gospel of the kingdom and still living in our own land, is sufficient, then I will ask what we will say about four of our largest States that aggregate the same population ^{and} who have had this gospel of the kingdom for more than a half century and yet are receiving and dispersing about \$150,000.00 tithe per annum? But I do not care to dwell upon these points.

I fully agree with you that our people are not paying an honest tithe. I think an honest tithe paid by the denomination would give our denomination three times the income it now receives from the tithe. I have been surprised at the tithe paid by our colored people in Mississippi, and have no hesitancy in saying that if our people as a whole paid as honest a tithe as these people are paying it would be quadrupled in the denomination.

But so far as the matter of tithe goes I can hardly wake up very serious enthusiasm. The white laborers for the white people in the South are paid from the tithe, but for several years the Southern Missionary Society has supported from two to five ordained ministers among the colored people, and this support has come from the donations received but the conferences have not allowed the tithe to go to their support. Of late we have succeeded

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in getting some of the conferences to take on one or more of our ministers so that we have had some relief in this respect. And yet the statement is true to-day that for several years our Society has paid from its donations from two to five ordained ministers in addition to paying its Bible workers and teachers.

Some people have placed their tithes in mother's hands and she has forwarded to our Society, promptly, to help meet the pay-roll of the ministers. Recently three sisters in Colorado have sent their tithes to pay the colored ministers in the South. Considerable disturbance was created in regard to this by the President of the ^{Colorado} conference. He wrote letters to you and others, and I examined them and find the statements false in many particulars. It will not be out of place to mention a few facts. Bro. Palmer never asked an individual to pay tithes, and he certainly did not ask the church to pay its tithes. For this I have the statement from Bro. Palmer and from each one of the sisters who paid the tithes. I have seen two of them personally on my trip to California and in each instance ^{in which the matters were} they introduced the matter to me, each one said they would not pay their tithes into the ^{Colorado} conference and if it was not taken for this work they would send it away somewhere else. In each instance Bro. Palmer said he did not like to say much about it and he never solicited tithes from our people. He did tell them circumstances about our Society paying the ministers in the field, and he did tell them that mother from time to time sent tithes money to help us pay these ministers. I will here say that we keep a separate account of the ~~small~~ small amounts of tithes that come to us in this way and apply them entirely to pay the ministers working for the colored people. The sisters whom I visited both said their

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paying tithe was voluntary on their own part and was in no way solicited. One of Eld. Watson's letters came into mother's hands before I arrived in California. She asked me something about it and I said but very little. I told her I was going down to see the sisters who paid the tithe and find out the circumstances in regard to it, for I intended to investigate it thoroughly. Outside of this I said nothing to mother in regard to it for I ~~see~~ ^{thought} she understood it. Of course I said that Eld. Watson found fault because the tithe was paid but she knew all about that herself. The morning I left Mountain View for Los Angeles and San Diego, she told me she had written a letter to Bro. Watson, and she would like to have me take a copy of it to show to these sisters who had helped the work with their tithe. She placed this letter in my hands, and I assure you it was a great surprise to me, and I want you to understand that it was not written at my solicitation or ^{with} ~~of~~ my knowledge. You have had a copy of this. And I think it very fortunate, Eld. Daniells, that you did not bring that matter out while at Nashville according to the statement made by Eld. Watson. To be frank with you I was not well pleased with the course taken by Eld. Watson. After Bro. Palmer returned from Colorado, Eld. Watson wrote me a very violent letter. When it came I was broken down with over work and on the eve of nervous prostration, but I at once dictated him a letter stating that the situation was new to me and I did not know what the situation was and how it should be treated but that we wanted to do the thing that was right. I requested him to hold the matter in abeyance for a short time until I could recover my strength a little and then we certainly

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would do what was right for we could not afford to do anything else. His reply to me was more violent than the first. He said there was no question about it and no need for any delay, that he should thoroughly ventilate it, and that that kind of wickedness must be stopped. Now I will maintain before him or you or any body of men in the denomination that my request to Eld. Watson was perfectly reasonable and that no christian man had a right to refuse it, for I calmly I approached him in a christian spirit showing a desire to make right any wrong that may have been done. To be frank with you, I was not settled in my own mind in regard to the matter. I had many times refused tithes that had been offered to me, and I felt I needed to know my ground. I knew that the money would be used to pay ministers ^{there by} where ^{it} was refused ^{from} ^{the} all other ^{places} sources but whether we had a right to take it was a question. After that last violent letter I dropped the matter entirely intending to talk it with mother when in California because I knew she had had experience along these lines and the light she had would enable her to give a correct decision. After Eld. Watson wrote me the violent letter of which I mention he immediately began sending his correspondence regarding it to you, to different people in California, and to Eld. Butler and others in the South, and kept good his word of stirring up this matter. I do not think he helped his reputation particularly or bettered his prospects among his constituency in Colorado.

There was one matter that a silly handling has been made of and that was the confidential talk Bro. Palmer had in the private house of the elder of the church. ^{what did it amount to any way, and whose business was it} Under the circumstances

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it would of course ^{have} been better if Bro. Palmer had not said these things but I do not think the man that made the handling of them showed himself to be abundantly blessed with the wisdom of christian forethought. I presume I could get myself into just such a place as that. I have a carriage that cost \$700.00 when it was new, but when I got it it was second-hand and I traded for it another carriage that was so built that it was practically worthless to me for any use whatever. I could mention other things. I have a valuable horse that was held at \$250.00 but I secured it in the way of an exchange which was beneficial to all parties, so that the horse only cost me \$100.00, the price of a most ordinary kind of a horse here. Now, sitting around a man's ^{fireside} I would tell him these circumstances and some others I might relate and he could go out and blow me just as hard as he did Bro. Palmer, for every item he mentioned to this brother was an absolute gift to Bro. Palmer and the disposal of them in any way would place him in a very embarrassing condition, and so he holds and uses them just as I hold and use those things which are valuable and just suited to my use but which cost me no more than the commonest articles I could buy. I own one of the most modern and well equipped food factories that there is among us as a denomination, but the property had been sold at sheriff's sale and I bought it from the man who bid it in, for the mere cost of the building. And the building was just what we needed for our offices, and every corner of it is filled. I got the worth of my investment in the building alone, and then there is 25 acres of land with it worth about \$2000.00, and food factory and machinery ^{equally} worth \$3000.00.

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How easy a handle could be made of this if one felt disposed to do so. Some day our people in the South will need a food factory and I have it ready for operation whenever this is desired. Now is a good time for the conference to come in and manage the food business along "regular lines", and I can make it very easy for them.

Now I am not saying that Bro. Palmer has not made mistakes. He has made many of them, and so have I, and I guess there are several others in the denomination who have made some mistakes too, and if they were all aired and made public it would make quite a volume. Some of it would be very interesting reading. But I do not care to dwell on this. I felt that it was only right that you should understand the true situation regarding Bro. Palmer's visit to Colorado, and about the paying of the tithe to the Society.

Now, before I started to dictate this letter I had no thought of attempting to bring out the points I have mentioned. I will simply say they were brought out in response to the last paragraph of your letter which asks me to "please receive this letter in the spirit in which it was written,- an earnest desire to secure in the Lord's way the means we need to quickly finish the Lord's work." It was the friendly tone of your letter which lead me to mention a few facts which if you were in my place I am sure would weigh very strongly with you.

Now I will come to the real point which I have had in mind and my question which called forth your letter. It was my question to the secretary of the General Conference asking how monies received for ^{or Southern Work} "the work in the South" were appropriated. I will ask you to read a paragraph in that letter from mother to

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Eld. Watson. In it she states that the colored work has been and is being robbed. When this statement was read by me first I could not understand it, but I want to say that I have found out fully what it means, and this knowledge requires an explanation from me to our people as to how they should send the money designed for the colored work in the South. I have been making these explanations while on the Pacific Coast. You have seen fit to take this (according to statement sent here) as an attack upon the General Conference. I will simply say it is nothing of the kind. I have avoided anything of this kind as those who have heard me, if they speak the truth, will say so. If the money reached us that was sent for our work we would be able to start many more schools and advance the work with much greater rapidity. The statement in the letter from mother to Eld. Watson was not, ^{made} at my instance and was but dimly understood by me when I first read it, and since reading it I have been very careful to avoid anything that could be considered as an attack upon the conference. If you care to take up this matter with the idea of remedying the situation I shall be perfectly willing to consider it with you. There is momentous work before us in this field and our opportunity to do it in peace will soon cease, and I have been very anxious that some plan that we might suggest could succeed in bringing the means necessary to carry forward the work. Hoping that I may be understood in what I have written is my desire, the same as it was with you in your letter, I remain

Your brother in the work,

JEW-R

J. E. Watson