

León, Gto., México, August 3d 1906

Dear Brother Willingham,

I received your kind letter this morning and will try to answer now. I want to say two or three things about the subject in hand.

1. Since I wrote you I have been to Torreon and got a glimpse of the situation. You know Bro. Cheavens and I were college mates and I wanted to see him, so it was convenient to kill two birds with the same stone. I was there Sunday last and preached at night. He told me of the field and said that I could manage it. I expressed some fears that I did not yet have a sufficient grip on the language, but he encouraged me very much. Certainly that is a much more promising field than we have here in the South, unless it be Guadalajara.

2. As to this field, we must not let it go entirely, no. We must hold it, but I believe Josue Valdez, who is here now with me, could manage it. He is a good man and a good preacher. This house can be released any day on our part. They are obligated for three years more I think it is. We could hunt out a good house, but much less expensive for Valdez and the services. In this way we could cut down the expenses greatly and I am thoroughly convinced of the same work that we are doing now.

3. Bro. Cheavens thinks, and I am about converted, that there is no better field for my kind of work than Torreon. I am more or less of an evangelist and there is certainly a better opportunity there. And as I said before, there we can get the printery on a better basis, and turn out more work without occupying so much of my time.

But to conclude, I am ready to do what the Board advises. I want to go to Torreon, but I am ready to stay here if it seems best to the brethren. May the Lord lead you and us.

Hope you had a good time at the Conventions. It is hot up there for such work now. We are reasonably well.

Fraternally,

J. E. Davis

Leon, Gto., Aug. 12th 1906

Dr. R. J. Willingham,

Richmond, Va.

My Dear Brother:-

Last week we held our mission meeting. It was a good meeting. Spiritual and harmonious were all the sessions. It was good to be there. Wish you could have been with us. We did nearly everything with perfect unanimity. Of course some have opinions of their own that the majority cant accept, and so they submit to the majority. But we were unanimous in planning for the work for the ensuing year.

I want to write of several things. And as I think of it just here, I will speak of the mine over near Morelia. I paid the taxes up to July. Mr. Mahon says that they are paid this quarter by some other party, but regularly. I have not looked up the amount of taxes paid, as it is considerable work to no purpose. The lawyer had all the receipts--I mean our lawyer in Morelia--Mr. García. Taxes are up. If a transfer is made, it will have to be made there in Morelia according to the laws, or else it will not be valid. If at any time the amount that has been paid is needed, I will look it up from the books and send it. However the lawyer holds the receipts. He is a good man I am sure.

Now as to some things you will find in the minutes of the Mission meeting. I want to urge the necessity of putting the printery on a basis so I will not have to dedicate so much of my time to it. You will see with me the need of this, and most especially, if I go to Turreon. I will supervise it and see that it goes, but we need the appropriation as per recommendation of Mission. This was well

discussed, and all were agreed that we have in the plant a great helper, but that we need to work it.

You will see that a Commentary is in the air. As you know, it originated in the North Mission and Bro. Marrs was appointed as the representative of the Mission up there. You will see that we agreed that such a work is the thing needed, and I was appointed to act with Bro. Marrs in working out details, to report to a joint meeting of the missions in San Luis Potosí, at the time of the National Convention--of course apart from that entirely. He has likely written you. It can be done and ought to be done. We Baptists ought to lead out, for the Methodists are doing great things in the publishing line and supplying our men with Methodist literature.

Also you will see that paper question was taken up and referred to the same committee. That it is to report at the same time. You will agree with us, I am sure, that we need a paper and are losing by not having one. All agree to this, the brethren up there in the North as well as we down here. We want a good paper.

This is leading up to the recommendation made by the mission. As you will see, they recommend that the Board grant \$750 Mexican to buy the plant which Mr. Sloan offers at such a reasonable price, on condition that it proves to be what it is said to be. You will see that I am to go to the City and investigate it. Well, now this is with all this larger work in view. It is a sacrifice on his part. We are not to take the machinery as it is about the same as what we have now, but all the rest which is less than half price. He has a lot of new type as well as some older letter, and all together it is a big bargain if we can get it. Whether we get it or not depends on what the Board says, unless he has sold it within

the last few weeks which is not probable. With this he put out his paper, tracts, books, etc. Adding it to what we have, we will have a splendid plant for enlarged work.

Well, as I said, this is with a view to establishing a paper. As you see, we ask for \$1000 Mexican for the printery for coming year. This is for salary of a first class printer, and also to pay for other workers. This includes paper bill for a paper and in general. If you can give us this amount for the coming year, we can put out a paper, many tracts, the work of the S. S. papers as heretofore and at the end of year be in good shape financially. This I believe as we have made it go thus far, and though we have done things on a small scale, we have gained right along.

Unless we have the appropriation, we are going to be handicapped in such a manner, that we can do very little, as I must dedicate my time and energies to the work to which I was specially called of God. I want to preach. I want to evangelize. In the Torreon field I will have ~~the~~ chance. I can run the printery too. That is, I can do it with the help the appropriation will give me. You will understand that we have given quite a parge per cent. of our time to this work during the time we have been in Mexico. It was not lost. We have gained much. It has been a great help. But now, I want to get out of the printery as a common type-setter and pressman, and do a greater work, now that I can, having the language so I can preach a little bit.

My wife and children are well. They join me in sending best wishes to you. May the Lord direct and bless you and yours.

Fraternally yours,

(J. E. Davis)

J. E. Davis

Postscript:-

I have been thinking over the matter, and as Bro. Mahon is likely to want a field where there is much work that requires riding horse-back and in the open air, and as we have but one of that kind, and that is Morelia, why not think about the matter of sending Bro. LeSueur to this place? I think he will come. This kind of a field will suit him well, as he finds it hard to do ranch work. It is likely that Bro. Lacey will be summoned South to take charge of the schools. That will give you the opportunity to say to me to go to Torreon. The more I think of it, the more I think I ought to go there. Have not heard from the Board yet, however. We would like to move in September if possible, so we can get the printery settled for the next Expositor which has to go in the mails the 1st of Dec. We will get the last quarter out Sept. 1st. Then we ought to get there for Oct. 1st if possible. What has the Board said?

J. E. Davis

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Printery

J. E. Davis

J. E. Davis

León, Gto., Mexico, August 24th 1906

Dr. R. J. Willingham,

Richmond, Va.

Dear Brother:-

I have been thinking a great deal while waiting, and I am led to confess that I have had some misgivings about moving to Torreón, which I will give you.

There is no doubt that it will cost more to run the printery there than here, as we will have to pay more freight and too salaries are higher there--much higher there. I have been wondering if we could not get a liberal, or better protestant printer to move here and take the work. In which event it would be better not to try to move the printery.

Then that is another difficulty, the moving of the plant. I vowed when we got here that I would not try to move it again soon. It is a hard job. Then, too, the way they handle things in this land is terrible. I had the press packed well, and when it got here it had not the sign of a crate or box.

There is here a good field--hard of course--but then they are all difficult. We have a good house to live in and are pleased.

Here we are not far from Dr. Chastain who is the editor of the Sunday School literature, and it is handy to communicate with him.

I am willing to do whatever is right, and am convinced that the Lord wants me to do.

About the printery of Mr. Sloan's, in writing him, he says that hi will take \$350 down and the balance \$400 the 1st of January. Of course that is not much difference, but it might be a help to you in deciding the matter.

I still think we ought to have this printery, for it comes at a great bargain. If his inventory is correct which he sent me, and I inclose herewith, he is letting us have it at about half price.

Well, we had quite an exciting time last Sunday night. The mob attacked us. It was the birthday of the Governor, and they were in the streets. As they came to our place where we were holding service--I was trying to preach--they began crying out, "Death to the protestants, Death to the protestants." One fellow threw a torch he was carrying at the window, but the iron bars at the window protected it. Otherwise, the torch would have crashed through the window and fallen into the room. The policeman rushed out to find out who threw at the window and they began to throw stones at him and at some of the brethren who had gone out into the hallway to see if their help was needed. Some of the mob saw that the policeman was in the street, and they tried to rush into the house. The policeman saw their scheme and with the help of the brethren, they shut the door against the mob, but not any too early. The came near hitting Valdez, our helper here, and a stone struck a young man and cut the blood from his hand. The mob dispersed as soon as they saw they could not get into the house.

Well, I will close . Hope you are getting encouraging reports from every quarter.

Fraternally,

J. E. Davis

Leon, Gto., Mexico. Aug. 31st 1906

Rev. R. J. Willingham,

Richmond, Va.

Dear Brother:-

I have an ungent invitation from the Baptist church of Moberly to come and preach the didicatory sermon at the didication of their new building. You know we were working off the proposition when I left them. We had raised more than half the money. Now they have completed and paid for a fine new house and want it dedicated to the Lord. They want me the 1st Sunday in October.

With your permission I would like to go. I can make the trip in a short time and it comes at a time when I can be away from the field without much trouble. They pay all expenses of the trip. It will give me a chance to visit my parents a few days as they live right on the road.

May I hear from you in a short time as they are anxiously awaiting a definite reply.

Wishing you great prosperity and richest blessings of God upon you, I remain,

Fraternally yours,

J. E. Davis