

Leon, Mexico. Nov. 3d 1906

Dear Brother Willingham:-

I got home last Monday morning from my visit to old Missouri. I find things about as I left them. I had a fine trip and want to thank you and the Board again for granting me the leave of absence.

I am about persuaded since getting back and learning how the land lays that I ought not go to Torreon, but should stay here. The situation now is this. Valdez is not going to stay in the work if I leave (and he talks like giving it up even if I stay) and that will leave this field desolate. The Methodists will gobble up what little we have, and this does not suit me at all. In fact it must not be.

Then another thing is the appropriation you have made for running the printing plant. Instead of \$1000 you have given us \$400. It will not keep the plant going and what is the use of paying out a lot of freight to get it to Torreon, where it will take more money to run it than here, if we are not yet to run it with a vim? That was one consideration in my going I thought. I can do a great deal more with \$400 here than there in this line.

Another reason is the trend of things up there. I can see that they will want me in that college. I want to say emphatically that I am not cut out for such work and do not want to get where it will be thrust upon me. I would fail in it and do not want it. I am not at liberty to say all that I might say but this much I can say--the trend of affairs is not satisfactory to me and I would prefer to stay here. I can work for the Lord in this field and some day see the harvest, or if that day I may never see, then I can know that He giveth the increase and it will come some day.

The plan to start a paper has been opposed by some of our men, at least not endorsed. I am now going to shut up. It seems that if I have any thing to do with any plan, certain ones oppose it. We ought to have a paper but how?

I can continue as Treasurer if you want me to, since I am going to stay here.

J. EDGAR DAVIS,
PROGRESO, No. 48
LEÓN, GTO., MÉXICO

Can we draw that appropriation early (I mean that for printing) so we can buy paper for the work we have ready to get out? Also so we can get at it as soon as possible. If so, please let me hear. Usually the price of paper goes up here about the beginning of the year. At least that has been the rule so far. We can buy now at a better advantage than we can later perhaps. X

Our Book Agency has succeeded better than I had hoped for. The great drawback is that I have to order so few books at a time and the distance is so great that I cannot keep in stock books to supply the demand. We ought to have \$200, I mean \$150 more, for we have \$50 now, as the basis of this good work. Can't the Board grant it for us? You know that this is to be kept intact. It is not spending the money but using it to get these books in reach of the people. X

Must close. Love and best wishes to you and yours.

Yours in Him,

J. E. Davis

X Says he meant gold

J. EDGAR DAVIS,
PROGRESO, No. 48
LEÓN, GTO., MÉXICO.

Leon, Mexico, Nov. 6th 1906

Dr. R. J. Willingham,

Richmond, Va.

Dear Brother:--

Refering to your letter in which you made reference to the buying of the type, etc., I find that you wrote on the margin of your letter of Sept. 12 these words: "The Bd is not ready to act as to buying type, especially, in view of proposal for Union paper, etc. W." Now I very readily interpreted the matter as meaning that you were not ready to appropriate anything for a Union paper, not knowing that there was a plan on foot to do this thing. I simply refer to this matter to show you that I had some grund for my mis-interpretation.

I wrote you the other day touching other matters.

We are all well. Hope you are the same. Saw that you were at the Missouri Association. Wish I could have been there but it was impossible. Getting my work in hand again. Hope to go the Michoacan Association the 14th of this month. Fraternally,

J. E. Davis

Leon, Mexico, Nov. 26th 1906

Mr. John C. Williams, Tr.

Richmond, Va.

Daer Brother:--

I find myself in somewhat of a predicament just at this time and write you to help me straighten matters out.

As you know I have been paying Bro. Lacy's salary, lots of moving expenses during the year, taxes extra and drawing all on my Letters of Credit. Now I find at the end of the year that I need more money than I have on my L.C. As yet I have not received the new one for next quárter, and so am obliged to draw more than my L.C. cabs for. I have \$1165.35 and \$50 for Expositor is to be charged on next L.C. leaving \$189.50 which I am compelled to have at once. There will be need of drawing quite a litte more on this year for the schools and some other matters. What am I to do about it? Of course you will see why I am short.

My report will be in on time. I am going to simplify our treasurer work for next year, and thus getting before you a fuller report than by the present plan. Of course I will not change the plan of report, but will have everything in hand every month so I can know--and so you can know also--just exactly how everything stands. Will expect an immediate reply telling me how to move.

Fraternally yours,

J. E. Davis

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Treas. So. Mex Mission

On L.C. 882 - \$1165.35

" " " 12122 -

Over drawn

189.50

Expositor

both have

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León, México, Novbre 26th 1906

Dr. R. J. Willingham,

Richmond, Va.

My Dear Brother:-

I went to Panindícuaro to attend the Michoacán Assn, which met there last Thursday a week. Breth. Chastain, Lacy, LeSueur, and Sanders and Miss Jones were there. We had a very profitable time. Sunday was a great day, there being 8 additions for baptism. Bro. Pablo Rodríguez of Múzquiz was there and stayed over three nights preaching. My helper, Josué Valdez, and I remained over till Saturday, that is, day before yesterday. There were 12 received for baptism. We return the 5th of December to be with them about a week and to investigate some other fields of importance. I will then baptize 13 and probably some others who are ready except to marry civilly, or perhaps better said, according to the civil law. Two fine young men are converted, I am sure, and are disposing of a billiard table they have owned. As soon as they get that disposed of they will come in also. Surely the Lord blessed us, but as usual the Devil was not very much pleased with our success.

The night the Assn. closed they tried to blow us into eternity putting two dynamite bombs in the windows of the room where we have services. There were 7 Americans in the house and 11 others, but While we slept, God was watching and little damage was done. We urged the authorities to act, but they were so morose, that I sent a message to Pres. Díaz asking protection. He answered me and at the same time sent orders to the Gov. of the State and the orders were transmitted down to the authorities of Panindícuaro. They are doing better but do not intend to find the guilty parties, for they themselves are accomplices. However we gave them quite a scare and think

there will be no repetition of the act. We endured many insults in the streets but that is nothing. Things were more quiet when we left Saturday.

If you could see the joy of this people and the way they suffer persecution, you would say that it is worth while. You would say that God surely has a remnant here. There is much to dishearten us all, but God is working in this land and He can overturn, and will do it. After the effort to blow up the house out there, the family gathered together and began to sing songs of praise to God. It was about two o'clock in the morning. Monday night they were all there-- I mean all the members and adherents, and so on all week.

Did I not tell you that the young man I baptized here went to Torreón to school? He feels that God wants him to preach the gospel. There are here two young women who have been converted, but they are passing through the fires of persecution, even their own parents are leading. They accused them to the priest and took them before him. But with valor they answered the priest, in the presence of their parents. They will come out all right. You see it costs something to be a christian in this priest ridden land.

Now some matters of business.

As to the Agency of Books, I meant gold in my petition. But all I ask is that you do the best you can for us. I am receiving orders every day. Some come from Cuba, others from Argentine and I have sent books to the Philipines, to Cuba, to Argentine, to the United States and all around here. Often I have to order them direct which means a delay and thus we cannot do as well as we would like.

My report will be in on time. It is not going to be so bad, if I do say it myself. When we consider that it is my first year of real work and that it is on the most fanatical field in Mexico, I cannot help but feel encouraged somewhat.

But the business which most discourages me is that my brethren in South Mexico are not willing to agree to any plan, so it seems, that I have any connection with. I confess that I do not know why. It seems that my only sin is that I have a few ideas of my own, and being a new man, it is not good to advance them. I do not want to destroy one thing that has been done. I opposed the election of Bro. Lacy as Director for good and sufficient reasons. When the matter was decided in his favor, I signed the recommendation. I have done so ever in order to be in harmony with my brethren. But now I can not sign this last move, and told the brethren plainly my reasons, and that I felt that I ought to lay my protest before you, to which they consented. So please bear in mind that this comes after giving notice to the brethren that I would do it.

It seems that the Brethren of Toluca did not sign the recommendation of the joint committee, Bro. Marrs and myself, with reference to the paper. They had a called meeting of the mission in Morelia, all were notified except Hooker and me, and there decided on a plan that you perhaps have received by this time and to which I could not give sanction for reasons.

of its The plan contemplates making Dr. Chastain editor of all the literature. I do not oppose that. But he is to remain in Guadalajara and have the printing done there. They ask for \$600 Mexican and say that they expect \$600 from subscriptions. Now Dr. Chastain has taken the printing of our S.S. literature out of my hands on account ~~claims~~ being so much trouble to print it here and edit it there, so he claims--and I do not deny that it is some extra trouble for the printer especially. Now I cannot see through this move to have all the printing done outside of our own plant. I have sacrificed to build up the plant and put my own money into it to make it go, and have improved the papers and all that, simply to let the plant perish at last. It grieves me at heart. It is not right. Why have a plant and not do our own printing? The brethren up north ask Why? and I think any sane person would ask the same. Why my brethren should want to tear down--better said--disable my work so it will have to go under after I have done what I could for them, I do not know. I wish I could know that they were not trying to do such a thing, but it is too plain a case--a case well made out.

I told them what it would cost to run the plant, printing all our literature for the year and went so far as to itemize it and submit it in writing but they ignore it. Here is what I submitted:

Sal. experienced foreman	\$40 per month	- - - - -	\$ 480.00
Help aside estimated	- - - - -	- - - - -	500.00
Cost of material for new paper	- - - - -	- - - - -	180.00
Cost of material for S. S. literature	B- - - - -	- - - - -	160.00
Expenses of running plant	- - - - -	- - - - -	100.00
Total P E	- - - - -	- - - - -	1320.00

Mexican

This would give us workmen to do the other work there is to do. From the columns of the paper any good article could be taken and put in tract form for distribution with only the cost of paper and ink additional. The book work--at least a part of it--could be run the same way. A department of History would be a fine thing and run this translation I have here ready to print of Vedder's History of the Baptists, taking the type from the columns of the paper and forming it for the book, thus saving half the labor and consequently much expense. By their plan we would lose all this.

Then why put all our men in Guadalajara and Toluca? Too, why not divide up the work of editing the papers and let the men direct their respective fields at the same time? Dr. Chastain has the S. S. literature; let some other man take the paper and let it be printed here in our own plant, putting our money into what is our own and not paying out the profits to others.

The brethren of the North were naming Cheavens and me as editors. If I am considered competent there and it is necessary to have the printer and editor in the same place, why not make the printer editor? Or if the printer is not competent let us make the editor printer. I offered in full faith to turn the plant over to any one who could and would take the running of it. They say we do not know how. To be sure I prefer to keep it but if I cannot run it for the good of the cause, then I want some one else to take it and run it, who can make it a blessing. I AM OPPOSED TO KILLING THE PLANT, BECAUSE IT IS DESTINED UNDER PROPER MANAGEMENT TO BE A GREAT FACTOR IN OUR WORK IN MEXICO. I am not alone in the belief that we ought to print our own literature. Bro. Marrs knows nothing of this new move, but here is an extract from a letter received the other day: "If the paper is to be started down South, I'll support it of course, but with the understanding that it is to be published by our printery."

I have written lengthily but hope I have not trespassed on your time and patience. I want to do right. If I err, it is not intentional. May God be glorified and not men. I am not ambitious to have a name in Mexico except as a winner of souls, in my humble station. I have founded nothing, edited nothing, have done little so it seems but stir up trouble. It grieves me, but God has blessed me and I am looking to Him to unravel all this trouble, which I believe He will do soon.

May God bless and guide us. How we need his blessing! Pray for us that we may do His will and not ours.

Fraternally and lovingly,

J. E. Davis