

Sept. 8, 1921.

Rev. J.E. Davis,
El Paso, Texas.

Dear Mr. Davis:-

Your letter of August 31st was received as Dr. Ray was rushing away to Vancouver. He sails on the 15th for his visit to the Far East.

& rent I am writing Mr. Marrs to pay your September salary/and salary and rent for the remainder of the year. I am also sending him L/C for this purpose.

Rents are outrageous here in Richmond, too. They sound very much like El Paso rents.

When there is so much to be done, I know it is hard to lessen the tension, but the Lord gave us only one body and put in that some delicate nerves which demand merciful treatment.

If I can serve you at any time, please call on me.

Cordially yours,

Sec'y. to Dr. Ray.

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EL PASO, TEXAS, Sept. 22, 1921

Dr. J. F. Love,
Richmond, Va.

Dear Brother Love:

As Dr. Ray is gone, I suppose we will be expected to address our letters to you. I hope that you will be in a position to hear me for a few moments, as Dr. Ray did not seem to be able to get it into his head there at the last that there are some things that must be done here in this Publishing House.

I say "must." Of course, I mean if we are to do anything worth while, and if we do not intend to do anything worth while, then I would like to know soon, so I can decide on certain very important matters that have presented themselves to me in the course of events.

I therefore trust I may have and hold your attention a few minutes. I feel that we are reaching a crisis in this great work, and it will be an expensive one if we do not rise up and meet the situation as we should--or as I feel we should.

1. Our present location is now absolutely inadequate to meet the demands on us. We have every foot of room occupied and as we are putting in a bindery, we will have no place for this machinery which I have already ordered. We have been forced to put in a bindery as we can not get binding done at a reasonable price. So I have a book sewing machine ordered for November delivery, also what other machinery we will need for good binding. This has always been one of our great needs. I feel happy that we can supply it now. So we will have to expand. Our present location is not and never was suitable for our plant. We have no office room, and both myself and the translator and editorial helper have to occupy places in the book room where everybody comes to interrupt us in our work. This makes it impossible for us to do good work. This is not as it should be--not just to us nor to our readers. Much more than this, it is not just to the Cause we represent.

2. It will be hard to rent a place that will give us sufficient room for our machinery and what we are getting in and what we hope to get within the next few years, our growing supply of books and papers, our stock and at the same time give us offices which we must have. Then too, we need a store room in connection. So it will take quite a building to house us. To rent it here is not practical. Everything here sells on installment payments.

I have found that we may be able to get suitable lots and erect a building adequate for the present and perhaps for some years to come for \$25,000 or \$30,000, with perhaps a cash payment of some \$7500 or 10,000 and the rest in monthly payments.

3. Now there is ^a building here which was put up and has been used by the Knights of Columbus as their Hall. It is in a fine location and is just in the rear of the First Baptist Church, that is, on Myrtle St. and the back of this Hall is almost touching the rear of the First Baptist, which faces on Magoffin St. This is a three story building and has a fine basement under the entire building with plenty of light. It would be an ideal place for the printery. Then we would have a book store on the first floor and plenty of store rooms for stock, books etc. We would have office rooms wherever we might want to select them and then the rest the First Baptist Church would rent from us at reasonable rent for some time to come. It is for sale and the matter is being negotiated, and either the First Baptist will buy it or we can have it as stated above. They would much prefer that we get it. This is a magnificent building and would give us a prestige that we are deserving of as I see it. It would be large enough for many years to come with but little or no remodelling. It is well located. It would be a fine game to play on the Catholics--of course I ought not call it a game. But they would get their money in time and we would get a splendid place for our House. In my way of thinking there is no better place for the House than El Paso, and there is no better house for us in El Paso than this Hall I have spoken of.

4. Now, this will be gotten by dickering through a third party, of course, for some \$30,000 to \$35,000, at least that is what I am given to understand. It can be gotten by a cash payment of perhaps \$5000 and then monthly or annual payments extending over a rather long period of time. This is the thing if it only materializes.

5. But in case we ^{could} not get this, what are we to do? I say let us build or have a Building Co. here to build for us, a suitable home for the plant. To do this we will have to enter into a contract with them. Otherwise we will have to sign up a rent contract for three or five years--likely the latter-- and will have to pay large rent--\$150 to \$200 per month. I see no way out of this, that is, no other way--either buy or get a much larger and expensive place to rent.

Now this is a statement of the matter as I see it and the other brethren are in accord with my idea. They stand ready to back up this proposition. But this matter is urgent. What is done must be done quickly, so I can hope to be able to stand up under this load of work which has fallen on me so heavily again. With present conditions I will be in just as bad a physical condition in twelve months as I was when I left here a year ago for what I thought then was to be a new and different work, whether in the Mexican field or somewhere else. Now I am here with the same kind of a prospect as stared me in the face then. What am I to do? I am resolved to find out so I can decide what course I am to pursue. Now, this seems to me to be fair and just--nothing more, nothing less.

I am trying to write the Expositor Bíblico for the first quarter of next year. I have been here now in charge 22 days and have written three lessons. I had four written when I came back. Now, at this rate I can not do the work that is expected of me. I tried to get Dr. Ray to listen to me but he would not. I face the same conditions that I told him--or tried to tell him of--and there is no remedy unless the Board comes in ^{and} takes a hand to change up our conditions.

I do not want to say rash things, but I feel constrained to say that if the plant is to stay where it is, then my services here are not needed, for if you want to spend a large amount of money in inefficient management making the publications cost two or three times what they should, then send some one who wants to drag along and just while the time away, and not expect me to run counter to my whole make-up, my ambitions, my hopes and my desires. Am I making myself understood? I hope you will not misunderstand my language nor my motives.

We have not been able to find a house to live in yet, and so we are here in an apartment, which is very comfortable and handy, though it has been very hot here and of course somewhat uncomfortable in an apartment, in comparison with a home somewhere like we had before, out where the breeze can be had at almost all times, even in the hottest weather.

I trust to hear from you in reply to this letter giving me some idea of what we can depend on, and telling me what course to pursue to get this before the Board. I wish it might be settled soon, for I really can not see my ^{way} clear to try to do what I can not do. I think that is not right. I only wish I could have two or three of those good brethren of the Board--business men--here to look through our plant and see what we are trying to do under the handicaps we have. They would recommend a change, even as Dr. Ray did each time he was here. But it is one thing to say you ought to get out of here into a better and more suitable place, and another to move into a place not provided for us--a move that will cost us several hundred dollars at the least, and more after we get a lot more machinery set up in the several corners of the house we are in.

Well, I have written too long a letter, but I hope that it may get some response of a kind that will fill the heart with gladness and hope. What are we to do? Tell us quickly, as we are going to go under if you do not.

With the very best wishes for the continued prosperity of our great Foreign Mission work, and praying God's richest blessings on you and all the brethren connected with the Board, I am as ever,

Fraternally yours,

J. E. Davis

Sept. 27, 1921.

Rev. J.E. Davis,

P.O. Box 667, El Paso, Texas.

My dear Brother Davis:

I have this morning your letter of the 22nd, and have read it with care, deep interest, and with sympathy for you. I do not recall that Dr. Ray talked this matter over with me before he left. Having recently visited the field and conferred with the missionaries, he marked the estimates for Mexico which had come in before he left. I find that in the estimates is a item of \$40,000 for printing plant located at El Paso, which with some other items Dr. Ray has blue penciled which means that for reasons which seemed good to him, he could not recommend the item. Since you call my attention to it, I will call especial attention of the Board to this item and your letter in which the matter is reviewed.

It is fair to say, however, that the Board will be utterly unable to grant much of what has been asked by the respective missions in their annual estimates. There is not the slightest probability that our receipts will be sufficient to meet these estimates as sent in without involving the Board in a debt which would most seriously hurt all our work. The Board will, in my judgment, be compelled to cut other estimates much more seriously than Dr. Ray has suggested cutting the estimates for Mexico. This is a painful piece of work for the Board. Those whose estimates suffer will find difficulty in realizing that the Board is sympathetic when it cuts estimates. Personally I wish, and I am sure that every member of the Board wishes that all that is asked for your work could be granted, but we ourselves as well as you are victims of circumstance. Many of the states have broken with the apportionment made of the 75-Millions at Nashville giving to education and other objects a disproportion of the funds. Besides there is not much prospect now that the 75-Millions will be collected. If the 75-Millions is collected, the Foreign Mission Board will not receive anything like 4-Millions a year, as it was supposed to receive. All these things doubtless influenced Dr. Ray in marking the item for printing plant with blue pencil.

The Board meets Oct. 12, and I cannot do more nor less than promise you to present the case as you present it to the Board. I should like to see you relieved of unnecessary discomfort and unfavorable conditions for your work. I should find very distinct pleasure at this end of the line in knowing that by anything I or the Board could do, you had been given the most favorable condition under which to prosecute your impor-

tant department of the Mexican work.

It occurs to me that perhaps another consideration Dr. Ray had in mind is that the present location of the printing plant has been considered temporary and the Board would not in the face of this fact, and especially under present conditions, be justified in making so large a permanent outlay until the question of permanent location for this plant has been determined.

Yours with warm regards,

Cor.Sec'y.

P.S. I wish to say concerning your personal working quarters that the Board will, I am certain, be willing to pay the rental for a room in which you can do your best work. I should think that you ought to be able to get such a room at modest figures while the question of permanent plant is pending.

I may say, also, that if you or the El Paso brethren have any definite proposition to submit on the Knights of Columbus building before the Board meets, you might place such in my hands, although I doubt that the Board will make a large permanent investment for the plant in El Paso at this time.

J.F.L.

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EL PASO, TEXAS, Sept. 30th, 1921

Dr. J. F. Love,
Richmond, Va.

Dear Brother:

I am just in receipt of your letter and will write what I have had in mind to write you for several days, in fact ever since I have found out what can be done here toward cutting down the expenses of this plant.

When I went to the Mission Meeting in Chihuahua, in June, the brethren scared me with their talk. They were in debt with the plant, so they said. Paper bills and all other kind of bills were in the way. They had borrowed from another fund--the equipment fund--\$1000, and had not been able to pay it back. They gave such a report to me that I did not know how to ask for an appropriation for the running of the plant for next year. So I drew my bow at a venture.

When I took charge just one month ago, there was still a deficit of over \$200. This was due the equipment fund. So I have kept close tab on the whole business this past month. We have done our work and paid off the deficit and have a balance of \$250, and this is one of the worst months of the year. We have several thousand dollars outstanding a part of which we will get I am sure. No bills have been sent out for a long while, so far as I can find out, and we are getting this matter in shape and hope to collect in a good part of this money owing to us. The Argentine brethren seem to think that we are a gold mine here and are almost \$1000 in arrears with their payments on the Sunday School literature we have been sending them for the past two years and I have written Quarles that we can not do this way any longer. The Cuban brethren--our Home Board folks--are \$700 or more in arrears on their book and literature account. I have written them about it and hope to get some of it in soon.

Well, to make a long story short I have it in mind to modify my estimates as follows, in the hope that you will try to give us this amount and not the amounts asked for in the former estimate. Cut out the item on location of plant, or building for same, for the present. Cut the estimate for running expenses of the plant down from \$20,000 to what it was this year--\$12,000. Cut the equipment fund asked for from \$10,000, to \$5,000. I sincerely hope you can give us this amount for equipment which we will need to finish installing our plant as we ought to have it. With this amount we will need but little in the future, for some time to come, for this purpose.

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EL PASO, TEXAS,

** This is my personal
rent allowance.*

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Also you may cut the special amount asked for for a book-keeper to \$125 per month instead of \$150. On the other hand I will have to ask for an increase in my rent money from \$50 per month to \$65, which is what we are having to pay for a place now and have not been able to do any better so far.

I am going to ^{do} my best to cut down expenses, and will succeed to a certain extent, but it will be hard for us to get the work done that ought to be done here on less than what I am asking for in this modified estimate. I am going to have the owner of this place fix us an addition to house the new machinery I have purchased and that will increase the rent to \$100 per month. This will be better than to move which would cost a great deal of money, and especially as we can not move into permanent quarters. However I may have to rent a place for a private office, but at present can not estimate what it would cost. Will try to find out about this in time to get it to you for the meeting of the Board. If not, then it can come up later.

We have nothing at all as to the Knights of Columbus Hall which they want to sell and the First Baptist wants us to buy or they will buy it if we do not. I suppose there is no use in thinking any more about it for the present. If they suspect that we would buy it they would rather let it stand idle than sell it to us, or to the First Baptist Church either, as to that matter.

Taking into consideration what you say about the 75 Million Fund, I am going to break with the other fellows now, and am sending my check to our Church treasurer with instructions for it to go to the Foreign Mission Board. It is not much for it is my pledge on the Millions Campaign, which at first was not designated at all, but which will now be designated for this year and likely the succeeding years. My check is for \$100 for the present year and if they will not promise to send it in designated as I have indicated, I will send it direct.

I shall await anxiously your decisions at the Board Meeting for if you can not give us this amount, after cutting down my estimates in this way, then I do not know how to go about doing the work we are expected to do.

If anything else arises, will communicate it to you promptly and fully as possible.

Fraternally yours,

J. E. Davis