

Yazoo River, July 17, 1896.

Dear Brother:--

I received a package of copies of letter tht you have been writing to others in regard to the publishing work, etc. I can sympathize with you in some matters mentioned in your letters.

You have had the illustrating of Christ Our Saviour quoted to you as though it was something to take as standard. I want to put myself on record as not accepting much of it as good work at all. I will say that much of the difficulty arises from the fact that the R&H policy was to keep our engravers of outside work, and I could get them only at odd spells, and then they were not fitted for the work. It was simply the best we could do. The agreement was that we would do the very best we could under the circumstances, and then would replace a large number of them. It was important to push through the work and get out an edition as soon as possible for several reasons. But now @ Gibson has come in he refuses to have the work done e ver that we agreed upon, and so I am left in the matter. Later I shall replace some of the cuts with new ones.

Now, in regard to the house to do the publishing. I agree with you that the Gen. Conf. is not the proper channel. Look at the situation as it is. The publishing houses have got the Gen. Conf. where they cannot really do anything. They have had the matter arranged in such a way that the offices are to do all the business, and really attend to the sales. Then the offices do the work for the Gen. Conf. Then the offices get 10% of the ret ail price of the books for handling them. Now, tell me what excuse there is for the Gen. Conf. in the matter at all. In fact, in the cheap popular books such as I am interested in, it practically makes it impossible to do anything with them. After the offices are paid for printing and binding, and the author has a royalty, and the office gets 10% for handling, there is nothing left for the Gen. Conf. unless they take it out of the author.

I wrote you some time ago about getting out a new book. I took in the situation as well as I could and then concluded that I did not want the Gen. Conf. to publish the book. The fact is that the matter is so cut up that there is no real incentive for any one to push the work and make the sale of it. I am therefore arranging for the offices to handle the book, and I specify how they shall deal with it. I do not want one to have a chance to make a profit on the work of the other, and so do not propose to give it to either one. For if one has to pay a profit to the other, the one who pays the profit has no incentive to push the book. My arrangement is for R&H to handle the book in its territory, and P.P. to handle it in its territory. In this way there is no cutting of profits, and each has as good a chance as the other. Write me what you think of this plan. I believe if mother could work her books in this way it would be a good thing.

I am now on the way home from a two-day's trip as a trial for the machinery of the Morning Star. It is doing good work, and will be just what is needed for this field. I have only had time to dodge in and write this as we are plowing through the waters of the Yazoo River. I shall have some pictures of the boat complete very soon, and will see that you all have copies of them.

There are some matters that I regret about the work I have done on the boat. It has been prematurely undertaken, at the advice of others, and with promise of full aid to carry it through. The advice was not good, and they failed utterly in the way of aid. I am getting through with it, but it has been a seriour draw on me. I think I have learned my lesson for life. My books are doing well, and will soon bring me through. I can only say that this has been one of the trials of my life, the way I have been misled. I am trying to walk carefully before the Lord, and I know he will bring it all out right.

In haste your brother J. E. White