

GENERAL CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS.

Eighteenth Meeting, April 15, 10:30 A.M.

ELDER A.G.DANIELLS in the chair.

Prayer by W.C.Sisley.

The Chair: This morning we shall give a little time to the consideration of our literature, its circulation, its influence, the work it is doing. We hope that we shall be permitted to hear not only from those engaged in that work here in this country, but from across the sea as well. We will first ask Brother Ford to occupy the time.

I.A.Ford: I am asked to take the place of another one in speaking in regard to plans of work. I realize that this is an exceedingly important question. Our success or failure in the work depends very largely upon the plans upon which we work. From past experiences, I have ~~been~~ been led to think that perhaps if we had less plans and more work, we would see more done than what we do at the present time; and yet it is ~~more~~ true that to accomplish the most in any line of work, we must have clearly defined plans, and thoroughly execute them. In order to do that, we must all be in perfect harmony and unity in carrying out these plans.

We have an illustration of unity of action in the Scriptures. It is found in the eleventh of Genesis. After the flood, when the children of men had become numerous on the earth, they decided to build themselves a tower, so that in ~~the~~ case a flood came in the future, they ~~would~~ might escape ~~the~~ disastrous results. They were so united in their efforts and work so hard, that very soon it began to assume ~~many~~

immense proportions. The record says that "the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one." O, I would to God that this could be said of this denomination henceforth forever! "They have all one language; and ~~now~~ this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do." Notice the tribute that the Lord himself pays to the unity of action that those people put into the work. This shows to us what we may do, if we are united. I believe we may learn from this a very profitable lesson. They were, of course, engaged in a wrong cause. We are engaged in the work of God, and not man, and this same unanimity of mind would be a great blessing to us in our work.

I believe the plans originated for this work when it was started, were heaven-born, and that we should quite largely return to first principles. The results from the efforts of those who went out to circulate our literature at that time, show that the blessing of the Lord attended them. Our publications of all descriptions were placed ~~in~~ in the homes of millions of people. ~~Therefore~~ This success was not at all pleasing to the enemy of all righteousness, and he, realizing that in unity there is strength, and in division weakness, sought to bring in other things to detract from this great work. The falling off in the total amount of our book sales shows how successful he has been in his ~~attempts~~ scheming to thwart the circulation of the truth.

I believe the decrease in the sales of our publication is not half so much due to hard times and financial depression, as it is to a lack of consecration and unity in pushing the work that God has given us to do. I am glad to see that there is a returning to former methods.

The Spirit of the Lord has told us that we should study the history of the Waldenses, and work as they worked. ~~Now~~ The Waldenses were publishers. It was by means of their manuscripts placed in the homes of

the people throughout Europe, that the Reformation came in the sixteenth century. Their ministers could visit a few families, but it was necessary for them to have something to leave with the people, to strengthen them in the faith, educate them, and carry them on when the minister was absent. I am glad that their ministers were canvassers who went from house to house to distribute their precious manuscripts containing portions of the word of God. It seems to me that the plan which has been originated of all uniting in selling "Christ's Object Lessons" is going to bring in harmony again, centering us all, so to speak, in one common grand work, and thus doing away with the disunited efforts of the past.

There is one plan in which every individual, old or young, may have a part. It is found in Luke 10. In calling the attention of the apostles to the field, the Lord said: "The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest." I believe if that plan could be indelibly impressed on all our minds and faithfully carried out, we would see this work rise as every other work, and go forward with a power in which we have never seen it go. When we pray for something, our interests are in that thing, and we do all we can, too, to answer our own prayers.

To-day there is a great dearth of workers to distribute our literature. How shall we obtain workers? I would like to see every one of our churches take this matter up and set apart at least two of their number, and educate and train them to do this work. They will then have a special interest in these individuals, follow them with their prayers, and assist them and their families when they come into hard places. Some three years ago a certain brother in Indiana told me that his church helped him to get out into the field. After working for a few weeks he became almost discouraged, having had rather a hard time. He received a letter ~~from his wife~~ from his wife one morning when he was feeling real

downhearted, in which she said: "At our prayer-meeting last night you were the special object of our prayers. God came into the meeting. We are praying for your success." This brother said to me, "When she wrote me that, do you suppose I could have gone home? I would have remained at my post, even if ~~imminent~~ it had been likely that I would die on the spot." That interest which those in the home church were taking in him, strengthened and encouraged him.

One plan formerly used quite largely is to send an experienced worker with one who is commencing, ~~man~~ or else placing the inexperienced canvasser in a company having some knowledge of the work. I had my ~~own~~ first experience in canvassing in Georgia, far from my home. I had faithfully studied the "canvass," and thought I knew something about how to sell books. Fortunately for me, I ~~was~~ was placed with a company whose leader was an old worker in the field, having had several years' experience. As we were on the train going out to our territory, he said, "Brother Ford, give me a canvass." I felt rather timid about it, but began. Before I had gotten very far, he commenced asking questions, and soon I became all mixed up and confused, and then he laughed at me. I decided that I did not know much about canvassing. I found that I must know my book. I fear we have made a great mistake in educating canvassers in a sort of parrot-like way, and they do not know, when they get into the field, the real pith of what is in the ~~man~~ ^{book} which they are selling, and consequently ~~man~~ are not able to intelligently answer questions.

Every canvasser should have an interest in the book he sells. I remember the case of one worker who had been selling "Great Controversy." He read "Desire of Ages," and said, ^{he earnestly desired} that the thoughts expressed in that book might be revealed in his life. He thought that was the best book in the world, and concluded he would take that along with

"Great Controversy." The result was, he did not sell another "Great Controversy," but all his orders were for "Desire of Ages." I am sure from my experience and by observation, that the man who has a special burden for a certain book because of the sanctifying influence of that book on his life, is the man who is going to have the best success.

In the education of workers, it is not a question to be left with one or two individuals. The State officers cannot do it without the co-operation of all engaged. I am glad that those who are standing at the head of the work in the Conferences are taking hold of this matter and are lifting, and I expect to see this work go forward. There is another plan in destitute fields, and we have them all over this ~~fixed~~ country and all over the world. We have places in the South where it would be almost impossible for any one, especially a man with a family, to enter the work and make a success and keep their families at home. What shall we do in such cases? These souls are as precious in the sight of God as those in more favorable localities. How shall we reach them? I am glad we have families scattered around in different places. These families, if they will open their doors and help in this matter, it will enable the canvassers to exist in the field and support their families and do a good work, and those families that thus help will be sharers in the sheaves which are brought in to the ~~XXXX~~ Master's vineyard.

Another thought: In the past some of our best workers that have had the best success in canvassing have been taken out of it to make poor workers in other lines, or complete failures. I want to read a line here from "Manual for Canvassers," page 63. "Canvassers have been called from evangelistic work to engage in other labor. This is not as it should be." I do not understand that to mean that no one should be taken from the ranks of canvassers, but the fact is that as soon as a canvasser make a good success of his work, some one is ready to suggest something else. In the case of the Waldenses, we find that they did not take up that work as a stepping stone to something better, but that was the greatest work they had, and I want to read a sentence right here from the same book, on the first page, showing that the canvassing work to-day is just as good as it was back there. "The canvassing work, when properly conducted, is missionary work of the highest order."

I do not believe that we have been conducting this work right, but we want to ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ reorganize it to some extent. I am glad that this line of work is receiving attention also, and I trust that it will be so reorganized that we shall see ~~xx~~ many taking hold of it ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ who have never thought of it before. In times past there have been persons going into the work to make money out of it, but everybody who goes into it that way will fail. They always have failed and they always will fail, and I am glad of it, because the work is God's that the truth shall be circulated for the salvation of souls, and when one goes into it that way, success will crown his efforts.

W. C. White: I believe that the time has come for us as a General Conference and as State Conferences to ~~sxxx~~ sould a clear call for our men who entered this work as pioneers years ago, who were blessed in the worl, but who have drifted off into other lines, I believe the time has come for us to issue a clear call for them to come back to the work, to take their places in the ranks, to take their places at the head of advance columns to go into this field to carry the truth in our publications to everybody. A little while ago our attention in Australasia was called to the fact that we had four or five strong men that had drifted off into other lines. Some of them were in important positions. The matter was opened up to Mother, and the message given her was, "Call for those men who have had a good experience in the book work, who have been engaged in other work; call for them to come back and take up their place again as leaders in this book work." Well, it seemed as though it would tear our other lines of work all to pieces, because these were strong men, but the message was placed before them, and their hearts were convinced. The Lord worked with them that they would re-

turn to the work, and they have returned, and I believe the time has come when we should call for such men as Brother Miles and Brother Fred Mead and other men in our States who have left this work and gone into other lines, that we should call for them to come back and take their places at the head of advance columns, that this work may advance and do its work throughout the world.

There is a great work to be done, and this is one of the grandest agencies, and it must be developed. There is no need of our book-work shrinking and shrinking and shrinking. It ought to be doubled, it ought to be quadrupled, and we must keep all the old agencies and forces good, and while we keep these forces good, we must also keep good a force of men who are traveling all over the field. We must also organize companies that will take charge of sections and districts and work faithfully and thoroughly and thus prepare a people to meet the coming of our Lord.

H. H. Hall: Brethren and Sisters, I love our books. I believe they are one of the grandest agencies we have for carrying forward the third angel's message. Therefore, I am glad to say a few words in regard to one way of circulating them. About three years ago the Pacific Press Publishing Company seriously considered the advisability of trying to enter trade book stores with some of our publications. We tried to secure the help of some one experienced in this line of work. We were unable to do this. We tried to do some work by correspondence, but very little was accomplished. During the time we were making these efforts, we also endeavored to get out some publications that would be especially appropriate for this class of trade.

Finally, -two years ago Brother Miles spoke of this at the Conference two years ago, - this matter impressed itself upon my mind very strongly and I have thought more than ever of it since, and what I

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shall say to-day will not be in the way of theory, but simply of telling you what we have endeavored to do on the Pacific Coast, and also my personal experience as far as it goes.

The day before I started out I had a talk with the manager of the American Tract Society in San Francisco. He had traveled much through the West and knew the situation fairly well. He told me that they had done considerable work of this kind, they had never been able to pay their traveling expenses. They had a large line of books also. They told me that it would be impossible to do anything. It did seem as though it would be so. We had an almost unknown line of books on unpopular subjects to a class of stores that were already overstocked. But our Board gave me the permission to try and I tried. I will not tell you of the many mistakes we made, but the plan we finally adopted was this: We would place one half of our books in one store only in a town. We would supply the dealer with the description of these books so that the circular was distributed as his own. In this way the people approached the books and examined them without any prejudice. This we thought to be something of a point gained. Placing them in but one store we would be able to tell the dealer that he would be fully protected. This was the matter that seemed to have weight with them and it assisted us quite materially. On the first trip we placed some books on sale. We have not had to do that since, and I think this plan will never be successful, unless the same person who delivers the book shall make the collections for them. It is impossible to do it by correspondence, at least we found it so. Just before coming here I supplied the second trip, and it is true that I found many stores where the books had been sold, and I found other places where they had sold but limited quantities.

I found a number of places where the ministers of the town had called in and almost threatened to boycott them if they continued to carry them. I found one "Desire of Ages" that had been sold successively to the cashier of a bank, to a Sunday-School teacher, and both times had been returned, because of its heretical teachings. Of course I do not know who will get the book next; but I hope they will read it sufficiently to find out its teachings.

From a financial standpoint we have not anything very bright to present, although during the four months which I spent on the road we sold about \$2,000 worth, at wholesale prices, so that the success was better than we supposed, even though it is not as good as we might hope.

Now a few words about the outlook. In my estimation, this outlook is twofold: first, the influence which the traveling man has upon the dealers. This may seem to you to be a small matter; but I believe the traveling man going around, can have just as good an influence upon these dealers as will be that of the consecrated canvasser who goes to the homes of the people. In fact, I believe it is stronger, because these dealers are not accustomed to meeting Christians; at least men on the road. There is not but one instance out of about one hundred as a rule where you find men on the road that lead a Christian life. Therefore I believe this is going to have a wonderful influence; in fact I have definite knowledge of this. I know that it does have. I believe that if the traveling man shall live out the principles in the books he is selling, it will be recognized every time; and when such a recognition is given, then the man will be liable to be interested in the publications, and finally he may be brought into the light of truth.

My second thought is this: It will not be long until this truth shall rise and sweep over this world, even more than it did in the times of Christ. We know this. There is coming a time shortly, in fact

it seems to me that I have seen the beginning of it here, when it will rise in such power that the world will be thrilled with its power. When that time comes, there is going to be a demand for the publications which contain the thoughts that this message is based upon; and when that time comes, people are going to inquire, and inquire diligently, and dealers are always glad to get anything that the people desire, and they will have to purchase.

Just think a moment: If in Jerusalem at the time of the pentecost there had been bookstores containing lives of Christ, containing the doctrines which he taught to the people, the promise of the Holy Spirit, do you not suppose those stores would have been thronged with people anxious to get them? Of course they would. It would have been impossible for it to have been otherwise. Then what about the present time, when people are reading almost continually? It is true, the class of reading they secure is not the best. But at any rate they are educated to read; they secure their news in that way. And so I say again when people are curious to know the basic principles of the message that has such power, they are going to read. Then, if these dealers are acquainted with our publications, even though they may not handle them, but if they are acquainted with the men who have brought them to their attention, I am sure that our books will go as they have never gone before.

You may think it will be impossible for us to secure books then. But I read something the other day in the new volume of the Testimony on this point that was a blessing to me; and that is the thought that so long as probation lasts the ~~walk~~ canvasser will have work to do. If he has work to do with the books during that time, there must be books for him to handle, so that the canvasser and the dealer with the trade are on the same basis. Therefore I am sure that even at that time there will be plenty of publications for the dealers, and as surely they will know where to get them.

I want to give you one experience, and then I will close. I had been unfortunate enough to contract the grip and was not feeling well, and I came to one of the hardest towns on the whole line, the town that I dreaded from the time I went out. It was a large place. And one of the largest dealers had curtly told me on the trip before, that he wanted nothing to do with our publications. The next largest dealer had no interest whatever. One other dealer was so deaf that I could hardly get him to understand a thing. Still another dealer had returned a number of his books, and another man had been in a hospital, and had not paid for them. It seemed to me as though I could not go out the next morning, and I passed a discouraged night. But the next morning I was reading in my Bible in my worship, and there were somethings that came to me, especially ^estrengthening and encouraging, and I thought I would take it all to the Lord in prayer. I remember that I took out my list of names that I had there, and wrote them down in my diary, and I had a season of prayer over those names. It seemed to me that the Lord came especially near, and I felt when I went out that he was going to help me.

The first place I went was to this large store, where the buyer had refused me before. He was a man difficult to be found. But after I had talked with him three or four minutes, he gave me an order for more than \$30 worth. I went to the next store where they were indifferent, and the man gave me only a small order; but he bought a number of other books for his own reading. He said he was interested in our literature; and if he found those things what he expected them to be, he would put in a large stock. ~~And then~~ I went to the ^{deaf} ~~indifferent~~ man, and while I had some difficulty in getting him to understand, yet he purchased. I went to my other dealers, and while I had some difficulty during the day, yet every name that I had written down in my book that morning bought quite a liberal quantity of our books.

That night when I went to my room I had a thanksgiving season, you may be sure. And during my season at the hotel, another brother, Brother A.D. Guthrie--whom some of you may know---came in to see me. He had been working with health foods there, and he had found a lady that had read a book he had sold to her, and she was ready to come into the truth. We then had another service, and I praised the Lord for the opportunity, and for the blessing and for the privilege of working for him, even in this way.

There are many other instances I might relate, but I will not take your time, because I know it is precious; but suffice it to say that the Lord is in this as well as in all these other methods of spreading the truth.

The Chair: The brethren have asked me to give a little talk on the relation of religious and health works. "Is it competition or co-operation?" Co-operation, of course. There is no competition in anything in God's work. So I will not spend three minutes talking about that; but I will say a few words about the pushing of the health works in connection with our religious books. And as I have been canvassing, and have not had much time to study the canvassing work in this country, I shall tell you something about our experiences in Australia in the sale of medical books.

About ten years ago a brother went out to sell the "Home Hand-Book". He was selling "~~Hand-Book~~" "Man, the Masterpiece," but about ten years ago he went away out to West Australia, a thousand miles away from Melbourne, where our publishing house was located, and canvassed that sparsely settled territory, and met with great success in the sale of the book. And while working for a man, he also sold quite a number of "Home Hand-Book." But for many years our "Home Hand-Book was considered too large to sell. None of the canvassers thought they could make it go. So we had copies on our shelves for years and years. "Ladies' Guide,"

and "Man, the Masterpiece," were sold, but the "Home Hand-Book" was too large, and the price was too high. But the sale of "Man, the Masterpiece," and "Ladies' Guide," became so large, I may say really phenomenal in the country, for the country in which they were being sold, that some undertook to sell the "Home Hand-Book;" and during the last three or four years our agents have had a wonderful experience in the sale of that large book. Brether-Palmer-

Brother Palmer has sent me some statistics regarding the comparative sales of the medical and religious books. I will read them to you. Beginning with 1895, the value of medical books sold was \$18,327. I will just mention the thousands. The value of religious books sold was \$25,000, making a total of \$43,000. In 1896 medical books, \$17,000; religious books, \$23,000; total, \$41,000. In 1897, medical books, \$26,000; religious books, \$11,000; making \$37,000; in 1898, medical books, \$27,000; religious books, \$21,000; making a total of \$48,000; in 1899, medical books, \$44,000; religious, \$20,000; total, \$65,000. 18900 medical books sold amounted to \$54,000, and the religious books, \$28,000; making a total of \$82,000. So that you see it has not been just one year that our medical books have been carried along, but every year they have increased---from \$18,000^{in 1895} to \$54,000 last year.

Well now, you remember that our territory is a large one, the people are scattered, the population is small, and the agents have just tramped that whole country over, covering millions upon millions of acres, and thousands upon thousands of square miles of territory. They have gone out with both the religious and the medical books, and have sold them right along together.

Brother Palmer has given a few items here that I think will be better than anything I could say.

"1. The population of Australasia is about 4,500,000.

2. The number of Seventh-day Adventists is about 2,000.

3. The number of canvassing agents has varied from 20 to 70," during these six years.

"4. The sale of large subscription books has amounted to a little over ninety per cent of all the books sold..

5. The number of religious books sold has more than equaled the number of medical books; but the high prices of the medical books has made their value greater than the value of the religious books."

You get the idea? A "Man" or a "Guide" would sell for five dollars; the Home Hand Book, eight, nine, and ten dollars, while the Great Controversy, Daniel and Revelation, and other books sell for not more than half that, so that the number of religious books has been about the same as the number of the health books.

"6. The medical and religious books have been pushed by the Tract Societies with equal energy." Cooperation; neither one has had a black eye given it.

Voice: Is it customary for one man to take both medical and religious books together?

A.G.Daniells: That is owing to the territory he is in.

If we send a man out into the back blocks over a scattered territory, where he has to travel miles and miles, sometimes thirty miles to come to a house, we tell him to take along all he wants; ~~but~~ and to load himself

up and do all he can; but if he is in thickly settled territory, then we ask him to take one book.

"6. The medical and religious books have been pushed by the Tract Societies with equal energy, and with gratifying results. If one large religious book follows another ~~quick~~ quickly in the same territory, the first is likely to injure the sale of the second. We have found it advantageous to follow a religious book with a medical book, thus lessening that difficulty. We see many advantages in running both lines together under one management."

There has been a good deal of talk about having some medical canvassers, or men come in---the medical folks take the territory and run the medical books, and the Tract Societies take it and run the religious books; but we have always said an emphatic No, to that, because it would mix up our territory. Now we have for many years kept clear records of our canvassers' work. We know where they have gone for the last ten years; we know what books they have put in the territory. We know just where to send agents with either the medical or the religious books, and as long as we keep the whole territory under the control of one management, we can keep a clear record of everything that is being done. But if we have two managements, well then, we do not know what is being done. Besides, we believe that it is the duty of our denomination to give its attention to these medical lines right along, just the same as to the other lines, and there should be no competition, and no conflict or sparring in the field at all.

"7. The highest record made in this country during the past six years was by a lady canvassing for 'Ladies' Guide.' Her sales for one month amounted to \$1120.00." Can you beat that in America? That was not just a great big flash in the pan. I wish I had our monthly summary to show you her sales from month to month for two years. It is just as wonderful;~~xx this xx~~ but this was the highest she reached. Many times, she came nearly this. "The highest record for one week was

made by a brother canvassing for 'Home Hand Book.' His sales amounted to \$345.00.

"8. For over fifteen years these large subscription books have been pushed in Australasia, and the last year was the best thus far."

Now about the conditions for sellins: "The times are hard, the droughts are severe, and the population is widely scattered, and yet the work goes on. As long as the agents can keep the droughts and hard times out of their own hearts, they get on very well.

"9. A good harvest is sure to follow such seed-sowing. In one of our colonies during the past year, fully twenty good souls have decided to obey the truth as a direct result of work by our agents and their books."

Yes, a nice church was raised up in one town where a canvasser had gone there located his family, and lived right there, and canvassed the town over and over, and the country all around, and he raised up such an interest in the message that a minister was called for, and went there, and labored and brought out a church, and now they are erecting a church building.

Well I don't suppose I should say anything more about it is, but I believe, dear friends, that we can do a hundred times more with our medical books than we are doing at the present time; and you can see that by rotating, or by alternating rather, the medical and religious books, you can just keep the territory going all the time.

I believe Brother White is to speak on methods of finance for the work, on compensation for the author, publisher, State society, and canvasser.

W.C.White: The method of finance which if adopted by each individual canvasser, each church tract society, each state society, will put our work on a footing where thousands of dollars of interest can be saved every year to the cause, where the precious time of the worker

can be saved from worry, is the pay-as-you-go plan. I need not tell you that at the present time there is a general willingness on the part of the person selling books to wait until he has made his collections before he pays for them. Then there is a general tendency on the part of our local church societies to permit a small indebtedness of from five to twenty dollars rest upon them---money owed to the State society. That this condition places our State societies where they stand, from five hundred to five thousand dollars in debt to the printing houses, and that as a consequence our printing houses are paying interest upon thousands and thousands of money which they ought not to pay one cent of interest on. Each year, our missions, our general cause, our missions, are robbed of from ten to forty thousand dollars, because of the interest that it pays on these indebtednesses. Can we afford it, brethren?

I am glad that this is a missionary Conference; that we are talking up liberalities to missions, and I believe that one of the grandest ways to help our mission cause twenty thousand dollars a year, will be for us to adopt the principle of individual responsibility. And if our agents must have assistance, to carry the business, let us encourage them to appeal to individual friends to supply them with the capital, and thus make a donation to the missions through the publishing houses of that interest which otherwise is lost to the cause. We talk of the missionary spirit in our churches, and take donations. That is good; but one of the grandest donations which our churches could make to the general cause, would be ~~to~~ an earnest effort to pay up all their dues to the State tract societies, so that they could pass it on to the publishers, and the publishers could be saved the interest, and thus be enabled to make liberal gifts to our missions. I know that the managers of our printing houses are more than willing to turn the facilities of these great plants to turning out ~~the~~ of books in our foreign languages, providing the means by which we can carry

the truth to every nation, kindred, and tongue. What is the difficulty? It takes so much capital, and we have got so much interest to pay. Brethren, shall we break this yoke? Shall we lift this burden? Shall we set them free? Shall we tell them to use this and as much more each year in publishing works to go to every nation? I pray God that he may impress this matter upon our hearts, and that we shall unitedly stand for the principle of individual responsibility.

Another feature regarding finance, and this is one with which our State Conferences must deal. The time has fully come, brethren, when we should return to the first principles adopted here in the Conference of 1886. I was not present, did not enjoy the privilege of the discussions; but I have read it, and studied it, and I believe those principles were sound.

They were based upon the belief that obligations are mutual. And it was agreed that wherever a state tract society would assume the responsibility of thoroughly working its territory, ^{where} it would say, We believe that God will help us to be the agent of the publishing house and ^{of} placing the truth in every family, In order to do this we will adopt the general plans before recommended. We will place a state agent in the field, to give his constant study to this matter, to visit the churches, to find men and train them that they may enter the field and work with him, and we will give our influence to this work, we will give our strength to it, we will accept it as the greatest self-supporting missionary effort of the denomination, and we will make it first in our efforts,--it was agreed that when our state tract societies would take hold of the work, feeling their responsibility to work the territory, placing the state agent in the field, then the publishing houses would turn over that field to them, would protect them in their work,--in the canvassing books and their sale of subscription books and would allow no one else to handle subscription books in that territor

I say, this was based upon the position that obligations are mutual. But as time has gone on, we have backslidden. One society is meeting with great success; two societies, three societies, and four or five, so that there was enough money received from the canvassing work to pay the state agent. The brethren said, "Take that money, and pay the state agent, releasing the conference from paying that man, and letting the conference put other men in the field." The motive was good, but the plan was bad; because just as soon as this was done, other states began to plan, How can we throw the burden ^{entirely} on the tract society? Then when it was a year of reverses, and the amount was not large, then these tract societies said, "We are responsible; we ~~are doing~~ will do this work from our office." And so a state agent has gone out of the work, and our work has shrunken, shrunken, shrunken, until that which ought to be our great-

est honor is becoming our greatest disappointment, because we have backslidden, and have not stood by the principles adopted at the beginning.

Will it not be better for us to go back to first principles, (Voices: Amen!) and let every state say "We accept the canvassing work as a great evangelizing agency; we want our canvassers to be evangelists; it must be so. We will choose a man having good business ability, ability to read minds, to measure men, to direct them, and we will employ him from state conference funds. We will **keep** him constantly in the field, let him go to our churches and minister to them in any way he can; we will let him hold Bible readings, we will let him visit families, and let him find the men whom God is fitting to be canvassers?" (Voices: Amen!) Then he must associate with the right men in the field, so that they may get a good experience and keep up that work. ¶ Then let us agree, brethren, that from the earnings of the canvassing work, -- for if we take hold of the work on correct principles, there will be large earnings; our tract societies will receive large funds from this work, -- let us agree that not less than one-half of the net earnings of every society every year shall be used in benevolent work. It should be placed in the hands of the conference committee to use in benevolent work. What kinds of benevolent work? -- First, all of our canvassers should be supplied with tracts and leaflets, so that every family that would not buy a book could have something to read. (Voices: Amen!) Then there are other enterprises that need to be carried on in behalf of the canvassers. And then there are various lines of oldtime tract and missionary work. We have various agencies created for carrying this work, for following the work of the canvasser, -- by correspondence, by sending literature to follow him up his work. You will find plenty of ways to use it. But let us agree, brethren, that the canvassers shall be paid by the conference, and that one-half of all the net earnings of the canvassing work shall be placed in the hands of the confer-

ence Committee each year for this benevolent work.

What would you do with the other half?--Let the other half go into the capital account, until we have a capital in each depository sufficient to own all our books and pay our printing houses and not be at all in debt to them. When that capital account is sufficiently large that we can carry that business, then let the whole of the proceeds of the canvassing go into the hands of the committee, to be used each year in this benevolent work. But let your general canvassing agent be an evangelical man, employed by the conference, paid by the conference, and let it be understood he is doing the highest kind of conference work in carrying forward constantly the effort to get more evangelical canvassers into the field.

I believe that this is a principle which is vital; and I most earnestly hope that our people will make decisions at this meeting; that they will stand firmly by it in the future. And let us recover the results of our backsliding.

A Delegate:

~~Yes~~: It was stated, let the canvasser be paid ~~xxxx~~ ^{by} the conference. You meant the state agent, did you not?

W. C. White: The state agent; certainly; The general canvassing agent, I am talking about; I have not said a word yet about the ordinary agent this morning.

There are a few principles, brethren, that we need to say a word about. It would be useless for me to attempt to go into details, but I must say just a word about a few of the principles which should cover our dealings with one another and our feelings toward one another, in this work. If we are to attain the greatest success, every part of this work must have sympathy for and rejoice in the prosperity of every other part. Is that not so?--It is.

Let us consider the different parties that have to do with the producing of our literature and placing it before the people. You say, "The Lord puts it into the heart of some teacher of the Word to write that Word

that people may read it." That represents effort. It takes time, it involves study, it involves expense, and it can only be successful where God has given that talent to the individual. We recognize that where God gives a talent to an individual, he gives that individual the responsibility of stewardship. Is that not so? On the one to whom he gave one talent rested the responsibility of the stewardship of that one talent. To him who had ten talents, rested the responsibility of the stewardship of the ten talents. When our publishing houses have arranged with authors that they shall receive a very small percentage of the earnings of their books, let us remember that that is theirs, and that as God has given them the talent, he has also given them the stewardship, and let us not begrudge them

Do you realize that the author gets only half as much as the tract society has for simply receiving the books from the publishing houses and passing them on to the canvasser? The author receives only one-tenth part as much as the agent does for carrying the book and selling it. If you were to write a book, you would think it a large proportion that you would receive for the writing of that book,--one-tenth part of what the agent receives for only taking the book and carrying it out and selling it to somebody? No; I do not think you would consider it too large. It is one-half of what the tract society has for receiving the book from the publishing house, paying a little freight, keeping the accounts, doing the collecting, and passing it on to the agent to distribute. Just about the same amount that the publishers have for the work of distributing. Let us not begrudge it.

We pass to the publisher. We ought to give much more consideration to our publishing houses than we have done. Because our publishing houses have not shown loss in their balances, and because their business has grown, we have come to think that they are very strong financially; that they are getting the lion's share. But they are not getting the lion's

share. They are getting a very small percentage; and you will hunt a long way before you will find other publishing houses that ~~xxx~~ are doing the same line of business.

You think of it. Our publishing houses, after paying their workmen, meeting the actual expenses of getting out a book, ordinarily receive as a matter of profit on the book about one-half of what the **state** tract society receives for simply passing the book through their hands on to the agent. Is that too much for all the responsibility they bear? Is that too much?-- (Voices: No!) Why, no; we know it is not too much; and, brethren, let us not begrudge it. (Voices: Amen!) Let us be thankful that the volume of business is so large that with this very small percentage they can live and continue to do this work. (Voices: Amen!)

The time will come when we shall study this thing more fully, more thoroughly than we can do to-day; and when you read, you will find that in the same Testimony to the church which called the attention of this people to the fact that plans should be laid which would provide for our books to be circulated and broader plans laid, ~~you will find that~~ points out the danger of our dealing closely with the publishing houses.

principles. The time has come for us to lay aside the study of policies, and study principles. We can build on them, but policies are shifting. What can we say about the finances of the State societies? Our State societies should own their stocks of books, and they should have a capital fund sufficient to meet any emergency that arises in which they must for a short time advance large quantities of books to a successful and trusty agent. Our societies should stand above indebtedness.

I have spoken of what I believe to be the right policy in dealing with State agents, and in dealing with the surplus. I believe our Conference should pay the State agent, and that the surplus of our societies should go one-half to the capital fund and one-half to benevolent work.

What are the greatest dangers of our State societies? I will point out a few of their perils. One is that in our effort to do the old-time missionary work, we shall fail to secure thoroughly capable financial men to manage the canvassing branch. Another is that in securing competent men to manage the financial branch of the canvassing work, we shall fail to provide secretaries of missionary experience to carry forward the old-time missionary work. There are two departments: why should the one be neglected, while the other is built up? Brethren, this ye ought to have done, and not to have left the other undone. We must recognize that our societies have these two branches, and we must provide workers who are thoroughly capable of managing both of these two branches, and not ruin one to the advantage of the other.

Another danger of our societies is entering into side issues, doing a little trading, a little general trading, or a little printing, a little bookmaking, a little publishing, and this, that, and the other, that takes up the mind and time of the Secretaries, so that they do not have time to think, to pray, to study, and to reach out in correspondence and in sending out literature as they used to do in the old-time days. We must

not fritter away our time. Ministers should remember this, secretaries should remember this. What a shocking thing it is for a worker to let a half-day be wasted because a little expense would be incurred in using that half day to advantage! In the ministry we are tempted to let our time slip away to save a little traveling expense. There is an important mission, something important to be done; it will cost fifty cents or a dollar to make a trip to that place. We can not afford it, we think; but we let a day or two slip away, and yet think we are economical! The greatest economy a minister can ever exercise is to make the best use of their time. The greatest economy that our tract society secretaries can ever exercise is to make the best use of their time. The same is true with reference to our canvassing agents. I believe we are frittering away lots of time in "playing publisher." It does not pay. There is a better way. I have no discouragement for local papers; but as we organize Union Conferences and those Conference knit their work together, let us have a good, wholesome printing-house in connection with the school in that Union Conference. Let our students do the printing, and do it in one place for all the local Conferences in that Union. Let the school have that experience. This is not by commandment. It is by advice. Make the most of it; for you will save lots of money.

Just a word about our agents and their financial system, their compensation. Our agents have solid work to do, and we should not begrudge them their earnings; but our agents must also remember that they are responsible to God for the use of that talent. When the time comes, as it will come in foreign mission fields, in home mission fields, in the destitute South, in the great populous cities of the East, and in other sections of various lands, when you come face to face with this question, "These people want books; they must have books," the only way to succeed appears to ~~be~~ be to bring the retail price of the book closer to

the actual cost of production. How shall it be done? I believe the time is near at hand when we shall see agents who are hungering for the spiritual advancement of the people of a section, saying, "Here, if you will produce a book that can be sold at a lower price, I will cheerfully work for forty per cent instead of fifty." That will enable the publisher to bring the price where the people feel they can take it. In populous localities the agent is closer to his people. It is rapid sales, that will enable him to get a living, and as you study this matter, as it is brought out in the ~~McGraw-Hill~~ Manual for Canvassers, I believe you will find this is consistent with the appeal made there, where it says that our agents have been tempted because the publishers of secular works have offered them large wages, and our agents have been led to demand the largest wages. They are exhorted not to do this.

Some of our brethren have taken this as an evidence that all agents should have a salary. But stop and reason a minute. In what way do other publishing houses pay wages to their agents?---By their commission. In what way do other publishing houses offer high wages on secular books?---By offering a big commission. In what way have our agents influenced the large compensation?---Through demanding the large commission. There are fields that require it. There are fields that will support it. But brethren, as we advance with this work, we shall find fields that appeal to us for a different condition of things, and the agent has it in his power to solve the difficulty by saying, ~~instead~~ "If you will produce a class of books on which you can put the price lower, and only give me forty per cent, I will take it, and I will work it at that." That will enable us to put the books where the people will feel that they are in reach. I expect in the providence of God we will see such a move as that during the next two years arising from the agents themselves.

That there might not be any mistake about this matter, I asked Mother what was presented to her mind, what was meant, by those references

to high wages? I asked, "Is there anything in that statement that would help us to settle this question as to whether canvassers should ~~not~~ have a salary, or work on commission?" "Why," she said, "the matter of salary or commission does not enter into ~~it~~ it. It is a matter of compensation. That is what I meant by wages. It is compensation." I said, "Then what is your judgment? Is it your judgment, from that which has come to your mind, that it would be an advantage to our cause to pay our agents a salary?" She said, "I don't see how it can be done. I don't see how it can be done."

Those who would work profitably on a salary are not the agents who most urge it. Whose who urge it most are those whose labors would not earn it, and therefore our Conferences would be brought into distress.

This is a missionary Conference. We are broadening our plans for missionary work. We are loosening our purse strings; we are making every plan and every provision so that the home funds may be taken into the mission fields. Do you believe that the enemy of your work can see this progress without putting forth a special effort to raise some new issue to absorb that means? Do you believe that you can return from this Conference and go forward with the organization of your Union Conferences with ~~xxx~~ making a special attempt to see developed local ~~xxxxx-xxxxxx~~ enterprises, that you will ~~xxx~~ be able to pass on ~~xxx~~ to the General Conference, and through it to the mission fields without a new issue being required. Do you believe that you can carry this matter into the local Conference without meeting special issues, special pleas that will use up all the matter in the State and thus curtail the work? No, you must expect it. You must expect that in the organization of the Union Conferences there will be propositions arising that will absorb all the funds, and to keep the means going out into foreign fields I say to our canvassers, do not do it. The Lord has provided for us. We have not provided means by which men can receive compensation in accordance with their labors, and as these have been blessed in the past, we believe they will be in the ~~xxxx~~ future. Especially should men who earn large means realize their responsibility and use these means in helping to forward the cause of God; in helping their fellows who are not successful, and in using means as though they were God's and not their own.

I pray God that whatever of truth I have spoken may rest in your minds and may be helpful in organizing this work and carrying it forward.

Question: I would like to ask where each percent of the retail price of the book is used, or where it goes.

W. C. White: Fifty per cent of the ~~book~~ price goes to the man who carries the book. Ten per cent goes to the State tract society that buys it from the publishing houses, furnishes it to the agent, keeps the accounts and thus is responsible for the work in the State. About five per cent goes to the publishing houses for their responsibility in handling and selling the book, advertising, getting circulations, supporting the field agents, in addition to the actual expense of printing. Five per cent goes to the author for all his responsibility in work and producing the manuscript, and what is left is used in buying paper and producing plates and running it through the press and getting it bound.

Question: Do you recommend that the Secretary be paid by the Conference or by the State tract society?

W. C. White. I think the matter of payment of secretaries and office help can best be determined by the State Conference committee according to the character of the work which they are doing and the condition in the fields and the condition of the funds of the tract department. I hardly think it would be wise for any one to enter into the matter of giving counsel in an offhand way. If a Conference has funds, or if a tract department has funds for building up its capital, or if it can use a portion of this fifty percent I have spoken of in sending out ~~xxxxxxx~~ gratuitous matter, it should not be considered a good investment by a Conference to pay the corresponding secretary from Conference funds. I know it has been done often, and often will be, but I believe that this is a question that will be dealt with locally.

E. E. Miles: There is one avenue for the circulation of our literature that has not been touched upon to-day. That is the news

company. I rejoice exceedingly that so much progress has been made as has been in the matter of getting our books in the regular books stores. There ~~are~~ ^{is} a large number of books stores, ^{larger or smaller,} that do not handle the class of books that Brother Hall has been placing with the trade. You pass through our large cities and you will notice that there are numerous places where they seem to have nothing but paper covered books. Many of these are in connection with tobacco stores. There are large news companies that supply these stores. They supply the trains, the railroad news business and also the news stands we find along the lines of travel. There is the American News Company, the Union News Company, the Southern News Company, the VanNoy News Company, the Christolm Brothers, the Railroad News Company, the Brown News Company, the New York and Eastern News Company, the Alhstrom, News Company, and others that I might name, that I ~~xxxxxxx~~ have some ~~xxx~~ acquaintances with, as I am already supplying them with books and have been for a number of years. I am persuaded that we ought to have workers among us who would prepare books for this class of trade. These books would have to be especially written, and I believe we have those who are capable of doing this. However, I would suggest a word of caution, and that is that they take counsel before attempting to write a book or to publish a book for this class of trade. I have learned that the larger number of books falls dead on the market. I suppose that there are twenty-five books published that amount to nothing at all that do not pay expenses to one that is successful, and there are facts and principles that are only discovered by experience, and so again I would say before ~~writing~~ launching out on this you would better seek counsel from people who are acquainted with the trade.

My name was mentioned here this morning as one who should return to the subscription books work. I am glad to say to you that that

call has not come from the brother who mentioned my name, but it came from the Lord; and for the last four months I have been devoting my time to the work, and the reason why I feel free to ~~return~~ my attention again to the subscription book work is because our publishing houses are taking hold of the trade book work. If the situation were the same as it was two years ago, and as it has been until very recently, I could not consent to this for one moment. I do not think that my work with the trade book business is at an end yet.

My interests are in that work; I have an undying burden for it; but at the same time, now that our publishing houses are taking it up, I fear that I can let this burden roll somewhat upon them, and that I can again return to the subscription book line. However, I wish to make these few remarks, hoping that the seed would catch somewhere, and spring up, and bear a harvest of books that can be circulated through these great avenues, these news companies. For when we go to the individual bookstore, the matter ends there; but when you go to the American News Company, that means a large part of the United States; when you go to the Union News Company, that means the railroad business for a large part of the United States; and when you have begun to do business with the American News Company and with the Union News Company, then these minor companies that I have named, and others that might be named, will be ready also to take and handle those books that are being handled by the larger news companies.

And so I say that I think we shall be negligent to our duty if we are satisfied with simply the regular subscription book business, with the work that is being done by our colporteurs, through our tract societies, or by even reaching the better class of the book trade; but we want these cheaper books, the paper covered books, that will go onto the news stands by the side of the novels, to be found there; for so many, many people feed upon novels, and novels only. I suppose that a very large proportion of the people never read a bound book; but they buy novels, magazines, and newspapers. And so we must meet the people where they are, and have something that will reach all classes of people.

The Chair: All in favor of adjourning will arise, and Brother C. Santee will pronounce the benediction.

A.G.DANIELIS, Chairman.

L.A.HOOPES, Secretary.

GENERAL CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

Nineteenth Meeting, April 15, 3 P.M.

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ELDER A.G.DANIELLS in the chair.

Prayer was offered by Elder H.W.Decker.

The Chair: Some of the delegates have a little matter of Conference Business that they are very anxious to dispose of, so that they can go on with other matters that are being delayed because this is not attended to. Dr. Kellogg has consented to allow us to take a few minutes for this purpose; so we will ask the delegates to consider this a meeting of the Conference, until this matter is disposed of. Brother Sharp, I believe, will present the matter to you.

Smith Sharp: It is the report of the Committee on Organization, which was rendered yesterday morning, and ordered printed, so that it could be considered. The chairman of the Committee on Organization is not here. There are other members of that committee here perhaps. They would better state the matter to you. [No one responded.] It is with reference to the transfer of the control of the Graysville and Huntsville school to the Union Conference. The Chairman of the Committee on Organization yesterday morning reported that that Committee had passed a vote requesting the Conference to transfer the matter of the appointment of the boards for the control of the Graysville and Huntsville schools to the Southern Union Conference, with the recommendation that it be passed by the Conference. It was ordered printed, and to be considered this morning. No unfinished business was called for this morning. Here is Brother Kilgore, who can tell us in regard to the matter.

R.M.Kilgore: I will simply say that the report of the Committee on Organization was something like this, that the responsibility of appoint-

ing the boards for the Southern Industrial School at Graysville, and the Oakwood Industrial School, at Huntsville, Ala., be transferred to the Southern Union Conference. That is the way it reads, I believe, exactly word for word.

Charles Thompson: It may be found on page 232 of the BULLETIN.

The Chair: Please read it.

Charles Thompson: (reading) "That the responsibility heretofore carried by the general Conference in appointing boards of management ~~and~~ for the Southern Industrial School (Graysville, Tenn.), and the Oakwood Industrial School (Huntsville, Ala.), be transferred to the Southern Union Conference."

The Chair: What is your pleasure regarding this recommendation?

M.C. Wilcox: I move that it be approved.

Irving Keck: I support the motion.

The motion was called, and was carried.

The meeting was here turned over to the stockholders of the Michigan Sanitarium and Benevolent Association.

A.G. DANIELLS, Chairman.

L.A. HOOPES, Secretary.