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1910-10-11, Letter from Thomas Stephens to Lyman Stewart regarding circulation

Thomas E. Stephens

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October 11, 1910

[Written on Testimony Publishing Company letterhead]

Mr. Lyman Stewart, President,
Union Oil Co. of California,
Security Bldg.,
Los Angeles, Calif.

Dear Mr. Stewart:

Your letter of the 17th ult. came duly to hand. I am delayed somewhat in replying in order that I might get some additional, rather more definite, information with regard to our missionary lists. The addresses of foreign missionaries for the following denominations are on our mailing list: Congregational, Baptist, United Presbyterian, Lutheran, Christian, Disciples, Wesleyan Methodists, Methodist, Episcopal, Presbyterian, Reformed Presbyterian, Seventh Day Adventists, Free Methodist, and Mennonite. Also those from the China Inland Mission, the South Africa Inland Mission and the Christian and Missionary Alliance. Relative to the letter written by Mr. R. D. Smith will say that two out of the four names (J. W. Wilcox and J. W. Stevenson) have been on the mailing list right along ever since last spring. The other two names (E. E. Strother and Dr. Mary Newell) we have put on the list. You quote one or two paragraphs from Mr. Blackstone in which he says he has inquired of the Presbyterian, Methodist, American Board London Mission and S. P. G., and none of them have received the first volume. (Incidentally, I may say that I do not quite know what the initials "S. P. G." stand for, and have not been able to find any one here who does. When you are writing again will you not kindly enlighten me?) In regard to our missionary list, Mr. Stewart, I wish to say this: We have had until recently considerable trouble in securing these lists. I am quite well aware that a great many of the missionaries did not receive the first volume and a considerable number the second volume. We have been all along just as careful as possible getting the names, but when the first volume was sent out some two or three thousand copies of the book were returned from the Chicago Post Office for better addresses, having been incomplete or otherwise defective. In a great many instances the provinces were

[Page 2]

omitted and we had to check each piece over one by one and by reference to Postal Guides and other sources of information complete the addresses as far as possible and re-mail the books. We feel that our foreign mailing list is now much more perfect and complete in every way than at any previous time. This forenoon Mr. Buckley, of the Buckley-Dement Agency, and myself had a full hour's conference with the foreign division of the Chicago Post Office, going over in detail a considerable number of points in order to make more perfect our system of getting the book out to foreign addresses. As soon as Volume III goes out we intend to follow up a few hundred books with personal letters to those to whom they are sent to find out whether they have received the books. We are doing everything we possibly can to see that the books reach their destination, and both our mailing agency and publishing house are co-operating with us to the fullest possible extent. I may also say that we have written to Dr. Louis Meyer for his assistance in corroborating [*sic*] all of our sources of information as to foreign missionary addresses. We probably should have done so before, but you know he has been in Europe a part of the summer, and

besides he is such a busy man that we felt some hesitancy in putting him to any time and trouble, and the more so because we felt sure we could get the lists from denominational sources without any large amount of assistance from him. I presume that Dr. Dixon has sent you the statistical report which I prepared for presenting to the executive committee at their meeting, September 30. And he has also doubtless written you with regard to the added amount which will be needed for Volume III. It is larger than I originally expected, inasmuch as we have several thousand more names than we anticipated. And now, Mr. Stewart, I wish to assure you that I will welcome any suggestions of any kind from you with regard to either the publication or circulation of the books, and especially relative to the foreign missionary part of our work. Any information which you can give me to extend or make more accurate our knowledge in this respect will be gratefully received.

[Page 3]

If all goes well we hope to have the book in press this coming week. Some little delay has been occasioned by authors not returning their corrected proofs as promptly as we had hoped and asked. You will be interested in looking over the enclosed "Publishers' Notice", which you will observe is much more detailed than former notices. You will also be deeply interested in the accompanying letter which came to hand a day or two ago. Still uniting our prayers with yours for God's richest blessing upon this entire movement and upon yourself and brother personally, I remain Very truly yours,

Thos. E. Stephens
Business Manager.