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1911-04-28, Letter from Thomas Stephens to Lyman Stewart

Thomas E. Stephens

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April 28, 1911

[Written in pencil] Ans 5/2

[Written on Testimony Publishing Company letterhead]

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

Dear Mr. Stewart:

You will doubtless hear from Dr. Dixon within a day or so, if you have not already heard from him, telling you of his resignation from the pastorate of the Moody Church, and of his going to London in June. He has not asked me, directly or indirectly, to write you relative to the matter, or in any way whatever indicated that he would be pleased to have me do so; but after much thought and prayer, I feel that this is what I ought to do—that you yourself would probably wish me to express myself on two or three points; and what I say on these points is only my own humble opinion—not worth much perhaps, but prayerfully and earnestly offered. 1. As to whether the Testimony movement has accomplished its original purpose. Mr. Stewart, it seems to me that there are some extremely important subjects that ought yet to be treated; especially those touching certain heresies of the age, which are playing such fearful and wide-spread havoc—“Millennial Dawnism”, “Christian Science”, etc., and perhaps “Evolution”, “New Thoughtism”, and like topics. Then, too, the following paragraph taken from a recent review published in the “Theological Quarterly” of St. Louis indicates a line of subjects which many feel should receive attention: “Among the most grateful surprises which this year’s book market has brought us we count this enterprise of two Christian laymen who devote their means to the defense of the fundamental truths of the Christian religion.*****If the wish could be entertained, we would like to see from the same, or from equally able pens, articles on Original Sin, Free Will, the Means of Grace, and the Origin of Faith.” And finally, ought not the Movement to be permitted under God to gradually resolve itself into a great world-wide evangelistic appeal? Ought not, as you yourself have indicated in a former letter, the doct-

[Page 2]

rine of grace to receive special attention? What a magnificent opportunity for a world-wide testimony of this kind—with the results, that, under God, would probably be sure to follow! 2. As to the advisability of the removal of our headquarters to London. I refer to this because the question may possibly suggest itself to you. Dr. Dixon asked me few days ago what I would think of it, and I told him that while I would be perfectly willing to acquiesce [*sic*] in any way with the wishes of yourself and the Committee, yet I rather doubted its wisdom (unless--I say this only to yourself—such change should become necessary in order to retain Dr. Dixon as editor-in-chief)-- for the following reasons: (1). It has been widely advertised and become well known that our headquarters are in Chicago. A change of address would I fear be very confusing. (2). I have had more or less experience with publishers during the past fifteen or twenty years, and in all this period have never met a more painstaking and conscientious firm than Messrs. Walton and Spencer. We would want to be very sure, would we not, before deciding on a change, whether their quality of service, and prices therefor, could be duplicated in London? (3). Our addressing agency is also doing its work well, and our Chicago mailing facilities would be paralleled elsewhere, it seems to me,

with great difficulty. (4). Our office force is well organized, and our expenses in this respect are very low. Could we do as well in London? My main assistant is an expert her knowledge of details, and whether I continue or not I believe that her services should by all means be retained. 3. As to the chief editorship. You have not asked my opinion on any of these points, but you will pardon me, will you not, if I express myself earnestly on this third point especially.

[Page 3]

I do believe that God guided you aright when you were led to choose Dr. Dixon for this task; and I cannot but hope that he will be continued. During his three months' absence, our work went on without serious interruption. Mr. T. S. Smith, one of the careful business men of the Committee, approved all orders on the treasury; and although we missed Dr. Dixon, yet he and we were able to keep in touch with each other, and our work moved forward practically the same as though he were here. Dr. Dixon is a man of deep and uncompromising convictions, but at the same time he is one with whom it is a genuine pleasure to work—far more so than might be true of some others. Do you not think that he could continue his work in London as editor-in-chief, and then have in this country if need be such a man say as Dr. Louis Meyer to act as his assistant editor in-chief, or his special representative; or, it may be that such an assistant would be unnecessary, the work being carried on just as it has been. In case any important change should be contemplated, I will be glad to assist in any way I can, or to step wholly aside if it is so desired. I am praying with great earnestness that God's will, not mine, be done in every respect. I have not forgotten your brother, and have continued to pray earnestly for his recovery if it be God's will. Yours in Christian fellowship,

Thos. E. Stephens.
Business Manager.

[*Handwritten in bottom margin of page 3 of the letter*]

Please don't fail to read the fine letters enclosed.