

St. Helena, Calif., May 20, 1931.

#9

Elders Heckman and Ashton,
Chattanooga and Nashville, Tenn.

Dear Brethren,-

I count it a privilege to write to you regarding the work of Medical Evangelism that is being carried forward with good results in many places. We hope to see this work wisely developed and broadened and deepened, until its influence is felt both at home and in missionary fields.

In one of sister White's manuscripts entitled "Medical Missionary Work," file number MS-32-1901, we read,-

"We shall see the Medical Missionary Work broadening and deepening at every point of its progress, because of the inflowing of hundreds and thousands of streams, until the whole earth is covered as the waters cover the sea."

How shall we understand this, and how shall it be brought about?

I have been a very interested observer of the working and the influence of some of the successful efforts put forth during the last few years to conduct medical evangelistic work, and to train both workers and leaders for this line of soul-winning labor.

Greatly have I rejoiced in the work that has been done during the last two or three years in the Potomac and neighboring conferences. The united labor of leading workers connected with the Washington Sanitarium and the officers of the Columbia Union Conference has commanded my admiration and confidence, and the work and administration being carried on at the present time by Dr. A. W. Trueman and his associates, in the churches in

and around Washington to a distance of more than fifty miles, appears to me as a blessed example of what may be done in other places.

The Medical Evangelistic Educational Campaign being led by Elder J. G. White in Melrose and other suburbs of Boston is wonderfully interesting and instructive, and is a marvelous revelation of the preparedness of the people for Medical Evangelistic instruction.

Turning to the Southern counties of California we see the nurses from the Paradise Valley Sanitarium united with employees of the South-eastern California Conference cooperating in evangelistic effort which brings splendid results. And we also see a soul-winning work carried forward in the cosmopolitan San Diego Dispensary.

Though the methods in each one of these efforts are somewhat different, the aims and results are similar, and all are encouraging.

It is my firm conviction that some plan should be devised by which this work in its many blessed phases should be so fully placed before our people that it may be better understood.

I believe that the work and influence of the Field Training School in Gospel Medical Evangelism operating in San Francisco should also be brought in a clear way to the attention of our people. It is a wonderful example of what a single conference can do to set in action a training institute for many lines of Medical Missionary work and Medical Evangelism.

I will now make a request. I ask that you join me in asking Dr. Truman, Elder J. G. White and Elder Burden to provide for our use and theirs, brief but comprehensive statements in printed form regarding successful methods of medical evangelism that they have employed and witnessed, accompanied by relation of experiences, that may be used to much wider enlistment and more serious employment in Medical Evangelistic methods of work.

I think that you are acquainted with my work, and know that as Secretary of the Board of Trustees of the White Estate, with whom Sister Ellen G. White left the custody of her writings, it has been my privilege and duty

to study very diligently the messages given through her to the remnant church. I refer to the messages found in her many published books and also to those that are found in the many hundreds of letters and manuscripts kept in her extensive manuscript file. These were kept in response to her direct instruction and were left by her for our benefit.

As I and my associates have studied these writings, we have been surprised, encouraged, and amazed at the evidences therein presented that our Heavenly Father has made wonderful provision for our enlightenment regarding success and victory in every phase of Christian Evangelism. We have been especially impressed by the clearness and forcefulness of the instruction regarding the importance and the urgency of the work of training a host of young people to be successful laborers in the spreading of the Gospel, by every agency employed by the Master.

As we have read scores upon scores of pages regarding acceptable evangelistic work, we have found an astonishing degree of emphasis given to Medical Missionary endeavor and Medical Evangelism. And we cannot evade the conviction that there is pointed out to us very clearly, a line of work that is rarely followed in a truly serious way by either minister or physician, or by Bible workers or nurses.

As you very well know, almost every minister can tell us of a few blessed experiences wherein he has been forced by unusual circumstances to minister to the sick, and he delights to relate the blessings which followed these experiences, mostly experiences of long ago.

Almost every experienced Adventist physician can tell us of many occasions where he has been led to open up to his patients the blessed hope through Christ. And he rejoices in the influence of this experience upon the patients and their friends, and also upon his own heart.

In fact, you can count on the fingers of your two hands all the ministers and all the physicians that you know to be laboring continuously on the plan of work pictured in our minds when we read of Christ's ministry, and when

we study His commission. And yet we know that there are very few who make these soul-winning experiences a matter of frequent occurrence. And why is this? In answer, we must confess that for centuries the enemy of all righteousness has planned successfully to separate the work of teaching the gospel from that of healing the sick. And the hope of seeing a united ministry is almost extinct.

In view of these conditions, we rejoice that our heavenly Father has sent to us messages in which we find such cheering words as follows:

"God's blessing will rest upon every effort made to awaken an interest in health reform; for it is needed everywhere. There must be a revival on this subject; for God purposes to accomplish much through this agency."

MS-6a-1890.

"Seventh-day Adventists are to be represented to the world by the advanced principles of health reform which God has given us." MS-186-1899.

"In the work of the gospel the Lord uses different instrumentalities, and nothing is to be allowed to separate these instrumentalities." B.F.

"Christ gave a perfect representation of true godliness by combining the work of a physician and a minister, ministering to the needs of both body and soul, healing physical disease, and then speaking words that brought peace to the troubled heart." C.H. 528.

In this connection please read the accompanying manuscript bearing title "Extracts Regarding Gospel Medical Evangelism." This grouping of extracts was made by the workers in the San Jose Mission.

Read also from "Cheering Words" the portions referred to in the accompanying list.

In the light of this instruction, it will appear to you as a very natural thing that I have taken a deep and abiding interest in the work of each group of laborers who are striving to find effective methods of Medical Evangelism, and especially, in the Field Training School in Gospel Medical Evangelism in San Francisco.

During the three years of the operation of this school, I have been a frequent visitor, and an enthusiastic supporter. I should have been equally active in cooperating with the other lines of effort in Medical Evangelism, had I enjoyed the same privilege of being near to them.

The Field Training School of Medical Evangelism is still in its formative experience. Its faculty has been strengthened year by year, until it now employs six competent teachers. The lines of instruction given, and the fields of activities of its students and teachers, are briefly stated in the three four-page leaflets that we are enclosing. Please read them.

I will now refer to one feature of the Field Training School which has given me much encouragement. That feature is its aim at permanency and the possibility of its continuance. You will appreciate my joy over the possibility of its continuance when you review with me the numerous times in which efforts have been inaugurated for the training of workers to engage in Medical Evangelism which has been of short duration. All of these efforts have been wisely developed and borne precious fruit for one or two years and then they have died. Here I will mention a few of the many instances of short-lived efficiency.

In Australia, Elders Starr, Maskell, and Baker, with their wives and a select corps of helpers, did a wonderful work in health reform instruction in connection with their evangelistic labors. The results of this work were far-reaching and still they bear fruit. But when they left the field there was no one left to carry the work forward in the same lines with similar strength.

In New York City and in Boston and its suburbs, Elders Maskell, Starr, and Dexter Kress with their faithful wives, and several efficient helpers did a work in Medical Evangelism that was far-reaching in its influence, but when they were called to other fields, there were no locally trained workers prepared to continue and maintain that line of effort.

Dr. Paulson, a man of great faith and tremendous energy, gathered a group of loyal helpers, and did a marvelous work in Chicago and Hinsdale,

but after his death the power of the work waned.

In connection with the establishment of the Loma Linda Sanitarium, excellent work in Medical Evangelism was carried forward by Loma Linda students ably led in field work by Dr. Lillis Wood Starr and others. It was a great success and an eye-opener on house to house work and cottage lectures.

Sister White felt so keenly the value of this work that she gave hundreds of dollars to help keep it going. And when three years of successful work had been accomplished, this evangelistic effort was permitted to die of starvation.

Repeatedly Sister White plead with the teachers in Fernando School to take their students during vacation into the city of Los Angeles and give them a training in soul-winning work. One year they did this. It was a great success, and having made one great success, they never tried again.

Of these and other similar efforts in Medical Evangelism, we observe for that none of them, was provision made for them to be continuous. No strong leaders were trained from among the many students and helpers. And why? The training was not sufficiently broad and continuous.

And now the question in my mind has been something like this.

Shall we go on to the end of the controversy, seeing the world's need, and studying Christ's method of ministry, and reading the clear, pointed instruction regarding the need and value of Medical Evangelism, and then, as many are doing, let it pass as a pleasant song?

Or shall we ask some experienced laborers to heed the appeals in the testimonies and once in three years in the large cities, make a demonstration of what can be done? And shall we hope that in its connection, they will give to a few co-laborers a brief, superficial training? And shall we hope that this training effort will suffice.

Or shall we encourage the maintenance in several strategic points of Institutes similar to those in progress in San Francisco, and in a few other places, and shall we pray that we may soon see efforts of the same sort in many places?

Do those who have taken the Medical Evangelistic Course in San Francisco, value the instruction? Read the Symposium Leaflets which we enclose.

Do those undertaking to work out the ideas of the School find Providence working with them? Read the letters from the workers in San Jose.

I hope that soon I may be able to place before you statements regarding plans and progress in other places.

Shall we become discouraged because of the difficulties to be met and the forty and nine criticisms offered regarding the work? No, indeed. Rather let us say, "In the Lord put I my trust: how say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain." Ps. 11:1.

Shall we decide the value of the tree by analyzing its leaves? or shall we say with the Master, "A tree is known by its fruits?"

What think ye?

Sincerely your brother,

W. C. White.

P.S.

Here are a few of the many criticisms that come to our attention:

The course is too long.

The course is too short.

The course is unbalanced.

An undue amount of instruction is given to diet.

More time should be given to house to house work.

Less time should be given to house to house work.

The teachers are enthusiasts.

The students are bent toward too much effort for the very poor.

The students are too anxious to work for the very rich.

The school is being supported by one conference and is governed by its executive committee.

The School aims to train workers to go forth and help promote Medical Evangelism in other fields.