

Dayton, Ohio, July 5, 1906.

Rev. J. Howe.

Dear Brother:-

I went to the ~~Q.~~ meeting at ~~F~~ Plainview Church, four miles north-west of Fortville, Ind., ^{The 80th} and though it was a slim affair, we had quarterly conference, a lovefeast meeting, and preaching twice on Sunday. Revs. Jackson, pastor, and Kinneman were present. The one faithful man to work is Jackson. The people generally regard Kinneman as an able preacher. He and wife recently visited Texas, and he purchased 160 acres of prairie land about 75 miles north-west of Ft. Worth, but it is not their expectation to go to it, but to receive a stipulated advancement in price within two years. He has 60 acres of land where he lives with three oil wells on it of moderate production. He promises to have some appointments on Blue River Circuit between this and conference. We have some few precious people at ~~Kinneman~~ Plainview, but they are deeply discouraged.

On my return home, Monday, I received a letter from D. F. Wilberforce, dated Freetown, June 5th. He states that he was unanimously acquitted by the jury; that three of the prosecuting witnesses were sent to gaol for perjury; that public opinion at Freetown and Bonthe were strongly in his favor, and that he thinks that the district commissioners, rather than the natives of Imperreh, are against him, and that it is best for him not to live in Imperreh, and that he thinks of making Bonthe his present home, where he ^{has hopes} ~~plans~~ of setting up an undenominational ^{preparatory} training school for missionaries. He says that he can not encourage the setting up of another U. B. Church at Bonthe, and that the pastor of the Liberal Church at Bonthe, being very sick, J. R. King (the Liberal superintendent) has arranged for him (Wilberforce) to take charge of the church there. You can see what all these things mean. Without loss to us (only indirectly) he goes back to the Liberals. I said "indirectly",

for I allude by it to its effect on his family. He expresses a purpose to write to some of our people about a fund for a building for his "Preparatory Training School", and also to write to some of the Liberals about the same. He evidently fails to appreciate the abhorrence of our people for polygamy and treachery; for he not only covertly entered on polygamous relations, but when called to account denied our having jurisdiction over him, but claimed that he was still a member of the Liberal mission Conference in Africa, which was false. So now we are delivered from the difficult question, what to do with him if he ever came asking us to forgive him, reinstate him, and then employ him as a missionary, as if he were to be trusted. He is not likely to get funds for his proposed building either from our people or from the Liberals. I wonder how the Liberal church in general will hail the return of an unrepentant polygamist to their fold! But is it worse than Freemasonry?

Wilberforce's cheek is prodigious. Evidently he has no proper conception of the crime of polygamy, and the abhorrence of it by the Christian people of America.

The situatio seems to me to be this. His action, and the removal of the ex-chief's factorship from Imperreh, leaves us free sailing there. But two things remain to confront us: One is the bad influence of his polygamous example in Imperreh. The other is its reproach there to our mission work, of which he was a superintendent. These may be overcome; but what is to be its effect on his family as workers for us--on Christopher and on Joseph and their wives? These are very difficult problems. I have felt for months the difficulty of our situation. It has engaged my deep solicitude. Many could solve it with a dash: "Have nothing to do with the boys"! But that was as intricate as any other question. We had already had too much to do with them to

dismiss the question so easily, and especially while the future of the family turned on so many contingencies. Aside from the father's retrograde, the promise was good enough, and we had invested hundreds of dollars in them by bringing them from Africa and educating them.

It seems to me that we can not act wisely in case of Joseph and his wife, by sending them to Africa without enrollment as members of our Church. I told Joseph before his pardon, that connection with the church would be necessary. It may seem to some unnecessary; but what if here-turns to Africa, becomes offended and then disclaims all connection with us? It seems to me too that we ought to have a pledge in writing to stand loyally by us. It might not effect him, but it would throw him in his true light before the Church and the world. I think you need to consult the resident members of the Committee on the questions growing out of the present turn in the state of Wilberforce affairs.

I have a letter this morning from Rev. W.H. Willoughby, Glencoe, Oklahoma, saying that Mt. Vernon Society, in his neighborhood, is still loyal, and that he has been preaching for them the past two years. They have a fair church-house and I held my last session of conference there, and they evinced warm sympathy with me then. He says their Sunday School is good, and one was added to the Church the past year. He says he thinks of going to Kansas this fall. His neighborhood has paid him for preaching \$4.00 for the two years, perhaps thinking he had not done more than a local preacher's work. Bishop Wood writes that Rev. A. L. Hope starts soon to Oklahoma as presiding elder. Hope is very capable for the work, and if properly enlisted in it can do well. He has both good speaking and executive ability, as doubtless you observed last fall. If two or three live men can be put into Oklahoma, to visit all the appointments once a month, perhaps much may be regained.

Your brother, Milton Wright.