

Dayton, Ohio,

Dec. 16, 1907.

Rev. J. Howe,

Huntington, Ind.

Dear Brother:

Yesterday, I received your letter of Dec. 13th, and this morning came your letter of Nov. 20 to my eye. The latter came the very day I had started to Fairmount, and was put away till my return, and then obscured till now, by oversight. So, like yours of the 20th of November, this will answer two letters.

Some items in your letter of the 20th ultimo will need no answer at this late date. As to a meeting of the Executive Committee, had I received your suggestion before going to Indiana, I should have delayed the trip till we could have had a meeting of the committee.

As to the colored H. J. Becker, I

think the sooner we are rid of all responsibility for him the better. It appears that his was not the act of a sudden impulse, but like D. F. Wilberforce, deliberate, systematic fornication. Such conduct after years of professed conversion, places the sinner in a position forbidding us to repose confidence in them again. I am glad some good American girl was not Dr. Flickinger's medicine to cure Becker's sin, by prevention. D. F. Wilberforce married a good American girl, but it did not prevent his sin. His fornication doubtless began long before he was chief, and F. suspected it. The colored Becker inherits it from his namesake! There are enough broken-hearted American girls. The Liberals will have use for Becker. Concubinage is no barrier in some places. We ought to get rid of any distinction between concubinage and fornication.

The South West District, from 1897 to 1901, had an episcopal admin-

tration of indifference; now it has one of pessimism. Both the ill-health and sensitiveness of the superintendent are charged up to the district. The conferences must have discipline, but mixed with optimism and encouragement, it is dry, harsh medicine. To encourage a patient by word or look that his end is near, is promotive of a speedy exit, and insures its certainty. What we need for our weak conferences is planning for better evangelism, not contracts for their burial clo~~thes~~ and driving nails into their coffins. I knew an old man who took the measure for his wife's coffin while she was on her sick bed!

If we are to vacate the finest territory of land and people that the world contains, we had better write the United Brethren church a failure, and advertize the corpse of our missionary society for sale to the dissecting room. Did I

not tell you in my last letter, that I am too old, and behind the times?

To talk about abandoning old fields that have cost us years of labor and thousands of money, to substitute some new fancy, reminds me, "that a rolling stone gathers no moss." How many new fields have I known, that excited extravagant hopes that proved to be hard stump-pulling tasks, and some abandoned ere long. Our ministers in large numbers are wholly consecrated (in testimony meetings), but are especially devoted to some coveted circuit, station or district. To go out to some weak conference of crying need, would strain their consecration. Several such I have known, and to-day they are dried up. Our borders are perishing for the help of really consecrated and qualified ministers. So many say in their hearts, "put me into the priests office, that I may eat a morsel of bread." It is professional!

Your brother,

Milton Wright.