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Dear Ken and Betty:

I apologize for the overlong delay in response to your letter of November 20, '90. While moving, I severely twisted my back. There was no improvement after four months, so a lumbar X-Ray was taken indicated a healing fracture. This has improved over three months to the point of where I could submit to prostate surgery and that was done on February 1. Yesterday I returned to normal functioning. I feel better than I have in several years and am enjoying getting back to work.

About all the help I can give you on any changes in the text of The URANTIA Book including punctuation, "typos", changes in digits, and textural changes are those of my own experience.

As I told you, prior to publication, Forum members, engaged in reading the first proof sheets made from the original metallic plates, were constantly seeking primarily for typographical errors including punctuation, errors of grammar, syntax, or any other errors which could occur in the process of the transference of a text from manuscript through the linotype procedure into metal printing plates. Apparently, the most potent source of error would lie at the point of the linotype operator. Dealing with a complicated text did not simplify matters, at least in my opinion. It is my belief that some of the "typos" were carried over into the first printing.

I had only one experience with a textual change being made between printings. I told you about this during your visit in Pensacola. This was due to the diligence of a high school science teacher who had a B.S. in science and had read in a scientific journal that a specific figure given in The Urantia Book expressing the relationship between the mass of the nucleus and the planetary electron in the hydrogen atom had changed by one digit. He was able to persuade the people at 533 to change it in the second printing. At that time I had moved to Wisconsin and the chap instituting the change had followed me as president of the Brotherhood. Quite by accident, the change was pointed out to me by a young woman student who was incensed at obvious tampering with what she firmly and correctly believed should be left alone by human hands. I raised quite a ruckus about the matter and it was returned to its original status in the very next printing. Since that move, with the exception of 1973-1975, I have not resided in Chicago and have not been informed of any other apparent discrepancies between printings until your letter of Nov.20. I am taking up this matter with the Foundation immediately.

You have asked the exactly correct question about the original type setting which appears to be involved in some of these events. The original printing plates for the U.B. were made by the old linotype-mold-casting technique. In the twelve year interval between the first and second printings new photographic techniques and higher speed presses had rendered the original plates obsolete and new plates had to be produced. As the original plates were

planned to yield one million impressions, this was quite a blow. It is quite possible, despite what was thought to be close supervision, that errors were introduced at this point. You know from your own writing experience how difficult a proof reading task is involved in a text of over one million words. It looks like we need to carefully proof read the present printing against the first printing. In my opinion, there can be only one edition of the U.B., the first.

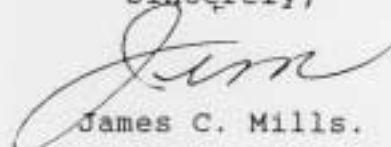
I am very glad to receive your comments and appreciate your confidence very much.

In regard to comments about the introduction and summary I find no fault with them.

I would suggest that you give some thought toward some emphasis on the fact that we all can see a new work only through the eyes of our own partial knowledge and experience; our world view or hypothesis, our weltanschauung. This immediately forces us to see a new work through dark glasses. We also place far too much significance on the works of others talking about the same thing, particularly in the areas of philosophy and religion about which A.N. Whitehead quipped: "The safest general characterization of the European philosophical tradition is that it consists of a series of footnotes to Plato." Jesus was more serious than we realize when he said: "you must become as little children." This is particularly true of our approach to the U.B. The fact that it continually reiterates, 'religion is a purely human experience of experiencing a relationship with God' should promptly eliminate our tendency to compare the U.B. with known theological thought except as the latter may provide some means to insight but never explanation. At a recent group meeting in Atlanta, one of the members brought out a bible to compare with the U.B. I interrupted to ask: "do you compare The URANTIA Book to the bible or the bible to The URANTIA Book or do you see each as an independent work discussing at times the same events?" I see science with a different viewpoint. My own early training in Chem. and Physics showed me that science is an ongoing process and to dogmatize it at any point is to fossilize at that point.

Now that I am beginning to return to the things that I wish to do, I will honestly try to be a better correspondent. Please give my best wishes to that gal from your area who wrote me. I have not answered her and can't remember her name. It will be a great pleasure to hear from both of you again. Eunice sends her best to you. She's out pushing cards this morning.

Sincerely,


James C. Mills.