

Transcription — Page 1

(Note: Text in margins is included afterward.)

Shakopee, Nov. 1, 1866

My Dear Brother,

It is my happiness to inform you that a daughter was born to me Oct. 31, at 10½ A.M. Maria and the baby are doing very well. The baby is very fat and vigorous, and promises well in every respect. Maria's labor was less protracted but more intense than ever before. We have great reason to be thankful for her safe deliverance and for the life of the precious (tear in paper makes word illegible)—

Bottom of page continues:

—I have not yet entered upon the formal discharge of my duties as professor, having been delayed by my domestic affairs. In a few weeks, or by the first week in December, I shall probably take the chair. My studies in preparation have been both interesting and profitable, and I hope the results may be so to my class.

Here is the **word-for-word transcription of page 2** of the letter from Edward P. Gray to his brother Samuel Gray:

Transcription — Page 2

I have purchased a house next to the parsonage and fitted it up for a parish school. The purchase money was \$750, and I have laid out a hundred more. I consider it a very favorable purchase. I hold it in my own name for the present, but the Bp. (Bishop?) intends to purchase it for the church, and I have agreed to give a deed for it when I have received what I have laid out on it. I have received about \$200. The school was opened the first Monday in Sept., and has 19 pupils. This is pretty well for a beginning, especially as several other schools were opened at the same time. 25 or 30 scholars would make it self-supporting. But deficiencies will be made up by funds coming through the Bishop's hands.

Your impression of the prosperity of Shakopee is not quite correct. It has been rapidly growing since the R.R. arrived, and I think is bound

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"day soon come when better men and a better spirit shall prevail among all parties or the"

Shall I proceed with **page 3**?

Transcription — Page 3

to grow. Its population now is not

less than 2000. The great drawback is the preponderating foreign element, which is mainly Romanish and opposed to improvements. But I hope the R.R. will gradually bring in a different population. Good schools will help in the same direction. But our district schools are generally miserable. Intelligent people do not want to settle where they can not have good schooling for their children. We experience here (as in many other places) the bitter fruits of a too extended suffrage. Foreigners and ignorant persons who can not appreciate education or public improvements of any kind, have the entire control of county affairs. Persons once in office keep themselves in office, because they can control the majority vote. All county affairs are corruptly managed by this means, and the people who

Left margin (vertical):

"Lord have mercy on our country! Your affect brother Edward P. Gray"

Transcription — Page 4

suffer most by it are quite helpless. Public affairs throughout the country have suffered immensely from the same cause. It is the very reason why the great cities are so corruptly governed, without hope of remedy. The Democrats encouraged this universal suffrage for political purposes, and now the Republican party—the party of "moral ideas"—propose to carry the degenerating process still further, by bringing in millions of incompetent votes which they can hope to control. They had the opportunity of adopting the principle of intelligent suffrage, as ad-

vocated by the Springfield Republican, but this was not a sufficiently “moral idea” for their purposes; and so an opportunity which may never occur again without danger of a revolution, was allowed to slip.

In reply to what I advanced from the N.T. teaching on the subject of slavery, you merely remark that “the system of bondage prevalent with the Jews 18 or 20 centuries ago, was a very different affair from Am. slavery of this last generation, and therefore your remarks are therefore inapplicable.” To this I answer. It was different in details of the law by which slavery was

Transcription — Page 5

was regulated, but was not essentially different in principle. The Mosaic Law recognized the right of property in a slave’s labor, and of control of his person, “forever”. See Ex. 20: 20–21. A distinction indeed was made between bondmen that were Israelites, and those that were not. The former were to be liberated at the year of Jubilee, but the latter might be held “as an inheritance for your children after you” — a “possession” — “your bondmen forever.” Lev. 25: 39–46. This is precisely the description of American slavery in its essential principle. The Mosaic laws regulated the institution in one way, American laws in another, but the thing itself, slavery, was one and the same.

But your remark supposes that my citation from St. Paul had reference to Jewish slavery. This is entirely a mistake. Jewish slavery could not exist, as such, beyond the limits of Palestine. But St. Paul in the passage I quoted was writing to the

Transcription — Page 6

Timothy, bishop of Ephesus and of course had reference to slavery as it existed there, and throughout the Roman Empire. That system of slavery was of course controlled by heathen laws. It was the selfsame under which persecuted Christians were sent to labor in the mines and the galleys subject to the

cruelties of heathen masters, with almost irresponsible power. It was this system that was prevalent throughout the civilized world in the time of Christ and His Apostles and which must have been had in view in their teachings. Neither St. Paul nor St. Timothy were brought up in Palestine, but in Asia Minor one at Tarsus, the other at Lystra, and both of course were conversant with heathen slavery, and to that their teaching had primary reference. But that system was no better, in many respects worse, than American slavery. ?? Christianity with these facts to deal with did not denounce slavery as a sin, but admit

Transcription — Page 7

ted master and slave to its sacred mysteries, counseling the one to gentleness, the other to obedience, “not only to the good and gentle, but also to the forward, “ to suffering wrong fully”. 1 Ret: 2:18-25. Compare Eph. 6:5-9. Col 3: 22-25. 4:1. Titus 2:9-10. 1Tim. 6:1-5. This is Christianity as taught by inspiration. How much likeness has it to Abolition Christianity, or to Republican “moral idea” Christianity!

But, “although the legal institution of slavery is abolished, its spirit yet lives among the rebellious majority of whites in the South.” “Its spirit” indeed! Who made men judges of other men’s thoughts? And if you judge rightly, what then? Did the “spirit” of slavery “live” in St. Paul and St. Peter, when they counseled the slaves of their day (not to rebel nor to run away, but) to submit themselves to their lot, and the masters only to be kind and gentle”? If it did, & it was no sin in them, is it a heinous

Transcription — Page 8

Crime in xxx white men! Or rather are they the slaves, and republicans their “masters”, that they must needs be so abjectly submissive in thought, as well as in deed! Must they be counted rebellious because perchance, they can not give up without reject an institution, the forcible & sudden change of which subjects them to so great damage & inconvenience; or because they can not submit without a xxxx to be deprived of every right at the unlawful dictation of a fanatical party? To call the majority of the southern whites “rebellious”, is simply a reckless partisan slander. They have not rebelled against the legitimate consequences of the war. Rebels they were when they resisted the lawful authority of their country; rebels they are not, when they have submitted to that authority, and the rebellion authoutatiously declared to be at an end. The indulgence in such recriminations can never bring harmony & tranquility, xxx unworthy of a Christian. In like unworthy xxx you to speak of “our drunken demagogue of an accidental President!” What mean you by “accidental”? Is he not the legitimate President? Did not Republican votes put him in office? Did he not succeed constitutionally to the deceased President? If so, what does all this xxx about “accidental” mean? Who is responsible for the President, but the party who put him in the way to the chair, who endorsed him as their man? If you don’t like him whom have you to thank? Why the same party that owns Parson Brownlove, B. Butler, Sumner, Phillips,

Margin writing – page 8 (only a few words are legible)

Character of xxxx decency Renounce “ the powers that be,” if their own creation, xxx xxxxx.

Margin writing – page 3

Lord have mercy on our country! Your Affect brother. Edward P. Gray

Margin writing – page 2

Day soon come when better men and a better spirit shall prevail among all parties, or the

Left margin (vertical) page 1:

"In the present context there is little choice in men it is only a choice of measures say the"

Top margin page 1:

"P.S. I get the 'Pac. Churchman' & read it with interest. Do you receive the 'Am. Church'?"

E.P. Gray"