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I come now to the second matter raised in your letter the trip to Africa. Although I would have preferred you to have gone to Zambia this year, but for the reasons given and the counsel of my fellow office-bearers I am willing to go. The most difficult and disliked part was the suggestion to go to Nigeria. To be perfectly frank I have no guts for that trip. The reports are so sickening that both my mind and my heart are closed to it. Notwithstanding, I honestly made my convictions known to the men at our joint board meeting on 26th January and placed myself under their authority to be willing to do whatever they suggested. They came very close to commanding me to go! and I must submit. If I don't I will undermine all I have been teaching them for a decade and a half. I am thankful to the Lord that he has appointed fellow office-bearers to knock objectivity into us when we are too pessimistic and subjective and to bring us back to biblical reality when we are too optimistic with blinkers on. These may be the words of a coward but not of an inflexible heavy shepherd! I will write to Conrad.

I would charge you to express my profound gratitude to the elders for their wise suggestion. We will be putting all to the Church as soon as we hear from Africa and from you.

Yours as ever,

Ash (T.L)

Ash