

must be exercised in the distribution among them of foreign money, lest they be pauperized in spirit and led to a dependence upon the home churches demoralizing to themselves, and incompatible with that spirit of self-reliance which we are earnestly endeavoring to inculcate.

The statement that "such gifts will not interfere with the regular contributions" has generally been found illusory. It is the experience of the Boards that in the outcome they do interfere, and that they weaken the giver's sense of responsibility for the maintenance of the general treasury by concentrating and narrowing his sympathies to a particular point.

More seriously, the principle denies to the Boards and to the Missions the benefit of natural increase in contributions. The amount which was being given to the regular fund and which "will be given anyway" may have been, and indeed, usually is, entirely inadequate to the just needs of the work and to the proportionate ability of the donor.

Our chief safeguard against inevitable and frequent losses by death, failure, and other causes, and at the same time our main hope for such an enlargement of missionary operations as will enable us to respond to the calls of Providence and the urgent necessity of millions still unevangelized, lies in the large and steady increase of gifts to the general treasury unembarrassed by conditions. This essential purpose is seriously endangered if the diminished gifts of the past are to be regarded as the basis for the future, and the extension of the work made possible only in isolated cases which have happened to attract the attention of particular donors.

It should, moreover, be remembered that however sincere and far-reaching the intentions of the donor may be, the Boards have the real responsibility for the maintenance of the work, and must, after his death, or in the event of his inability or disinclination to continue his gift, assume the financial burden of its support. It is, therefore, only just that the approval of the Board should be deemed a prerequisite to the inauguration of work, especially when that work involves the employment of native helpers or the acquisition of property. Cases have frequently occurred in which Boards have been thus compelled to assume responsibilities which they would not have approved, and which have caused considerable anxiety and financial loss.

It ought to be clearly understood that the disposition of givers to send money directly to the field, with the request that it be not counted as a

part of the regular appropriations, but be used for some independent work, is based on radically wrong views of the object for which the Boards exist, of the responsibility for the support of the missionaries which they have incurred on the authority and by the direction of the churches of the paramount importance of the regular work as compared with outside objects, of the economy of the Board's administration, of the risks which are inseparably incident to enterprises depending on the wisdom or life of individuals, of the relation of church members of the Boards which use their own authoritative agencies for the disbursement of missionary funds,

We are aware that the amount given by the friends of a particular missionary may be small, and that the temptation is strong for one to interest his friends in the plans for which the Board cannot furnish the needed funds. But each one of the thousands of missionaries has such friends, and a large part of the dependence of the Board is on the family and church circles represented by these missionaries, which in the aggregate form a most important part of our constituency. Manifestly, if each missionary encourages or allows his own circle in that measure to send its gifts in any measure directly to him, the source of our supply would be dried up.

If it be said that people will often give to their own missionary friend or relative when they would not give to the Board, we reply that, as a rule, the missionary himself can control that matter. If he is loyal to the Board, his friends will be. He represents their foreign missionary interest, and their attitude will be influenced by him. There will be no trouble if he says to them: "Send your gifts to the Board; The Board will provide for me and for my work, if those who love me and the work will send their money to its treasury."

It cannot be too strongly emphasized that the interests of the Boards and of the missionaries are identical, and that if they do not stand together, and bring united pressure to bear upon the church at home, the cause will suffer irreparable damage.

The missionaries themselves frankly recognize this. One of them recently wrote: "I firmly believe that a great deal of this special object difficulty might be avoided if every missionary would not only refuse to encourage it, but use every opportunity to work up enthusiasm for 'stock in the general fund.'" I have failed to find one individual that was not capable of conversion by five minutes personal conversation."