

hension, and that is the division of the Protestant mission work of Continental Europe into a number of separate and rival interests, each having an American headquarters in New York or Boston and a network of collecting agencies throughout the country.

One after another these societies—for they are such—are being formed, and their success will lead to the creation of many more. To say nothing of the discouragement and bewilderment of American pastors amid this multitude of rival appeals, and the serious detriment to those great missionary boards which are earnestly striving to get on *without* collecting agencies, will such a policy be wise and safe even for the churches which are aided?

A sharp and exciting competition in the American market; so much thought and interest turned away from the proper development of a self-reliant, moral purpose and an aggressive zeal in the churches themselves; the handing over of the missionary work of these churches to a central committee, to be carried on largely by foreign funds. Will not all this tend to apathy and to greater and even greater weakness? Even in heathen lands an undue spirit of dependence is fatal to the stamina of the Christian rank and file.

It is essential to the growth and efficiency of the Continental churches that they should as fully depend on the development of their own effort and their own liberality as if there were none in any quarter to help them.

Then let that effort be supplemented by systematic and generous aid from more favored lands. Let this be done without personal solicitation, and by proper concert of action. Our own mission boards will all gladly transmit contributions as directed and without expense. If any discrimination is made let those objects be specially favored which are most economical of ocean voyages and the expense of collecting. There is need of serious

attention to the present drift of these great interests, and of prompt measures to secure system, economy, increased confidence and more generous aid.

But perhaps quite as important as this is an earnest and prayerful sympathy for the Continental churches. The spirit of the age is against them. There is no longer the moral earnestness of Ambrose in Italy or of Cologny in France. Rationalism, on the one hand, and hierarchical superstition on the other, chills their ardor. Loose conventional sentiment in regard to the Sabbath and other religious observances lowers the tone of spiritual life. They know almost nothing of the revivals which have blessed our land. What they need most of all is a baptism of the Spirit. They should receive funds with which to push their evangelization into new districts; they need also the prayers of Christendom for a divine refreshing upon the churches themselves.

As to the relative merits of different causes, those undoubtedly have the first claim which lead to the establishment of permanent and self-sustaining and self-propagating institutions. We should never forget that *what Paul aimed at was churches*. He was not satisfied with exhorting ever-changing multitudes. His whole work and that of his associates was constructive. He ordained elders in every place. He made each community of converts organic from the start.

What work of street preaching or bazaar preaching or chapel preaching, that forms no church—that rather glories in the fact that it is undenominational and never mentions the word church—can compare for one moment with that of the Waldenses, whose solid organization has lived and toiled and testified and suffered and bled for ages, and which to-day, after so long and so glorious a history, is still one of the most vital forces of Southern Europe?