

REPORT.

Being a reply to the Communication received from the London Auxiliary, dated September 7th, 1877.

In the reply of the Committee of the Auxiliary to the memorandum of this Board, disappointment is expressed that the Directors do not set forth the grounds upon which they anticipate that the adoption of the Committee's proposals "would be but the first step leading to results in the highest degree prejudicial to the interests of the Bible cause." The Board freely admits that this cannot at present be proved by facts, but would remain to be shewn by the future history of the Society; and on this account, perhaps, a few of the Directors were, on first thought, inclined to advise the adoption of those proposals, that the experiment might be tried. But it was seen that any arguments that can be advanced in favour of the existence of an Auxiliary at London must equally favour the formation of similar Auxiliaries at several other cities in the Society's field; that such division must cause a large increase of expense; that there is no guarantee that it would produce any adequate improvement in efficiency; that it might possibly, and would probably, have an opposite effect; and that experience tends to shew that there could be little hope of such an experiment succeeding. The Board therefore came to a unanimous decision that it could not consent to the adoption of proposals which it believes would lead to the division of the Society into several small Auxiliaries, creating unnecessary machinery, and thereby expending money which would otherwise help to circulate the Scriptures. The Directors believe that this would alienate the confidence of the people, who are very properly desirous that their contributions should go as directly as possible to the object for which they are given.

The Directors also fear that the adoption of the changes proposed by the London Committee would lead to the practical severance of the Branches in the London field from this Society. To say the least, this, they feel, would be directly contrary to the second article of the constitution, which embodies one of the important principles upon which this Society was originally founded, and which requires the Directors to seek to unite and concentrate the operations of the different Societies of the Province. They believe that the adoption of the changes proposed by the London Committee would be a serious step in the opposite direction.

The Committee of the Auxiliary express the fear that disadvantages have flowed to the cause under their jurisdiction from sudden changes made by the Directors and specify the important change from the employment of permanent to that of provisional agency. The Board thinks that this change can scarcely be said to have been sudden. In fact it seems to the Directors that the provisional system, as adopted by this Society, has been gradually developed. The Committee complain that this change was "effected without any consultation of their views, or, as far as they know, of any of the Branches." This is a mistake; for in our Report for 1872, we say:—"The system of provisional agency, inaugurated in 1870-1, . . . has been continued. The success of the first year of trial led the Board to continue the same plan. . . . With an increase of contributions from Branches, there has been a