

December 31, 1906.

MEMORANDUM:

This letter of December 29th from Dr. Morehouse seems not to grasp the real purpose. Dr. Morehouse wants half the fund to go to Baptists and half to other denominations. The reasons urged for this are the following:

- (1) Other denominations are richer than Baptists.
- (2) Other denominations will not give to Baptists.
- (3) Mr. Rockefeller is a Baptist.
- (4) Each denomination would know how much to expect - the Baptists one-half, the others one-eighth each.
- (5) The central organization would have its work all done for it. It could simply distribute the income.
- (6) Everybody would say Mr. Rockefeller was generous if he gave the other denominations one-eighth and his own a half.

To this I reply:

If the object of the fund were to enrich the Baptist denomination, No. 1 would be a good reason, but such is not the object.

If the object of the fund was to exhibit the same narrowness toward other denominations that they exhibit toward us, No. 2 would be appropriate, but such is not our object.

If the object of the fund were to propagate those doctrines which are distinctively Baptist as distinguished from the great fundamental principles of Christianity upon which all agree, No. 3 would be appropriate.

If the purpose were to give to each denomination a fixed endowment that it might count on for all time, No. 4 would be appropriate, but in that case the principle of the fund might almost as well be distributed in the beginning as to have the central agency hold it.

If the purpose were to make the central organization nothing more than a trust company - a mere holding concern for the investment of money, No. 5 would be appropriate.

If the purpose of the gift was to secure a general consensus of satisfaction on the part of everybody, I frankly do not think there would be much complaint if the Baptists got half and all the rest of them together got half.

I must record here my surprise and disappointment that a man of the perspicacity of Dr. Morehouse and of his experience could so completely fail to apprehend the higher values. We are founding this fund for the purposes of efficiency, elasticity and adaptation. Our object is to secure through its use not the exploiting of any denomination or its tenets, but the largest possible fruitfulness in home mission work. So we are proposing to distribute the income each year to those agencies which shall seem to us to be most effective of different denominations, and we are giving to each in proportion as it promises to be effective, and we are stimulating each to the highest degree of effectiveness and we are making the income elastic to meet the varying needs and conditions as they shall arise from generation to generation.

Dr. Morehouse's plan would absolutely destroy the very center of the whole thing. It would mummify instantly the scheme.