

22 Circuit St.,

Roxbury, Mass., Dec 30, 1897.

Jan'y. 7, 1898.

Mr. W. A. Belden.

Dear Friend:-

You will have noticed in the January (1898) number of the Missionary Herald, 2nd page, the Memorial of the American Board to the Churches, from which it appears that, unless unusual efforts are put forth to secure, (over and above the usual receipts,) the sum of at least \$110,000, the Board will come out in debt that amount Aug. 31st, 1898.

You will also have noticed from the statement on page 1 of the same number of the Herald, that the Board was short \$61,000 on its current account at the end of the first quarter. You are also aware that, aside from this, there is a debt of \$22,000 still unpaid and unpledged at the end of the first quarter. This outlook seems to us alarming, because it would indicate that there is a possibility of a very large debt at the end of the fiscal year, which might necessitate large reductions in the work in the foreign field. We do not believe that the constituency of the Board has a realizing sense of the disaster, which is occasioned by a reduction in the foreign field. When we were telling to a Christian lady recently how a reduction would affect the work in Ceylon, she exclaimed, "Why, I had no idea that it would be so bad; if I had known this before I could have made a good many self denials last year and given more to the cause."

Would it not be possible for the Missionaries now in this country, by God's help, to enlighten the Congregational Churches on this question? We are arranging to print a booklet for wide distribution, which will contain letters from Missionaries of different fields, stating ^{the character of the work carried on, the blessings} how a reduction would effect the work in ^{such a field,} the field in which they have labored, showing how great are the needs and the opportunities for advance work, how earnest and devoted are some of the native workers, and beseeching the churches to come to the rescue, and flood up the General Funds of the Board so that they can carry on this great work unimpaired. If we could have something ^(from 100 to 200 words) from your pen within a week or ten days we would be very glad. Already we have received one or two excellent articles. It was on the receipt of these articles that we felt that, if each field of the Board could be represented by one or more writers, the appeal to the churches would be a very telling one. If the picture of each writer could appear in the booklet with his statement, it would catch the eye more quickly, and make it more probable that the statement would be read. For this purpose would you be willing to send us a photo of yourself along with your letter? We would return it to you uninjured as soon as a small cut had been made. Could you also tell us the names and addresses of any retired Missionaries of the Board?

Yours in the Master's service,

Any photos illustrating the people or places referred to would make the article of greater value.

Mary Margaret M. Lister