

FOREIGN MISSION BOARD FINDS SOUTH AFRICAN LAND GRANT
A PERPLEXING QUESTION

"There is one question about which I have been thinking considerably of late and that is this; what should be our relation to the various governments with which we will come in contact in our labor in foreign fields. We have contended very earnestly against anything looking toward a union of church and state, and even went so far at our last General Conference that we protested against exemption clauses and against exemption of church property from taxation.

"Now I do not suppose that there will ever come a time in this country when we could secure state favors if we desired, but may it not be possible that the Lord will test us right upon some of these principles in our work in other places, especially as we come in contact with some of these petty governments of Africa or the islands of the sea. They are just as much civil governments as the greater powers of earth. From them, in a great many cases, we will be offered a great many favors. What relation should we sustain on some of these points?

"You know the British South Africa Land Company has offered us 12,000 acres of land. The question naturally arises, will it be a compromise of principles to accept this. The matter has been talked over considerable outside of the regular meetings of the Board, and although the question has never come up for action, I think that the majority of the Board feel that it would be better to go through a form of purchase, at least, and thus obviate any difficulty which might arise in this respect."

(F. M. Wilcox to W. C. White, Dec. 4, 1894)