

THE PRESBYTERIAN.

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When the Commercial Bank suspended payment, thereby causing a very serious loss to the Temporalities' Fund of our Church, the Committee were placed in a difficult and delicate position. There were different classes of claimants on the Fund, the first of whom—the Commuting Ministers—had so strong a legal and equitable claim that it was felt to be impossible to resist it, even had the Committee felt it their duty to have contemplated doing so. It is almost unnecessary to state again the foundation on which this claim rests. Briefly, however, we may say that when the Clergy Reserves were secularized the ministers who then occupied charges in our Church might legally have appropriated to themselves the amount at which their income was valued and the capital sum of which would have been the property of each one of them, to be used for his own purposes. A different course was followed, and the large amount which would have been scattered was thrown into one fund. The annual allowance which each of the commuting ministers was entitled to receive was \$600, but in order to extend the benefit of the partial endowment to as many as possible, \$150 of this was allowed to remain to be distributed to the newly inducted ministers at the rate of \$200 a year to each. Of the legal claims of the non-commuting ministers and of those who have been inducted since the settlement of the Clergy Reserves it is not our intention to speak. The question of greatest importance, now to be settled, and which it is the duty of the church members to consider well and thoughtfully, is what plan is to be adopted to make up for the loss occasioned by the reduction in value of the Commercial Bank shares, and to increase the available funds required to meet the wants caused by the natural increase of charges. As we

have declined to consider the legal aspect of the case as respects claims upon the Temporalities' Fund, so we refrain from touching upon the various proposals that have been made to modify the manner in which the Fund is at present distributed. These may both be discussed in their proper time. What we would now ask is that our congregations should make a united, systematic and sustained effort to meet year by year, and as part of their regular contributions, the amount necessary to meet the growing necessities of the case. The time for special, spasmodic and fitful effort has passed away. We are now able to ascertain clearly and measure exactly the annual amount that must be raised. Were all to contribute in proportion to their means the sum from each congregation would not be excessive nor beyond the ability of even the poorest. For it must be borne in mind that according to the means of each is the sum expected. If a congregation is poor, few in numbers, and those few not blessed with this world's wealth, it need not be ashamed to send what it can, nor need its members blush to find their small offering acknowledged beside that of the wealthy, who may give as many dollars as the others give cents, and that without giving up a single luxury. Can we say that this has always been the rule? It would not be difficult in going over the list of those whose names appear as contributors to show that many small, struggling congregations have given not relatively but positively much larger sums not only to this object, but also to the other schemes of the Church. And here we must repeat what we have often insisted upon before, that the cause of this is not to be traced to unwillingness on the part of people, so much as to carelessness, and too often indifference on the part of the ministers. Let any just claim be put fairly before our people, let its ends and objects be properly explained and the reasons why it should be attended to plainly set forth,