

and, if deemed advisable, reduced to a missionary station.

NOTE.—The objects and advantages proposed and believed to be secured by the above arrangements, are the following:

1st. By fixing on a hundred pounds as the minimum entitling a congregation to come on the sustentation fund, our people will be reminded that a less sum than this is not considered adequate for the respectable support of a minister in Canada. And it is considered of importance that this should be kept distinctly before them, and that they should not be allowed to suppose that, except in cases of clearly ascertained inability, less ought to be offered.

2nd. By empowering the distribution committee to place on the fund, by an act of grace, existing congregations contributing less than the minimum, by allowing the Synod to do the same for new congregations contributing less, by a similar act, a preventive of deception and slothfulness on the part of the able congregations will be secured. A motive to raise at least the minimum will be presented, and yet ample provision will be made for supporting and encouraging weak congregations.

3rd. By the arrangements for checking defalcations in the contributions of congregations, a stimulus to exertion will be given, and a remedy for a possible evil, which might destroy the advantages of the fund provided.

N. B. In case of mistake it may be here stated that the declaration proposed to be required from congregations before being put upon the fund, is not intended to have the effect of imposing a stringent obligation, but it is merely recommended as being considered the best means of ascertaining what congregations are able and willing to contribute.

Second.—PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION.

The objects which it seems desirable to accomplish in the distribution of the sustentation fund, are the following:

1st. To raise the stipends of the ministers of poorer congregations, by drawing to some extent upon the funds raised by the wealthier congregations.

2nd. To apportion the salary of ministers in some proportion to the importance of their congregations, and the probable expenses of the style of living required of them.

3rd. To prevent anything like invidious inequality in the salaries of ministers.

4th. To present as powerful a stimulus as possible to congregations to contribute liberally to the fund.

All these objects, it is believed, will be attained by adopting the following scheme:

Let the minimum number representing each congregation be 10, and let 1 be added to that number for every £20 over £100 contributed by that congregation: then

Add together the numbers representing each congregation.

Divide the whole sustentation fund by the sum so found.

Multiply the quotient by the number representing each congregation. The product in each case will be the dividend due to the minister of said congregation.

The numbers fixed upon in this scheme have been selected after considerable thought, but it will be plain to those who examine it, that the rule given may be employed to alter the relative amount of the dividend due to each congregation, by simply altering the numbers selected. *i. e.* by either making the minimum number more or less than 10.

It will also be seen that the numbers added to congregations contributing a higher sum than the minimum, might be added for a smaller sum than £20, so as to increase the number of classes formed by the rule, (and that without altering the relative amount of the greater and less dividends) by increasing the minimum number representing each congregation, and diminishing in proportion the

sum entitling to an additional number 20, and adding 1 for £10 above £100.

1st. It will be seen that the salaries of ministers of poorer congregations would be raised at the expense of the funds contributed by the wealthier: and that the deduction made for this end from the funds raised by the wealthier congregations, would increase in the ratio of the amount contributed by them, (so as to throw the burden on the back in proportion as it was able to bear it.)

2nd. It will also be seen that the salary of each minister would be, to some extent proportioned to the importance of his congregation and the probable expenses; at least, if, as it is believed, the amount raised by each congregation may be taken as the surest and least exceptionable index of these circumstances.

3rd. It will at the same time be seen, that great inequality in the salaries of ministers would be prevented; and it is plain that, if deemed desirable, this inequality might be lessened to any amount, by increasing the minimum number representing each congregation.

4th. And lastly it will be remarked, that provision is made by the scheme for giving a stimulus to congregations to contribute liberally to the fund, inasmuch as it appeals in the first place to their interest in the whole Church, from the circumstance of every minister and congregation being benefited by every additional penny contributed to the fund, and inasmuch as it exists, at the same time, their interest in their own locality, and their feelings of attachment to their minister, and desire for his personal comfort, by providing not only that every additional penny contributed to the fund shall increase the quotient (above referred to), which determines the amount of his dividend, but that every additional £20 above the minimum which they are able to raise, (or a smaller sum if that be deemed preferable), by adding an additional number to the minimum representing the congregation, shall entitle him to a sum equal to said quotient.

Third.—DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE.

With respect to the composition and regulations of the distribution committee, the following recommendations are submitted:—

1st. It is recommended that the distribution committee should be composed entirely of laymen, to be appointed annually by the Synod.

2nd. That these should be empowered and instructed to consult, as they see cause, with the moderator of the Synod, and the moderators of Presbyteries.

3rd. That a report of their proceedings should be presented to the Synod at its annual meeting.

4th. That it should be part of their assigned duty to provide for the visitation of congregations, with a view to the promotion of the interests of the fund.

5th. And lastly, That they should be instructed to co-operate with the sustentation board in giving as much publicity as possible to the manner in which congregations are fulfilling their duty to the fund.

As the foregoing general statement may not at first sight be intelligible. The following abridgment of the table that accompanied the original draft of the scheme may aid in throwing light upon it. Suppose, for example, that the contributions to the fund from 30 congregations amount to £476, that the proportionate numbers representing these 30 congregations, amount in all to 373. Divide the whole sustentation fund, £476, by 373, and the quotient is 12.

A congregation contributing £96, or even a less sum, may, as we have seen, be admitted upon the fund, by the Synod, on the recommendation of the Presbytery of the bounds, although falling short of the minimum. Such congregation then would be represented by the proportionate number 10; 12

is the quotient found on dividing the sum of the representative numbers. 10, multiplied by 12, gives £120 as the minister's stipend of that congregation.

Take a congregation contributing £125, and thus having 11 shares in the common fund; multiply 11 by the common multiplier, 12, and we have £132.

Again, suppose a congregation contribute £220, thus having 16 shares, such congregation would draw as their minister's stipend, £182.

Hitherto the common multiplier has not exceeded 11; but if the scheme were generally taken up, and well sustained, there is reason to believe that it would not fall below 12.

At a meeting of the Commission held in January, 1845, it was reported that several Congregations had declined the adoption of the scheme, as set forth in the *Record*, and that others had agreed to adopt it with modifications in its details. After deliberation, a series of resolutions was passed, in which were stated the unanimity with which the scheme of a common fund had been agreed to—the labour bestowed upon it; that in consequence of its novelty and the variety of its details, which had been little explained, it was not to be wondered at that diversity of sentiment prevailed in regard to the common fund, and expressly declaring that it was not intended that the adoption of all its details (or the circumstances referred to) should be a *sine qua non* to the adoption of the scheme itself—recommending to Congregations to consider the importance of united action in the matter, by the whole Church. That, according to the original constitution of the Sustentation Board, a Deacon or other representative of the Court of Management, in every several Congregation, shall have a seat in that Board—and recommending to Presbyteries to visit Congregations in reference to this matter, and report to a meeting of Commission to be held in Toronto in February.

At this meeting there was little to report, the visitations not having been completed; but the Commission instructed Presbyteries to give all due attention to the views and representations of intelligent members of the Church, on the subject of the scheme, and report to the Synod at its next meeting, and note any emendation of which they might think the scheme susceptible.

At the meeting of Synod in Cobourg in 1845, reports and series of resolutions on the subject were read and referred to a Committee, on behalf of which Committee Mr. Gale reported the following draft, which being read, was unanimously adopted, as expressing the judgment of Synod in this matter:—

1st. That the principle of a common fund be approved, and recommended to the support of all the congregations connected with the Synod, as being, in the deliberate judgment of the Synod, well fitted to promote the efficiency and extension of the church, but inasmuch as particular engagements, or other circumstances, may render it inexpedient for some congregations to place themselves on the fund for the present, it is left to the discretion of congregations to act in this matter as they may deem expedient.

2nd. That all details as to the mode of raising their contributions to the Sustentation Fund, whether by Deacons' Courts, seat rents, subscription