

Communications.

OUR HOME MISSION WORK.—No. 2.

(To the Editor of the *Canada Presbyterian Record*.)

Sir,—It is very desirable, when speaking of any plan or proposal, fully to understand what is meant, for, otherwise, of course we may be thinking of one thing, and others of something very different. I rather fear that, with regard to the CENTRAL FUND, there has been a good deal of this misapprehension. I may be wrong; but it is my impression that some of the brethren think that in establishing such a fund, there would be something like interference with the liberty of congregations, and that all connected with the denomination would be *obliged*, or at any rate enjoined, to forward *all* their missionary contributions to the Synod's Treasurer, and Presbyteries be instructed to deal with defaulters "according to law."

If any have such an impression, I cannot wonder at their determined opposition to such a Fund. If, however, they would only consider the matter a little they would see that such is not and cannot be the idea of those who are earnestly solicitous for the establishment of such a central synodical scheme. I greatly mistake, if there is a single member of Synod, who would wish to use the slightest coercion in the case, or trench in the smallest degree on the full liberty of individuals and congregations. All that is proposed, as far as I understand the matter, is, that congregations be invited and encouraged to send in what contributions they may think proper, to the Synod's Treasurer, in order to form a Synodical Home Mission Fund, entirely analogous to the Foreign one, or that for the French Canadian Society; that the Fund thus formed be administered by a Committee appointed by Synod, not independently of Presbyteries, but through means of them. and that, far from its being intended, or calculated to interfere with Presbyterian action, or the full development of local activities, it is expected, as it is most earnestly desired, to second and sustain the one, and bring out more completely and satisfactorily, the full vigour of the other.

In the absence of any such *fund*, many would find great difficulty in discovering a way, by which they might help in evangelizing the country; or, at any rate, help them who stood most in need of other assistance. Some congregations, no doubt, might, from the suggestion either of the ministers or of some of the members who knew the facts of the case, take one or more struggling causes under their special care, and foster them, as far as pecuniary help at any rate, was concerned, for a few years. This has often been done, and in general not much to the satisfaction of either party. Better *that*, than nothing; but better, in most cases, something else, if possible. At the very best, it is an irregular, incomprehensive way of going to work, and if universally acted upon, might allow just those particular causes, which required sympathy and assistance most, to languish and disappear. There may, of course, be congregations that know so well the circumstances of others, that they feel constrained to assist them. Well, be it so—they can do so with perfect propriety, and assist a general Fund at the same time. Or, the proceedings of a particular Presbytery may, to some neighbouring congregations, appear so interesting and important, that they feel constrained to help them *directly*; well, in such a case, also, no one would have any reason to object, except that they were acting so far, in ignorance of the whole field. But, while there may be such isolated cases, there will be an ever increasing number, where any desire is to do the greatest amount of good with their contributions, and who having no particular regard for one place more than another, wish simply, that their abundance should most efficiently supply some other lack. For *such* a central Fund, is just the very thing; and the Committee of Synod are simply their administra-