

culties, which we doubt not will be speedily removed, we feel the strongest confidence as to the ultimate success of the Scheme.

2. We feel it our duty, however, to remind you, that the successful working of the Scheme depends, in a great measure, on the cordiality and energy with which it is entered into and sustained by our congregations generally—the congregational office-bearers giving regular and unremitting attention to their duties—and each member and adherent contributing freely of his substance, at the stated periods, to this great object, as the Lord hath prospered him.

3. We would especially urge on the Deacons, or other office-bearers in each congregation, the importance of making immediate and effectual arrangements for collecting, at stated periods, (weekly, monthly, or quarterly, as may be most convenient in each locality,) the contributions of the people to the Sustentation Fund—assigning a small number of individuals or families to be visited by each office-bearer, with the aid of a sufficient number of collectors.

4. Where seat-rents are continued, if, as is likely to be the case, the amount raised for the Sustentation Fund in that way, fall below what the numbers and ability of the congregation could afford, the Deacons or other office-bearers ought immediately to give the people an opportunity of supplementing it by termly contributions, collected in the manner described in no. 3.

5. As the Sustentation Scheme is based on the great Christian principle that every one contribute to the support of the Gospel, according to his means,—and as its success is manifestly dependent on the faithful carrying out of this principle, the Board expect that office-bearers will guard against any tendency to limit their exertions in behalf of the fund to the making up of the precise sums they have declared for—but will perseveringly endeavour to bring their congregations and every member thereof up to the standard of duty in the matter.

6. It is earnestly requested that those congregations which have not yet reported to the Board, will do so without delay, if possible, before the expiry of the first quarter on the 31st March, it being obviously very important that the Scheme be put in operation throughout the Church previously to the next Meeting of Synod, so that its advantages may then be known, and its difficulties ascertained and provided for. In the case of congregations in arrears to their Ministers, who have thereby been hindered from taking the necessary steps to place themselves on the Sustentation Fund—we deem it our duty, after much deliberation, strongly to recommend that a separate arrangement be entered into for the gradual extinction of such claims, so that the immediate resources of these congregations may be set free, and become available to the Sustentation Fund. By this means both parties may be relieved from dragging a lengthening chain, and a regular and satisfactory system will be at once introduced.

7. The Board is prepared to accommodate itself to the circumstances of congregations which have made special pecuniary engagements with Ministers, and have not been relieved from them; and they trust that if any of the wealthier congregations are prevented, for the present, by such circumstances, from placing themselves formally on the Fund, they will yet contribute to it in proportion to their means, and thereby bear a due part in sustaining the ministrations of the Gospel in the weaker congregations of our Church. An early intimation of their purpose to this effect, is desirable.

ISAAC HUCHANAN,  
President of the Board.

JAMES WALKER,  
Secretary.

The objects which require to be provided for, in making arrangements for the distribution of the sustentation fund are the following:

1st. The placing of congregations upon the fund, as entitled to share in its distribution.

2nd. The distribution of the fund among those entitled to share in it, in such a way as most effectually to promote the ends for which it has been resolved upon. And

3rd. The formation and effective management of a distribution committee; under these heads

the following proposals and recommendations are accordingly submitted:

**First.**—Arrangements as to the placing of Congregations upon the Sustentation Fund.

I. It is proposed that existing congregations shall be divided into two classes,—those contributing a minimum entitling them to come on the sustentation fund, and those contributing less; and that the minimum required shall be a hundred pounds cy. per annum.

II. That the distribution committee shall be empowered to place on the fund by an act of grace existing congregations contributing less than the minimum; but that for the future, no congregation contributing less than the minimum, shall be put upon the fund, except by an act of grace on the part of the Synod or Commission, founded upon the report and recommendation of Presbyteries.

III. That the mode of ascertaining the title of a congregation to come upon the fund, as contributing the minimum, shall be by requiring from existing, and also from new congregations, including under that term members and adherents, a written declaration of their intention to contribute to the fund not less than the minimum.

IV. That in the event of congregations, coming by right upon the fund, failing to contribute the minimum, or of congregations admitted by grace failing to contribute the amount which they have promised or which they have been accustomed to contribute, the distribution committee shall, if they find it impossible to remedy the evil, report the case of any such congregations to the Presbytery of the bounds, which shall examine into all the circumstances and report to the Synod, by which it may be struck off the fund, 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 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 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 congregations 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: as, for instance, by making the minimum number 20, and adding 1 for every £10 above £100.

The accompanying calculation of the application of the scheme, (marked A. B. C.) in which a conjectural amount of contribution has been assigned to each existing congregation within the Synod, will show the relative amount of the dividends which, according to the scheme, would become due to congregations; and by going over these calculations, and working the rule above given, in adaptation to any other amount which it may be considered more likely that congregations will contribute, it is believed that the objects stated above as desirable to be attained in the distribution of the sustentation fund, will be found to be realized.

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 enlists, 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.

N. B. It is feared that this general statement of the scheme will give it an aspect of complication, but it is believed that if the calculations be only gone over, as presented in the accompanying document, (marked A. B. C.) it will be found to be as simple and easy of application as it is hoped to be in other respects satisfactory.