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CONGREGATIONAL ARREARS.

In our last number we spoke of the late meeting of Synod as being in many respects to be regarded as a "business Synod." One thing which justifies this term is the decided action taken on the subject of arrears of stipend. When the report on the statistics and finances of the Church was presented, it appeared that, although there was some degree of improvement, there were many congregations largely in arrears to their ministers, these ministers being in many instances, those whose stipends were the smallest, even if they had been regularly and fully paid. In former years the matter had been noticed, talked about, and deplored, but nothing was done. This year, however, a step in advance was taken. On the motion of the Rev. T. Stevenson, of Owen Sound, a committee was appointed to consider the matter and report at an early sederunt. The committee accordingly met, consulted, and presented a report which we consider of such importance that we subjoin it:—

"The committee appointed to take into immediate consideration the question, how to liquidate the large arrears due to ministers of this Church, and devise means for the better support of the ministry, having met and seriously deliberated on the matter committed to them beg to report the following recommendations:

"1. That the Rev. W. S. Ball be relieved for some weeks of his pastoral duties, for the purpose of raising a special fund to aid and stimulate congregations in arrears, to pay such arrears in full and at once.

"2. That this special fund be placed under the administration of a committee, consisting of the ministers of Toronto with their Synod Elders and the Rev. Mr. Ball, the Hon. J. McMurrich to be convener.

"3. That Presbyteries be enjoined to do their utmost to stir up the defaulting congregations to pay off the arrears of salary due, without application to this special committee; and that said committee shall entertain no application for aid from any congregation without the recommendation of its Presbytery, and without ascertaining that the Presbytery has previously used such diligence; after which the committee shall take such measures as they think necessary, either by proposals of aid through the Presbytery, or by deputations appointed to visit congregations in co-operation with the Presbytery.

"4. That whatever aid be given to any congregation to liquidate its arrears, shall be given only on the committee being furnished with satisfactory evidence that the congregation has promptly and fully complied with all the conditions laid down by the committee, amongst which conditions should be the previous payment of all it has promised in order to enjoy the help of the committee.

"5. That all existing arrears having, as is hoped will be the case, been wholly wiped away by the action of this committee, Presbyteries be enjoined to use diligence to prevent the accumulation of arrears for the future, that they make themselves acquainted with the financial state of the Congregations under their charge, by calling for exact returns from them, within the year, at such intervals as they think best, that when congregations are falling behind in the