

sort of Benefit Fund, similar to that of the Widows' and Orphans' Fund, by which ministers should pay a certain annual rate, and be entitled, in the event of their being obliged to retire from the work of the ministry, either from age or infirmity, to such annuity as the rules of the fund might determine. For reasons which the Committee do not deem it necessary to state at length, they cannot recommend this as suitable to the circumstances of our church, either present or prospective.

A second plan would be the establishment of an invested fund, the interest of which would afford a suitable annuity to the class for whom it is intended. Such a fund, if it could be obtained large enough, would possess obvious advantages. But the Committee do not deem it advisable to attempt such a measure under present circumstances. In any case it would involve a large amount of effort to accumulate a fund that would afford anything like an adequate allowance, even for those who would now be entitled to be placed in the fund, and in the future much larger amounts would be required. Some members of our church entertain strong objections against the church establishing such a fund, and in the present state of commercial depression, and with the multitude of other objects pressing upon the attention of the church, the committee do not deem it advisable to make the attempt.

The third plan would be, annual collections in our congregations. Connected with this are obvious difficulties. Prominent among them is the fact that we have so many schemes already. A large number of our congregations do not contribute at all, or contribute very irregularly to the ordinary schemes of the church. It is said that even one-half of our congregations do not contribute to some of the most important of the church's enterprises, involving as they do, the great work which she is doing for God's glory and the promotion of His cause. Under these circumstances, can it be expected that a measure of this kind should receive the regular and combined support of the various congregations of the church?

The Committee did not therefore feel free to recommend either of these plans, pure and simple. But looking at the whole state of the case, the Committee recommend that immediate efforts be made for the establishment of such a fund by the following means: first, by a subscription from the ministers of the body, as God has prospered them; secondly, by donations from the wealthier members of the church; and thirdly, by a general collection to be appointed by Synod, to be taken in all our congregations. In this way it is hoped that sufficient might be raised during the

present year to provide for all cases requiring attention for some time. For the continued support of the fund, the Committee would rely on such legacies and donations as might be received, and general collections throughout the church at such intervals as the exigencies of the fund might require, and the Synod might deem advisable. The Committee feel that considering the nature of the object the Synod may go forward, trusting the word of our Divine Master, "Have faith in God." He has the hearts of all men in His hands,—to him belong the silver and the gold; and doing our duty, depending on Him, we believe that He would not "leave his aged servants, in the time of old age nor forsake them when their strength faileth." We believe that the scheme would commend itself to the liberality of the members of our church, particularly of those who, through the kind Providence of God, are placed in comfortable circumstances, and that the scheme once established, legacies and donations would flow in, and should the fund at any time be reduced to a condition requiring a new effort, a collection ordered by Synod throughout the church would readily replenish it. If a liberal effort be made at this time such a collection would not again be required for an interval of years.

The principal objection to this measure the view of the Committee, is the danger of its interfering with other efforts in which the Synod is engaged, and the importance of which the Committee fully recognize. The Committee regard it as sufficient to say in reply, that God in his Providence is now calling us to the work. Cases are now before the church, imperatively calling for our efforts, and it would therefore be unfaithfulness to him to sit still. The Committee would regret, should this measure in the slightest degree interfere with any of the other schemes of the church, but they would hope that by the exercise of prudence on the part of those to whom the Synod may entrust the business, all danger of this may be avoided, and our people may be found to respond in the spirit of the Divine injunction, "Give a portion to seven and also to eight, for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth."

In accordance with these views, the Committee beg leave to present the following resolutions:

1. That a fund be immediately established for the support of aged and infirm ministers, to be under the direction of a committee appointed by Synod.

2. That for the establishment of the fund a subscription be made among the ministers of the Synod, that the Committee be authorized to solicit donations from the wealthier members of our church, and that a general collection be made throughout