

centage as will equalize the expenditure and income for the year.

It was moved, in amendment, by Mr. J. M. King, seconded by Mr. D. M. Gordon:

"In view of the fact that, according to present appearances, the expenditure of the Home Mission Committee will be found to have exceeded the income by about \$7,000, it is agreed, with great reluctance, to deduct twenty-five per cent. from the amounts due to Presbyteries, including the Manitoba and other mission fields, at this date, for the labour of the past six months, making a sum of about \$3,500, and to appeal to the ministers of the Church for a similar amount."

A vote being taken, the amendment was carried, the vote being ten for the motion and eleven for the amendment.

At a later stage of the proceedings the members of the Committee subscribed about \$500, and agreed to carry out the latter part of the resolution by making application to the ministers in their respective Presbyteries, and the following were appointed a sub-committee to take charge of the matter: Dr. Cochrane, Messrs. Macdonnell and King—Mr. King to be Treasurer.

It is well known what the results of the appeal were. As one of your correspondents says: "The appeal made to the ministers did not commend itself to many. It appeared to many unjust to ask the ministers to undertake a debt for which the Church as a whole, and not they, were responsible." The appeal, however, netted some \$2,000, but the General Assembly revoked the proposal of the Committee as to the reduction of grants in Manitoba, and ordered that the salaries of missionaries in that province should be paid in full, which has accordingly been done.

As to the best mode of meeting the deficit reported in June last, the Assembly clearly indicated its mind in the matter, by the preparation of an appeal by the Moderator, in which Presbyteries were called upon to deal directly with the deficit. The deliverance of Assembly embraced these points:

I. That the Home Mission Fund for the Western Section, should have \$46,000 for the present year, to pay current grants, and wipe out its indebtedness.

II. That instead of making a special appeal for the removal of the present deficit, there be but one appeal for the deficits and the current year's expenditure combined, and that congregations be instructed to forward contributions to the respective Treasurers as early as possible, as there is due on the first of October (including the present debt) about thirty-two thousand dollars (\$32,000), so as to warrant the Committee's paying in full all grants, and to render unnecessary the reduction of twenty-five per cent. as contemplated by the Committee of the Western Section.

III. That a Committee be appointed, to prepare a short appeal, to be signed by the Moderator, to the members and adherents of the Church, setting forth the condition and requirements of the Fund, and enjoin every minister to read this appeal from the pulpit on some Lord's day on or before the last Sabbath of September next, and to afford opportunity to every individual to contribute by subscription or in any other way that the Session or the Deacons' Court may have previously resolved upon. The Assembly further enjoin Presbyteries to take order at their first meeting thereafter that this injunction has been complied with, and report to next Assembly. The Assembly further require that a copy of the appeal be addressed to each Presbytery, together with a statement of the amount which may reasonably be expected as the fair proportion of the Presbytery's share of the total sum required.

IV. The Assembly instruct the Committees, in their future administration of the Fund, to equalize the expenditure and income of each year.

V. The Assembly instruct the Committees to entertain no new applications for grants until the state of the Fund shall warrant them in so doing.

In view of such action taken by the General Assembly, I submit that the Committee are not deserving of the censure inflicted upon them by your correspondents. The different methods they have from time to time adopted to secure funds, and the continuation of grants in the face of an increasing deficit, show clearly that "their policy has not been one of despair." The "scriptural policy of faith" in the members of the Church, to meet the growing demands of the Home Mission field, "accompanied with works" on the part of the Committee, has led them to promise aid, when, looked at from a business standpoint, retrenchment was absolutely necessary. It is doubtless "a simple matter to pay out funds when they are put into your hands; any committee can do that;" but it is not a simple matter when the treasury is bankrupt and the fund indebted over \$20,000 to the banks.

I fondly hope that the Committee will soon be in a position to report a large reduction of the indebtedness—such a reduction at all events as will warrant payments for missionary labour during the current half-year; and that the Assembly's injunction to "equalize the expenditure and income of each year," will render deficits and special appeals in the future unnecessary.

I trust that I have said nothing in this communication to wound the feelings of any brother; were it not that silence on the the part of the Committee

might seem uncourteous to your correspondents, it would not have been sent. WM. COCHRANE,

Convener H. M. Committee.

MR. LAING AND A SUSTENTATION FUND.

MR. EDITOR,—The letter of Mr. Laing published in your issue of last week on the subject of a "General Sustentation Fund," revives a question which has been for some months kept in abeyance. As you say "this is a subject of general interest and which still requires discussion." It is only a pity that at this date, and in view of the experience of other churches, it should require discussion. However, if Mr. Laing represents a party, it is evident that discussion is still needed.

Mr. Laing is on the whole in favour of a Sustentation Fund. He thinks it, however, impracticable. Apparently the chief reason is because the class of congregations to be hereafter denominated "the aid giving congregations" will not in his opinion sympathize with the scheme. His words are "will you find 230 congregations in the Western Section of the Church who would be willing to enter on such a scheme?" The proper answer to this question is, of course, "no." But who gave Mr. Laing the information. They have not been tested. Let them answer for themselves. It is only, as yet, then, in Mr. Laing's own imagination that the scheme, on this score, is impracticable. What if gross injustice is being done by Mr. Laing to these congregations? Have not congregations, in like circumstances, elsewhere, done this very deed which he says will not be repeated? Presbyterians of Toronto, of London, of Galt, of Stratford! are you, or are you not, less magnanimous than your brothers and sisters of Scotland and of England?

Has Mr. Laing been uniformly correct in his anticipations of what has been done in the past? Did he anticipate the reception given to the report of the "Committee on Supplement and Sustentation," by the Assembly of 1878? Did he anticipate the action taken upon it when that "report" was sent down as a remit to the Presbyteries of the Church? Did he anticipate that two whole Synods in addition to the Synod of Toronto and Kingston, formerly, would overture the Assembly in the direction, not of a modified supplemental scheme, but of a General Sustentation Fund?

As he has been disappointed, I hope agreeably, by the action of the Courts of the Church, so I believe when the time comes, as come it will, he will be happily disappointed by the action of many of the congregations of the Church.

Mr. Laing's tactics are not calculated to promote the interests of the scheme. Saying to a man "we do not expect you to do your duty," is not the best plan to constrain him to do his duty.

Mr. Laing's reasoning again goes upon the assumption that the plan foreshadowed by Mr. McLeod is the plan of the Church. The Church has not pronounced regarding it. I do not think that it will be the plan of the Church in all its details. But I must not anticipate. Seeing that it is not the plan of the Church, Mr. Laing's statistics and conclusions therefrom go for nothing.

The question is not "What have the congregations done in the past?" but "what are they likely to do under the provision of the new scheme." The advocates of the scheme claim that greatly enlarged contributions will follow when the laws for the regulation of a "General Sustentation Fund" are put into operation. On what ground? you ask. On the ground of superior organization. The minister of each congregation will, or at least may, be at the head of an organization for raising funds. This would be the scheme of the Church. The support of her own ministry is the first duty of any Church. The sustentation scheme would be the grand scheme of each congregation. A society for raising funds must necessarily be in existence in every pastoral charge. I think there never has been a well wrought sustentation scheme without this. Our statistical tables now show us that those congregations doing most for the ordinary schemes of the Church are those in which associations have been formed for the purpose of collecting funds. Under any mere supplemental scheme associations will not become general. According to the statistics of 1877 there are over one thousand church organizations and 242 missionary associations. There are two large Presbyteries in which there is not one single organization for the purpose of raising contributions on behalf of the schemes of the

Church. We do not lack for resolutions in reference to them upon our statute books, but the most of these are lying as dead letters. There must be some radical change before you can enforce any laws requiring the formation of Associations for the raising of funds for ministerial support. That radical change you have when the Church will adopt the plan of a General Sustentation Fund. A minister cannot ask his people for an increase of his own stipend; at least not many can; I cannot. He cannot propose plans for the increase of it, but he can, without any delicacy, put himself at the head of an organization for the purpose of raising moneys to be thrown into a common treasury for the support of the whole. He is not only at the head but becomes the heart and soul of such an organization. I conclude at present with what Dr. Chalmers says on the subject: "The benefits of such an organization," viz., a large central fund, "are manifest and inestimable. It becomes an operation of infinitely greater delicacy and good taste, when the offerings called for in any given neighbourhood are for the direct and personal behoof of their own clergyman. He could do nothing to extend or stimulate such a process. But his deacons and even himself might without the violation of decorum, bestow upon it their full countenance and activity when seen in its true character as part of a scheme for the high and patriotic object of supporting a ministry of the Gospel throughout the whole of Scotland."

I hope to send you something further next week upon the alleged impracticability of a Sustentation Fund.

WILLIAM BENNETT.

Peterboro', October 27, 1879.

PRESBYTERY OF WHITBY. This Presbytery met in Bowmanville on the 21st October. There was a good attendance of members. Arrangements were made to bring the subject of missions before the congregations on some Sabbath or other suitable day, and also to hold a missionary meeting in each congregation, to be addressed by a delegation of two ministers and an elder, viz. Dunbarton, Claremont, Erskine, Duffin's Creek, and Pickering by Messrs. Abraham, Carmichael and Wm Smith; Whitby, Brooklin, Ashburn, and Utica by Messrs. Cameron, Peattie, and Ratcliff; Port Perry, Prince Albert, Oshawa, and Columbus by Messrs. Little, Crozier, and Yellowlees; St. Paul's, Bowmanville, Darlington, Enniskillen, and Cartwright by Messrs. Leslie, Fraser, and Beith; Orono, Newtonville, Kendal, and Newcastle by Messrs. Atkinson, Spenser, and J. C. Smith. The several Conveners were instructed to make the necessary arrangements with the congregations and give due notice and report at the meeting of Presbytery on January 20th. Inquiry was made if the G. A. Moderator's letter had been read from all the pulpits of the Presbytery, whereupon it was moved and agreed, "that the Presbytery expresses its pleasure that so many have attended to their duty, and trusts that those who have not yet taken action in the matter will do so at their earliest convenience." A call was laid on the table from the congregation of Oshawa in favour of Mr. S. H. Eastman, signed by 180 members and 52 adherents. After Commissioners were heard, the call was sustained and Mr. Eastman being present, signified his acceptance of it and the usual arrangements were made for the ordination and induction to take place on the 25th November. Mr. Cameron was appointed to preach, Mr. Little to preside and ordain, Mr. Carmichael to address the minister, and Mr. Atkinson the people. A small committee was appointed to examine the additional Hymns and report to the meeting in Oshawa. Messrs. Little, Drummond, and Leslie were appointed to examine the remittance a Presbyterian University and report in January. Messrs. Roger, Crozier and Kitchen were appointed to examine the remittance on the validity of Romish ordination and report in January. It was agreed that the next quarterly meeting be held in Whitby. The Presbytery adjourned to meet in Oshawa, 25th November, for the ordination and for the transaction of other business.—A. A. DRUMMOND, Pres. Clerk.

A MISSIONARY writing from China says of his work: "There are several inquirers here, but they lack adhesiveness. They want to go to heaven, but they act as if they would like to 'talk price' with the Lord, and secure some discount on the Ten Commandments, or a little mutual accommodation between His law and their habits and customs." We fear this is the trouble in a good many places this side of China.