

WIDOWS' FUND.

HAMILTON, Sept. 17, 1850.

The committee appointed by the Synod at its last meeting, for the purpose of communicating with congregations through their respective office-bearers, and endeavouring to interest and engage them in measures for providing for the families of ministers, through Life Assurance Societies, met in the session room of Knox's Church. Present, —Mr. Osborne, convener, the Rev. Mr. Cheyne, Mr. McLellan, Mr. Ferrier, Guelph, Mr. Burns, Toronto. The meeting having been opened with prayer by the Rev. Mr. Smellie, it was moved and agreed to, that the following gentlemen, who were now present by the special invitation of the Convener, be added to the committee, viz. —The Rev. Mr. Smellie, and Mr. McQueen, Fergus; Messrs. Fisher and Cook, Galt; Mr. Smith, Woodstock; Mr. Duff, Oakville; Messrs. Fisher, Walker, and Elmslie, Hamilton, and Mr. Davidson, New Aberdeen.

The minute of the Synod, suggesting that the families of ministers should be provided for through Life Assurance Societies, was read, and after careful deliberation, it was the unanimous conviction of the committee, that the plan was impracticable, inasmuch as that to realize a sufficient annuity for the families of all her ministers, would involve the Church in an expense of about £1000 a year.

It was then moved by Mr. McLellan, and seconded by Mr. Fisher, that this committee recommend that immediate steps be taken for the creation of a Widows' Fund, on the following principles:—

1. That the sum of not less than £1000 be raised by subscriptions and collections, on or before the 1st of February, 1851.

2. That a sermon be preached and a collection made annually throughout all the congregations of the Church, for behalf of said fund.

3. That the family of each minister of this Church shall be entitled to the benefit of said fund, by his paying the sum of £2, annually.

4. That each widow or family, shall receive from this fund as soon as it can be put in operation the average sum of £10 a year.

5. That the before mentioned capital sum, together with the first annual payments of the ministers, also to be paid on or before the 1st February, 1851, shall form the nucleus of a fund for the support of the widows and orphans of the ministers of the Presbyterian Church of Canada, and shall be invested in good and sufficient securities, on or before the 1st March, 1851; and that in subsequent years, the surplus arising from said annual collections, ministers' payments and interest accruing shall, after paying such annuities as may have come upon the fund, be annually added to said fund.

The above provisions having been read and put from the chair *seriatim*, were adopted.

It was moved by Mr. Fisher, seconded by Mr. McLellan, and adopted, that circulars be prepared and printed, embodying the leading features of the scheme, and urging its necessity; that one circular be sent to each minister, and one to each kirk session; and that a sub-committee be appointed to prepare the said circular, and also a statement to be published in the *Record*. The sub-committee to consist of Messrs. Osborne, Walker, Burns, and Elmslie.

Moved by Mr. Fisher, seconded by Mr. McLellan, and adopted, that Mr. Burns be appointed Treasurer to this Fund, and Mr. Elmslie, Secretary.

Moved by Mr. McLellan, and seconded by Mr. Walker, that in order that there may be no delay in carrying into effect this most important object, a subscription be now begun. The sum of £73 10s. was subscribed by the members of committee.

(Signed) JAMES OSBORNE, Chairman.
Geo. Elmslie, Secretary.

TRUE ZEAL.

FROM A HEARER'S NOTES OF AN ADDRESS BY THE
REV. W. C. BURNS.

GAL. IV. 8.

The following address was delivered at Perth, to the working people, at their breakfast hour, and during a snow-storm. Being quite extempore, it will vividly recall to his old hearers Mr. Burns's style in his occasional addresses:—

Few men are filled with such a desire after God's glory as Christ had when he said, "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up," or if they do, at times, feel something approaching to it, oh! it soon, soon evaporates,—it does not last—And why is this? Why do those who were once the most zealous in the work of God borm to fall asleep?—Why do those who used to weep tears of sorrow and pity over the unawakened, and who could not let one act, dishonoring to God, pass unreprieved, or at least unmourning, now begin to sit down with careless professors, giving all up in despondency and hopelessness, and even saying, in fearful, God-dishonouring unbelief, "We must just take things as they are, and leave others to take their own way, and wait God's time?" My dear friends, who ever says *that*, is guilty of treason against the King of kings; and moreover, whoever perseveres in saying that, will bring, ere long, a blight upon his own soul, and, it may be, on all his other labours. It is a dangerous thing to cease from the work of seeking to gain others over to the service of our Master; the soul's prosperity is so intimately connected with it, that we cannot neglect it without losing the blessing of God.

On the other hand, if we are engaged in a good work, we cannot throw too much energy into it; it is impossible to cast too fervent a heat into genuine heaven-born zeal; for when will our zeal be worthy the followers of the Lord Jesus, who left his throne, and suffered, and bled, and died, on this earth, just that He might bring glory to the Divine law, and sanctify the Father's name, in the redemption of the lost sinners, by the blood of his cross?

"It is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing." And were none of you ever thus affected? Some of you were zealous in days past. Has it lasted? Examine yourselves as to this while we mention one or two things which are inseparable from true zeal, and without which it cannot burn with a pure and steady flame.

The first of these is a *strong spiritual appetite*. A living believer seeks to have an equal relish for all the food which he finds in the Word of God. There is no truth, provided it have Divine sanction, from which he will not extract saving benefit, and life to his soul; the *smallest* parts of God's truth, as we might be apt to call them, have deep attraction in his eyes, and the *plainest* parts of the Word have more charms for him than the most adorned and ornamented of human thoughts and compositions.

Have you this characteristic of a child of God? The second thing which we shall mention is *spiritual activity*. This is the first outward manifestation of the existence of true zeal in the heart, and it springs immediately from the spiritual appetite of which we have spoken.

The want of food incapacitates a man from working; unless his body receive due support, he cannot work either hard or long; and so in the Divine life, if a man cease personally to live on Christ, he cannot work long for Christ among others. Impossible! He may keep up the appearance of this life long after the reality of it is gone: I believe that some now present can confirm the truth of this by painful experience. Are there not some among you who used to warn your fellow-sinners, and pray with them, and employ every means in your power to lead them to Jesus, speaking to them out of a full heart, and with all the earnestness of love? but now, your efforts are but feeble, and what you say is forced and only said from a sense of duty.

You complain that it does not impress the hearts of those to whom it is addressed. My dear friend, it *does not pierce your own conscience*; and oh! it is *only* when a deep and powerful impression of the truth abides on a man's own heart that the word has power to convince and to convert others. Sometimes the words spoken, whether of warning, or in commendation of Christ, are like nothing but dry skeletons of skin and bone, without either life or soul in them, and falling cold and powerless on the ear. But ah! when the truth is vividly impressed on the speaker's inmost soul, each word seems to have a volume in it, and every remark drops down sweetness and fresh fragrance.

And why should it not be *always* thus? Is the glory of Christ not so precious to you as it once was? Are the interests of God's kingdom less dear to you, or is it so far advanced in the world, that you have nothing now to do but to sit still, and look idly on? Is the state of sinners less awful, or their danger less imminent, because they are so many yats nearer eternity? No, brethren, no! It is *we* who have changed; it is *we* who have fallen asleep. Oh! confess it—confess it—: is *we* who are shutting our eyes and folding our hands, and falling asleep over the work, in which our heart and hand—our body, soul, and spirit—our time, talent, life—all, *all* should be engaged. Ah! but that is not the spirit of the Lord's true people. That is not like the character of your God and Father, or of your Elder Brother in the heavens, for He is a High Priest for ever—He intercedeth ever—He loveth to the end, and beyond the end of time, even for evermore. How inconsistent, then, are we, professing as we do to be his chosen people, and to be seeking after conformity to his likeness. You know it is said in one place that "all people will walk every one in the name of his god;" even the poor blinded heathen spend much of their strength and substance in the worship of their gods which "are yet no gods, but dumb idols." What! and shall not *we* then "walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever?" seeing that He lives and reigns "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." His glorious power is not less now than it was when first we trusted in Him; his long-suffering is not less patient, nor his covenant less secure—his love is not yet removed from us, and his faithful word abideth ever. We have the same Bible we had then; no promise has been taken out of it; the same throne of grace to go to, the same Spirit to help infirmity and strengthen faith. *The Son of God is not asleep*. Oh, no! He has been interceding for us on high amid all our forgetfulness, barrenness, and indifference. "Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep."

Believer! can you contradict this assertion? Can you point to the time when you sought with a sincere and willing heart to serve and glorify Him, and say that *then* you found Him to be a wilderness, or a land of darkness? I know you cannot.

If you desire the continuance of real, solid, spiritual comfort, seek to work diligently for God. You know that mere feeling cannot last long. Much of it must necessarily pass away; it lasts for a time, but the mind wears out, and sinks into a cold relapse, and fresh excitement is required to arouse it again. Ah! but that is not like the calm, pure, and spiritual feeling, produced by an impression on the will, through the Holy Ghost: elevating the conceptions, purifying the desires, constraining and keeping in subjection the whole heart and mind to the obedience of Christ.

Another mark of zeal is *implicit, immediate, child-like obedience*. How simple is the obedience of a little child; it does not ask a reason, or form a precise opinion of each step it takes, but readily follows its parent wherever he leads. A calm, quiet, unnummuring obedience, is what the Lord seeks from his people; a chastened temper, a renewed will, for such a work in the