

## The Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund.

BY next Assembly there will be nearly 70 ministers on this fund, and this would require about \$14,000 to pay the paltry allowance of \$200 a year, whereas only about \$11,000 were received in 1889. Why is it necessary? Because the salaries of most of our ministers have not been adequate to meet the expenses of their position, and to lay up anything for old age and retirement. In several cases, for over twenty years of excessive toil, their salaries only averaged from \$400 to \$600 a year while having to keep a horse and support a family. And when their salaries were larger in towns and cities, their expenses greatly increased by rents, fuel, and aiding the poor, etc., so that several have had to spend from \$5,000 to \$10,000 beyond their salaries to meet the expenses of their position; and that while devoting their whole time and strength to the work of the church, and being amongst the hardest toilers and most successful workers in the country—working from 12 to 15 hours a day for 40 to 50 years, after a severe course of preparatory study of from seven to ten years; and then gathering in several thousands into the membership of the church, besides laying the foundations of many of the present congregations. Some of these men might have made a large amount of money or property, had they turned aside from their proper work to deal in real estate as some have done. But they feared that their usefulness would be impaired thereby, and were more anxious to promote the Divine glory than to make money. And are they to be allowed to suffer because of their conscientiousness, after devoting their whole lives to the advancement of the Presbyterian church in Canada? Is it right for the wealthy men of our church to allow such a state of things to exist? Has not the King of Zion laid the duty of advancing his cause equally upon all his people? Should not all Christians realize that all they have belongs to Christ, and should be used in such a way

as best to promote his glory? The Great Head of the church made ample provision for his servants under the old dispensation, who had far less work to do, and that only for 30 years. And He identifies Himself with his servants still, and enjoins on his people to properly sustain them, and promises his special blessing to those who honour Him in his servants,—1 Cor. 9, 1-14.

When they devoted themselves to the work of the ministry they did not expect wealth, but they had a right to expect that their expenses would be met, and that they would be able to lay up a modest competence for old age. But in many cases this has not been realized. Nearly forty years ago, regulations were made by the Aged Ministers' Fund Committee that \$10.00 per year of service should be paid to ministers on the fund,—that is, after 40 years of service or more, each annuitant should receive \$400 per annum. But the committee have never had the means to pay this very moderate sum.

In order to insure that annuity of \$10.00 per year of service, we require a capital fund of over \$200,000 besides the yearly contributions of congregations, and the yearly rates of the ministers. This sum would only yield about \$10,000 a year, whereas the committee need over \$20,000 to pay even \$300 *per annum* to, say, 70 ministers in future. The ministers should pay on an average at least \$8 or \$9 rate per annum, which would yield about \$5,000 a year. Then if the attention of all the congregations were called to the duty of contributing to this fund yearly, we might expect from \$5,000 to \$7,000 from that source. We should not rest until we have \$25,000 for yearly annuities; that is more than twice as much as we have now. The General Assembly has sanctioned the raising of a capital of at least \$200,000, but as yet the agent, Rev. Wm. Burns, has scarcely obtained the one-fourth of this amount in subscriptions, and only a very small amount in cash. There need be no difficulty for our church to raise \$200,000 or even \$300,000 for this fund,—if our wealthy men take the lead and contribute as God has prospered them. One member in the Eastern Provinces contributed \$20,000 to the fund in the east, and we believe a gentleman in the Western Section of the church has promised to give \$20,000 when the committee shall have raised \$200,000. Now, ten of our men each giving \$20,000 would provide the sum first named; twenty, \$10,000; or forty, \$5,000. Surely we have forty rich men who would contribute the amount, and then others supplement it by \$2,000, \$1,000, \$500, \$100, etc., till we reach \$300,000, and thus make the matter secure. Surely we have 2,000 or more wealthy men who could easily contribute the whole of this amount to be paid in three or four yearly instalments.

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