

difference between these two methods, it surely will be admitted that the sustentation scheme is most thoroughly in accord with the principles of our Church, and that it appeals to the Christian conscience as the other does not, and that, therefore, it is the scheme which we ought to adopt in our Church.

But here is the second question. Has not the supplemental scheme of the U. P. Church in Scotland been a great success. Unhesitatingly I reply it has not! It has done good service since it came into operation, but it has depended first and last rather upon the large donations of the few than the steady systematic giving of the many, and it has required, in order to reach its present position, to be aided by an extra effort which it may prove very difficult to maintain. In 1878, there was about \$60,000 contributed to the augmentation fund of the U. P. Church, and that sum was divided over 120 congregations, whereas in the same year, over \$300,000 was contributed to the sustentation fund of the Free Church of Scotland, and divided over 600 congregations. The U. P. Church has been confined very much to towns and cities up till recent years, and therefore has not anything like the same number of congregations requiring aid as are to be found in the Free Church, and when we are told that her supplementing plan is successful, we must ask would it succeed were her field as wide as that of the Free Church, and would it work as smoothly and regularly from year to year, were it required to produce so large a sum as we have mentioned above? The testimony of some of the best financiers in the U. P. Church could be quoted as to the defects of the augmentation scheme and the advantages of the Free Church method.

But we now come to the third question. Supposing this sustentation fund was established, what effect would it have upon the schemes of the Church? Would it not take away money from our Colleges and our Home and Foreign Missions? I answer, on the contrary it would tend to help all the schemes. Set your ministers free from debt and difficulty, and encourage your new and struggling congregations by putting it within their power to call an efficient pastor, and at once you will see such loyalty in seeking to further the work of the Church as we have never known before. Many were afraid of the extra effort made this year on behalf of Home Missions, lest it should cramp the giving to the other schemes, but all these fears have been put to flight by the discovery that all the schemes have gained rather than lost through the appeal made on behalf of Home Missions. So it will be where there is a properly worked sustentation fund, it will not retard the Church's progress, but assist it mightily. Such has been the result in

Scotland, England, and Ireland, and I am sure such would be the result here also.

The fourth question is a more general one. "What are the main difficulties in the way of establishing such a fund as you propose in this country?" There are many minor difficulties which we hear about very often, such as the extent of the territory to be covered, the poverty and newness of the country, the want of homogeneity in our Church, the cumbrous nature of the machinery required, &c., but none of those difficulties are formidable enough to daunt us, and will easily be met one by one as they are raised. The main difficulties are of a much more serious kind. The first one in my apprehension arises from the spiritual condition of our Church. A sustentation fund can only be hopefully launched in a living church, for it is based entirely upon Christian principles. If we had the spirit of the Apostolic Church when its members brought their possessions and laid them at the Apostles' feet, and no man said that ought he possessed was his own, we would be certain of success, but it is a serious question, how will such a fund succeed where there is so much worldliness and selfishness as is to be found among us? A shrewd elder said to me a year ago, I do not approve of your scheme because there are ministers who will take advantage of the fund and say, "I need not care for my stipend is secured," and again, there are congregations who will lean on the fund instead of exerting themselves to pay their own way. I answered that he had certainly mentioned the very strongest argument against the fund, namely, that the total depravity of the human heart stood in its way, but what will you think of our Church if in public Assembly it should declare that this fund cannot be established because neither our ministers or people are to be trusted? My friend found that his argument was a dangerous one, and I think he will not use it at the next Assembly. But another aspect of this same difficulty is continually suggested to me. The richer congregations will not do their duty, and the ministers who occupy our city charges will object to the fund. Again I admit that this is a great difficulty, for many of our city charges are burdened with great debts which hamper them in giving liberal aid to the schemes as it is, and any additional strain would be felt as oppressive; and I have heard the statement from a city minister, "We are doing very well, why can you not let us alone." Here again, it is total depravity that stands in the way, taking the form of selfishness, and the only hope is that friends who have such a low opinion of our large congregations and of our city ministers will be put to the blush by seeing their enthusiasm and liberality when the time