

the presumption being that in no case will it be refused. It is an equal sum. The benefit is equal; and it seems just that the condition on which the benefit is derived should bear alike upon all. It is scarcely possible on any other principle to frame an equitable regulation. The law is in accordance with the Presbyterian rule of parity. The rule of parity demands equality for its fundamental principle, at the same time it allows of accidental diversities. All ministers have an equal status, but a variety of gifts, labours, influence, and success. And so in regard to the distribution of this common fund, the condition is the same—the requirement of a minimum contribution—but there is both a perfect liberty and a Christian propriety in giving more than what merely satisfies the requirement, if a congregation, from its number and wealth, has the ability. There is as much responsibility in the right use of this liberty, as in obeying the requirement which gives no liberty. It is, therefore, most reasonably recommended and expected that large congregations will give of their abundance and according to it, so that the benefits of the scheme may be enjoyed by others that are small and weak. There is, in fact, no reason why a congregation in a self-supporting condition might not agree to waive its right altogether, taking nothing from the fund, and thereby making an annual contribution of £50. Some congregations might do more than that, and yet feel that they come short of their duty to Home Mission operations or Church extension.

The enforcement of the proposed regulation obviously necessitates the adoption, by congregations, of some plan to secure a regular semi-annual contribution of twenty-five dollars, in good time, before the 1st of January and the 1st of July, when the half yearly distribution is made. With a good will and a little management, the raising of twenty-five dollars steadily, twice a year, ought not to be a very formidable undertaking to almost any congregation. The burden, equally borne by fifty families or a hundred adult adherents, would be very light. The simplest plan seems to be to make a slight increase of the ordinary revenue from pew rents or subscriptions and Sabbath-day collections. Having arranged for this, the Secretary of the Board, might be authorized to deduct the sum required from the amount of the allowance, and the minister to charge the treasurer of the congregation with the amount of the contribution.

This regulation will, for the present directly affect only such congregations as have been referred to, fifty-two in all. The other allowances from the fund are secured by the commutation arrangements, with the exception of the grant of \$2000 per annum to Queen's College, which is paid conformably to a By-Law of the Board. These commutation arrangements have all the force of civil law, and therefore cannot be legally altered by the Synod. But the Synod has issued a unanimous recommendation to the congregations, whose ministers are in receipt of such protected allowances, that they give an equal sum with the others. This recommendation ought to have weight and respect for these obvious reasons:—The allowances are greater than those by which the other congregations benefit, in most cases more than double. They have been enjoyed generally for a much longer period, none of the others extending beyond the year 1856. The majority of congregations having commuting ministers ought to be better able to contribute, than those which have been thrown to a larger extent upon their own resources. In the event of their ministers being removed, their position, without the experience and practice of the others, would not be so favourable, and therefore the sooner they fall in with the scheme the better. And if the protection by civil law of the privileges enjoyed by their ministers be considered an advantage, a corresponding liberality seems to be but a proper exponent of that opinion. On such grounds may the recommendation of the Synod be urged, and the hope entertained that the example hitherto set by a few, will hereafter be followed by all.

As to the bearing of this regulation upon present exigencies, it is hardly necessary to say, that it was not imposed with the expectation that it would provide a sufficiency for all demands. Little more can be said in its favour than that, if carried out, it will secure a given sum, by means of which the benefits of the fund will be extended, with safety, to a few congregations that would not otherwise participate. The extent to which it is accepted will indicate how far there exists a disposition to promote this laudable object. A few figures will show clearly the capacity of the measure. Of commuting ministers there are 57 on the roll of the Board. If from this number we deduct 11 retired ministers, and then add 62, that is, the 10 who were not allowed to commute and the 52 who have