

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND DEFENCE FUND.

The recent decision in the suit for the restoration of the Temporalities' Fund to the Church, rendered it advisable to call a meeting of the Church Defence Committee, which was held on the 24th June, in the office of Sir Hugh Allan of Ravenscrag. One of the Church Counsel, Mr. D. Macmaster, was present to lay before the Committee such further information as might be necessary to make clear the present position of the suit; and the Circular issued under instructions from the Synod, by the Rev. Gavin Lang, dated 15th June, with post-script dated the 19th, after the judgment had been delivered, was laid before the meeting. The Committee heard with great satisfaction the List of the contributions from Congregations and friends of the Church throughout the country, and expressed cordial sympathy with those who had been compelled to make such sacrifices, too often unsuccessfully, to defend the churches which they had built for the worship of God in connection with the Church of their Fathers.

The Committee, after having had the whole position of the case before them, resolved heartily and unanimously to appeal to the members and adherents of the Church to support them in the determination to prosecute the appeal to the Privy Council. The first report of the decision of the Court of Appeals in Montreal was much more adverse to the case than the publication of the reasons for the judgment warranted. The leading point on which the present suit turns is the unconstitutionality of the Act of the Local Legislature of Quebec in dealing with the Fund. On that question three of the Judges gave the most decided opinion as to the Act being unconstitutional, and therefore null and void. Two took the opposite view, so that the Court of Appeals, in respect to the question actually before it, has decided in our favour. But one of the three Judges took up a point which, having been only raised incidentally, was set aside and abandoned, and upon that point he confirmed the decision appealed against, none of the other Judges sharing his views. The question will, therefore, be submitted to the Privy Council under the best possible circumstances—there being a majority of the Court of Appeals in favour of the Appellant, Mr. Dobie, on the constitutional point at issue.

The Committee cannot help acknowledging with thankfulness the liberality shown by the Congregations of the Church hitherto. The case has been one involving great delay and expense, and has tested the patience and faith of the adherents of the Church to the utmost. But it must be remembered that we have been gaining step by step, whilst apparently defeated; that every defeat has exposed some error in the judgments, till at last we have been successful in our real contention. The Committee believe it now to be their duty to make an earnest appeal for the necessary funds to bring the question to the final decision of the highest tribunal of the Empire. The prospects of success are most cheering, and every Congregation should bear in mind that, in subscribing to the expenses of this suit, it is contributing to the defence of its own individual church property. The importance of the decision in this case cannot be overrated, and the Committee would earnestly remind the Congregations and every member and adherent, that failure now to prosecute the case which seems in all human probability on the eve of success, would be to throw away all past efforts and sacrifices. There is no need to enlarge on this, the Committee feeling assured that every individual fully understands the necessity for the additional exertion now imposed on one and all in this matter.

The Committee believe that from this time to the conclusion of the suit, the sum of from six thousand, to six thousand five hundred dollars will require to be in the hands of those who are entrusted with its prosecution; and it was intimated at the meeting that one ever generous and faithful friend of the Church in Montreal had already subscribed toward that amount, and in addition to her other handsome contributions, the sum of \$1000.00. Of the required sum, at least one-half, or upwards of three thousand dollars, should be raised immediately. They would, therefore, suggest that active and energetic committees should be organized in each Congregation, or body of adherents where the Congregation has been broken up, and that remittances should be made immediately to the REV. GAVIN LANG, 102 St. Alexander Street, Montreal, Treasurer of the Synod's Fund, for all subscriptions outside of Montreal. For the City of Montreal the Treasurer is MR. R. M. ESDAILE, 17 St. Sacrament Street, to whom all friends of the Church in the City are requested to send their contributions as early as possible.

HUGH ALLAN,
G. W. CAMPBELL, M. D.,
JOSEPH HICKSON,
J. S. HUNTER,
R. J. REEKIE,
D. BRYMNER,
ALEX. MCGIBBON,
T. ALLAN,
R. M. ESDAILE,
GAVIN LANG.

MONTREAL, 1 July, 1880.