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THE WIDOWS' AND ORPHANS' FUND.

Our brethren in the pastorate are so very bashful in urging the claims of the Widows' Fund, that it is almost in spite of them that it has grown up to its present degree of strength. Now that the society contemplates opening a new branch of operations, changing its name accordingly, we have thought that a review of its past career might be both interesting and useful, as well as supply such lack of service.

"The Congregational Ministers' Widows' and Orphans' Fund Society" originated with Zion Church, Montreal, which sent Mr. C. Alexander as a deputation to the Union Meeting at Hamilton, in the year 1856, to propose its establishment by the body at large. Much discussion took place in the Union as to the principles in which the Fund should be administered,—whether it should be wholly charitable, given at the discretion of trustees to needy cases; or of the life assurance plan, a fixed allowance being given for a fixed payment; or whether these two plans should be in any way combined. It was to be noted that the ministers generally were strongly opposed to the "charitable" method, desiring to have some rights for their families by virtue of their own subscriptions, and to have the annuities of known amounts. The result of the discussion was the adoption of these views, and the resolve to form a Society consisting of ministers subscribing, as beneficiary members, churches collecting (by delegates), and life members—donors of a certain amount at once. Hearty thanks were voted to the Montreal friends for their action in the matter. The plan was carefully matured during the following year, and provisionally adopted at the Union Meeting of 1857. Any minister men in the body, of whatever age, was allowed to join the society during the next year, at the rate of \$10 per annum. The raising of a capital of \$4000 at once was set forth as necessary to the success of the scheme. In 1858, the constitution received a final revision, and a proposal to connect the fund with some existing insurance society was disapproved, as its investments could be made more profitably by itself. Small progress had yet been made in raising the capital, though Montreal had subscribed some \$1000. A number of ministers had become beneficiary members.