

ing to the recommendation of the Actuary, or to do otherwise as may appear to the meeting most advisable under the circumstances; with power also to the said meeting to adjourn itself from time to time as it may see fit.

23. The first investigation shall be made as at the 15th day of May, 1852, and every succeeding investigation shall be made as at the 15th day of May, not sooner than seven, nor later than ten years from the date of the immediately preceding investigation, unless there shall arise, in the opinion of the Committee of Management, circumstances which render it desirable to make an earlier investigation; in which case they shall have power to direct an investigation to be made within an earlier period than seven years.

24. And in the event of any alteration being made, as herein before directed, on the amount of the annuities herin directed to be paid, the annuities as so altered shall commence to be paid at the term of Whitsunday or Martinmas which shall first happen after the amount thereof shall have been so altered, and shall continue payable until again altered after any subsequent investigation.

25. The annuities payable to the widows or children aforesaid, being intended as alimentary provisions, the same shall not be assignable or subject to attachment or other legal diligence at the instance of creditors, but shall be paid only to the widows and the tutors or curators of the children and in case the widow shall be under any legal or natural disability to discharge the same, or in case the children shall have no tutors or curators, it shall be competent for the Committee of Management to name any two or more persons as Trustees to manage and apply the annuities in such manner as shall appear to them to be most for the benefit of such widows or children, and the persons so appointed shall have power to receive and discharge such annuities until they are relieved or superseded from their office as Trustees, which the Committee shall have power to do at pleasure.

26. The members of the Committee of Management or of the Presbytery of Edinburgh and Glasgow, or the Trustees to be appointed in virtue hereof, shall not be liable for omissions or for acts done by them *bona fide* in the execution of their duties, or for the solvency of the persons to whom the moneys shall be lent or put of to banks in which the moneys shall be deposited, or in *solidum*, but each only for his own actual mismissions.

27. In case any difference or dispute shall arise in relation to the Fund or its affairs, or with respect to the true import and meaning of these Rules and Regulations, between the Committee of Management and the annuitants, or any party or parties concerned, or claiming to be connected, therewith, or if created therein, every such difference or dispute shall be determined by the counsel who shall from time to time be appointed by the Free Church as their legal adviser, and whose determination shall be final and conclusive; it being hereby declared a condition of the claim of any party as widow or child under either of the said Schemes, subject to which condition none such claim shall be competent, that in the event of any such difference or dispute, the claimant shall acquiesce in such determination.

28. It shall be in the power of the Committee of Management to make such further regulations from time to time as may be found expedient in the discharge of their duty, and for beneficially managing and administering the Fund committed to their charge; provided always that such regulations shall not be inconsistent with the foregoing, which are to be regarded as fundamental Rules and Regulations of the Fund, nor subject to alteration in any respect, unless one year's previous notice of such alteration, shall have been given in the printed annual Reports as aforesaid, and unless such alteration shall be recommended by the Committee of Management, and adopted and sanctioned by the two Presbyteries aforesaid, at any of their stated annual meetings, or at any other meeting to be called for the purpose by the Committee of Management, and finally confirmed by the General Assembly.

Sustentation Fund for the Ministry.

At the meeting recently held in Canonmills Hall, regarding the support of the Christian ministry, one of the speakers quoted the following words, as having been used by Dr. Chalmers regarding the motions submitted to that vast assembly:—These are noble resolutions; and, if only adopted and acted on then with the blessing of God we are safe." We have been watching with some anxiety to see whether the suspicion so gently hinted by the founder of the Scheme shall be confirmed, or what we are sure he would infinitely prefer, corrected by experience. It is a noble and spirit-stirring thing to see such thousands convened, all animated by one spirit, and aiming at one result for the time; to the common human nature, there are few studies more instructive than the phenomena of such assemblies. At the same time, it is not to be questioned that the direct benefits of such stirring scenes are rarely in the ratio of the high interest or enthusiasm displayed. There is a risk lest applause may be substituted for action, and that the principles of which we immensely approve may be put off with out more approbation. "There is a readiness to will," but "is there a performance also out of that which we have?" (2 Cor. viii. 11)

SUSTENTATION FUND.

To the Editor of the Missionary Record of the Free Church of Scotland.

EDINBURGH, Dec., 22, 1846.

MY DEAR SIR,—I know you will allow me a short notice in your forthcoming Number, to submit some remarks to your readers regarding the great sheet-anchor fund of the Free Church—the fund for the support of a Gospel ministry in the land.

It may be presumed that all your readers are now aware of the principles on which that great fund should be upheld. It sounds to us instead of the Establishment principle, and tends to the solution of that great and important problem, Can a Church unwidowed ever be a National Church? Not merely does it contemplate providing for the number of ministers—it aims at something higher and more sacred still, even the extension of a pure and whole a Gospel to districts whence it might otherwise be banished; and in this way, the due support and extension of the fund, and all the spiritual wants of Scotland be supplied, is identified with the promoting of the Redeemer's glory in the enlargement of his Kingdom amongst us. All who thoroughly understand our great undertaking, must be convinced that if this fund be allowed, in any measure, to languish, the efforts will soon be felt in all the departments to which the energies of our Church are turned. So that, in fact, in pleading for the Central Fund, one is not really pleading for the missionary schemes, and all the other Christian objects for which the Free Church is labouring. To say all in one sentence, and trying to rise above all limited or local considerations, I have no hesitation in expressing the conviction that the glory of God our Saviour is to be promoted by the success, or his honor (as far as man can) by the depression of the Sustentation Fund.

Now, there can be no doubt that we have reached a crisis in the history of that fund. Not that there is the slightest reason to dread a failure—not that we fear for a moment that the people are less willing now than they were three years ago to uphold and extend the Free Church of Scotland; nay, I venture to express the conviction that amid the hardships even of such a year as this there will be no decrease in the fund. But no decrease is not enough. We have our numbers and forty charges never yet supplied with ministers; these have to be provided for, while not a few of them are poor, and in that character, possess strong claims on the rich. At the same time, the large donations are gradually falling in, and hence the crisis to which I allude. New and widely ramified efforts need to be put forth; and these, I trust, will everywhere be displayed. At

the late meeting of Commission, your report, as to the progressive state of the funds for missionary purposes, was most gratifying to all that care for the souls of men; but it also showed that there is no decrease in our people's zeal, and I will never allow myself to doubt that great and all-important fund, regarding which I write, will be allowed to lag behind the rest, or to decrease by one iota, while they are rising and advancing. Let the Sustentation Fund be upheld by the prayers as well as the contributions of members of Christ's body. Let religious principle preside over all the movements that we made, and all the addresses that are delivered regarding it, and then it will prosper in proportion to our prospering spiritually; for just as men grow in grace, they will grow in liberality, and any other growth will neither be steady nor lasting.

Yet something more is needed than a well-organized and right-principled machinery—it must, moreover, be properly wrought. Hitherto, may have grievously failed in this respect; but there are symptoms of returning or increasing zeal in this matter. We possess documents of the most satisfactory kind, from the Presbytery of Hamilton and elsewhere, indicating that men are alive to the importance, and zealous in behalf of the Fund; but a sample of the efforts that are needed are matters be wholly right, I beg to hand you an extract from a letter dated 15th December, from the Rev. H. McLeod of Logie-Faster, regarding the plans adopted in the Presbytery of Tain, and only premise, that were some such plan adopted over Scotland, and some such principles acted on, an increase of £10,000 might be the result during the current year. We have the right machinery set up—all that is needful is a right propelling and regulating power, the power of spiritual truth over spiritual men.

Mr. McLeod says, "The presbytery, considering the importance of the Sustentation Fund, and the necessity of increased exertion on the part of the people, appointed deputations to visit their different congregations, for the purpose of explaining and enforcing the duty of contributing. The deputations were further enjoined to obtain before next ordinary meeting, two lists, from each deacons' court within their bounds—which lists were to be presented to the presbytery at that meeting; the one list to contain the name of every contributor in the parish or congregation, with the amount contributed by him, during the preceding half-year, marked opposite his name; the other list to contain the name of every one, above sixteen years of age, connected with the congregation who contributed nothing at all, and who should state either that he did not mean to contribute, at present, as the case might be. They were also enjoined to state publicly to the congregations assembled in the respective parishes, that, until the meeting of presbytery at which the said lists were to be presented, those who did not at all contribute hitherto would have an opportunity of enrolling themselves amongst the contributors, if they felt so inclined, and that such contributors as wished, or saw it to be their duty, to enlarge their contributions before that day, would have an opportunity of doing so.

This plan was intimated accordingly, a day set apart for each parish, and, on the Sabbath immediately preceding, the congregation requested to attend the meeting; which, in every case, was opened by a sermon bearing on the subject. The result was most gratifying. In each parish several contributed who never until then saw it their duty to contribute, nor their sin in not contributing; a few enlarged their contributions; and some parents enrolled the names of their children, considering it a part of their duty as parents, as it undoubtedly is, to bring up their offspring in habits of contributing towards the maintenance of the Gospel of Christ in the land.

"I have no doubt that should some such plan as this be adopted by the Church generally,—deputations appointed to visit the different congregations, deal with the consciences of individuals, and to obtain correct lists from every parish for the presbytery of the bounds, to be examined carefully and kept in *retentis* for further use,—a very large increase would follow, the collectors and deacons would be encouraged and their hands strengthened,