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**Augmentation of Stipends.**

CIRCULAR FROM THE CONVENER.

THE Third Sabbath of November is the day appointed by the General Assembly for a Special Collection in aid of the Augmentation Fund. It is earnestly hoped that in all congregations and mission stations which have not adopted some other method of raising funds for this object, the collection will be made on the day appointed, or on some other convenient Sabbath. The attempt to raise the stipends of the ministers, in the Western section of the Church, to a minimum of \$750 and manse, was successful last year to this extent, that payments were made on the increased scale for the six months ended in April 1884, (grants having been made on the old basis for the six months preceding,) and a reserve fund of \$17,000 was secured, which has made it easy to meet the payments due in October without borrowing money.

When the movement was set on foot a year ago, there were 256 congregations in the Western section of the Church, including 33 vacant charges, giving less than the proposed minimum. Of these 78 made no claim on the Augmentation Fund, coming up in nearly all cases to the standard required. The number of congregations at present on the Augmentation list is 163, of which 141 have settled ministers. The amount required to secure the minimum stipend for the current year to these ministers is about \$30,000. Some small proportion of this amount may be received from the assisted congregations, but the stronger congregations of the Church will have about the same burden to bear as last year.

According to the regulations of the General Assembly, supplements should be paid semi-annually, so as to make the stipend "in the first place" only \$600 and manse, the income which remains at the disposal of the committee when the treasurer's books are made up at the end of the ecclesiastical year (April 30th) being distributed so as to secure to each minister, if possible, \$750 and manse. In view, however, of the heartiness with which the matter was taken up last year, and in the faith that there will be such a general and liberal response throughout the Church this year to the appeal for funds as will justify the committee in going beyond the letter of the Assembly's regulations, the committee resolved, at the meeting held in October, *to pay the supplements at the full rate of \$750 and manse* for the past half year. The committee are confident that the Church does not intend to take a backward step in this matter, and they have no fear, therefore, of being obliged to reduce the grants in April. It must be borne in mind, however, that a good many *special* contributions were given last year, which may not be repeated, and, consequently, there is need of increased liberality on the part of the congregations of the Church generally.

The General Assembly has resolved that the funds for Home Mission Work proper, and for Augmentation of Stipends, shall be kept distinct. It is particularly requested that congregations contribute separately to these two objects. If money be remitted for both objects combined, it should be distinctly stated how it is to be divided.

Envelopes, specially prepared, will be supplied to congregations. They may be distributed on the Sabbath preceding that on which the collection is to be made, or used in any other way that may seem good to the office-bearers. Such envelopes were