

Editorial

The Canadian Independent.

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THE RETIRING PASTORS' FUND.

It is exceedingly important that the members of our churches should take steps to secure means for the operation of the Retiring Pastors' Branch of the Congregational Provident Fund. In regard to the necessity for this department there can be no question. As a rule, the salaries of our ministers are barely sufficient for their support, year by year, allowing no surplus to be stored for the future. Their education, habits, and calling disqualify them, in a great measure, from entering into secular pursuits. The infrequency of a permanent life-pastorate gives the churches which they have served an excuse for not becoming responsible for their maintenance when disqualified by age for further work. The consequences are, that both churches and ministers are liable to suffer. The church, through the unwillingness of the pastor to resign, and thus lose his only means of sustenance, when he is mentally or physically unable to do full justice to the church. Ministers, likewise, when compelled by age or pressure from the church to relinquish their duties, frequently suffer, not only for common comforts, but also for the stern necessities of life. The unwritten his-

tories of the declining years of some of our honoured ministers, both in the past and present, would illustrate this in a manner that would astonish many of the former members of their churches—those who owe to them more than their lives. As churches, in their separate capacities, cannot, in most cases, attend to this matter, and as all our churches, or the denomination at large, has been served, directly or indirectly, by their ministrations, the only means of discharging this great obligation is by general co-operation through such a society as the one whose claims we advocate.

As our readers are aware, at the last annual meeting this was made a department of the Widows' and Orphans' Fund, which was changed in name to the Congregational Provident Fund. A constitution and by-laws were adopted; but the new department was without funds. A special committee, consisting of some of our most experienced financiers, reported that it could not legitimately go into operation until the sum of \$2,000 was raised. Towards this amount, only \$348.49 has been contributed up to the present time, and of this only \$280.55 has been collected during the past year, and that from four churches—namely, Zion Church, Montreal, and the three Churches in Toronto—leaving \$1,651.51 to be secured before anything can be done by the society. Will not our churches undertake to remit a collection to the Treasurer, J. C. Barton, Esq., Montreal, before