

taken of the whole sum contributed by the family, and that average shall determine their place in the allocation.

N. B. In case any church should prove to small for the number of applicants for seats, the deacon's court is recommended to arrange with the congregation for such an interim allocation of the seats, as shall give an equitable share in an allocation to all parties concerned; and at the same time to take such steps as may seem desirable for making more adequate provision for the accommodation of the congregation.

X. To prevent unnecessary sitting of seats after the first allocation, the seats of the church shall be divided into two, three, or more classes, according to the order of preference: a corresponding classification shall be made of the contributors; and those holding seats appropriate to the class to which they belong shall not be required to change them,—the change only being made from class to class.

XI. After the first time, the amount actually contributed by each member or family, as ascertained by the receipts in the treasurer's books, shall be the rule of classification and allocation.

XII. The sums contributed by a heretics shall be raised in the same manner as those contributed by members; adherents being assigned to the collectors along with members, as may be convenient.

XIII. Seats shall be allocated to adherents on the same principle as to members, after matters have been provided for.

XIV. The deacon's court shall have a discretionary power to give a preference of seats irrespective of the sums contributed by members or adherents, in cases of poverty, as also in cases of deafness or other infirmity: it being provided that such preference shall be cancelled on the complaint of seven members, so that no partiality may be allowed.

XV. Previously to the time of allocating the seats, families wishing to sit together, infirm persons requiring preferable seats, and non-contributors from poverty, shall be called to intimate their desire for seats to the deacon's court, and the secretary of that court shall then prepare a list of members and adherents in the order indicated by the foregoing regulations.

XVI. In the event of seats becoming vacant during the course of a term, the claims of applicants shall be determined by their place on the above list; and should any of the applicants be new comers, they shall be ranked according to their intended amount of contributions, as ascertained from the collector's books.

XVII. In case the sum raised by regular contributions through the collectors be deemed below what the congregation ought to contribute to the sustentation fund, a public collection or collections shall be made for the purpose of supplementing it.

XVIII. The names of members and adherents, with the sums contributed by each; as also the sums which may be raised by collections and otherwise, shall be printed and circulated at the end of every term.

XIX. The ordinary sabbath collections shall be made by the deacons, and such a proportion of the proceeds as may be required, appropriated by them to the following objects:—The ordinary support and the insurance of the property of the congregation; the warming and lighting of the church; the payment of the salaries of Church officers; the relief of the poor; the provision of sacramental apparatus (where necessary) and of communion elements; the support of the sabbath school or schools; the formation and support of congregational libraries; and the payment, when deemed proper, of the expenses incurred by the ministers and ruling elders in travelling to church courts; and the surplus, if any, shall be added to the sustentation fund.

XX. For all extraordinary burdens arising from the care of the property of the congregation, as for extensive repairs and improvements on the church and manse, the payment of outstanding debt

&c., the deacon's court shall be required to raise the necessary amount, either by special subscription, or by public collections made expressly for the purpose, or in such other special way as they may deem expedient. But in all such cases, they are recommended to consult with the congregation at a general meeting.

XXI. It shall be the duty of the deacon's court to provide, that the collections appointed by the Synod and Presbytery, as for the Synod Fund, the Presbytery Funds, Missionary objects, &c., shall be regularly and duly made.

XXII. An annual report of the proceedings of the deacon's court, shall be given at a general meeting of the congregation, called by 10 free days notice within one month after the expiry of every annual term, at which the congregation shall have an opportunity of making inquiries, expressing their opinions, and taking steps for carrying any matter with which they may be dissatisfied, or which they may wish to get altered, by petition to the Presbytery.

XXIII. For the purpose of having a congregation placed upon the sustentation fund, the deacon's court after making such arrangements in conformity with the above regulations, as they may deem to be advisable; and in particular ascertaining from the collector's books, the amount likely to be raised by the congregation for the sustentation fund, shall call a general meeting of members and adherents, and obtain their consent and permission to declare said amount, (or any higher amount if they think it can be raised among them,) to be the sum which they intend to contribute as a congregation, to the sustentation fund, and to intimate to the sustentation board, their desire to be placed upon the fund—which declaration and intimation, it shall be the duty of the deacon's court forthwith, to transmit to said sustentation board.

N. B. It is distinctly to be understood, (and if deemed advisable, may be expressly stated) that in making the above declaration as to the amount which they intend to contribute to the sustentation fund, congregations do not come under any positive obligation. They will neither be held absolutely bound to contribute up to the full amount declared, nor understood purposely to restrict themselves within it, but expected, while making an effort, at least to fulfil their declared intention, just to contribute more or less in proportion to their ability.

Report on the Distribution of the Sustentation Fund, approved and adapted by a Commission.

The objects which require to be provided for, in making arrangements for the distribution of the sustentation fund are the following:

1st. The placing of congregations upon the fund, as entitled to share in its distribution.

2nd. The distribution of the fund among those entitled to share in it, in such a way as most effectually to promote the ends for which it has been resolved upon. And

3rd. The formation and effective management of a distribution committee; under these heads the following proposals and recommendations are accordingly submitted:

First.—Arrangements as to the placing of Congregations upon the Sustentation Fund.

I. It is proposed that existing congregations shall be divided into two classes,—those contributing a minimum entitling them to come on the sustentation fund, and those contributing less; and that the minimum required shall be a hundred pounds cy. per annum.

II. That the distribution committee shall be empowered to place on the funds by an act of grace existing congregations contributing less than the minimum; but that for the future, no congregation contributing less than the minimum, shall be put upon the fund, except by an act of grace on the part of the Synod or Commission, founded upon the report and recommendation of Presbyteries.

III. That the mode of ascertaining the title of a congregation to come upon the fund, as contributing the minimum, shall be by requiring from existing, and also from new congregations, including under that term members and adherents, a written declaration of their intention to contribute to the fund not less than the minimum.

IV. That in the event of congregations, coming by right upon the fund, failing to contribute the minimum, or of congregations admitted by grace failing to contribute the amount which they have promised or which they have been accustomed to contribute, the distribution committee shall, if they find it impossible to remedy the evil, report the case of any such congregation to the Presbytery of the bounds, which shall examine into all the circumstances and report to the Synod, by which it may be struck off the fund, and, if deemed advisable, reduced to a missionary station.

NOTE.—The objects and advantages proposed and believed to be secured by the above arrangements, are the following:

1st. By fixing on a hundred pounds as the minimum entitling a congregation to come on the sustentation fund, our people will be reminded that a less sum than this is not considered adequate for the respectable support of a minister in Canada. And it is considered of importance that this should be kept distinctly before them, and that they should not be allowed to suppose that, except in cases of clearly ascertained inability, less ought to be offered.

2nd. By empowering the distribution committee to place on the fund, by an act of grace, existing congregations contributing less than the minimum, and by allowing the Synod to do the same for new congregations contributing less, by a similar act, a preventive of deception and slothfulness on the part of able congregations, will be secured. A motive to raise at least the minimum will be presented, and yet ample provision will be made for supporting and encouraging weak congregations.

3rd. By the arrangements for checking defaulters in the contributions of congregations, a stimulus to exertion will be given, and a remedy for a possible evil, which might destroy the advantages of the fund provided.

N. B. In case of mistake it may here be stated that the declaration proposed to be required from congregations before being put upon the fund, is not intended to have the effect of imposing a stringent obligation, but is merely recommended as being considered the best means of ascertaining what congregations are able and willing to contribute.*

Second.—PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION.

The objects which it seems desirable to accomplish in the distribution of the sustentation fund, are the following:—

1st. To raise the stipends of the ministers of poorer congregations, by drawing to some extent upon the funds raised by the wealthier congregations.

2nd. To apportion the salary of ministers in some proportion to the importance of their congregations, and the probable expenses of the style of living required of them.

3rd. To prevent anything like invidious inequality in the salaries of ministers.

4th. To present as powerful a stimulus as possible to congregations to contribute liberally to the fund.

All these objects, it is believed, will be attained by adopting the following scheme:—

Let the minimum number representing each congregation be 10; and let 1 be added to that number for every £20 over £100 contributed by that congregation; then

* See the explanatory note to the 23rd Regulation of the Deacon's Court.