

# The Presbyterian Review.

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Toronto July 8, 1897

## WIDOWS' AND ORPHANS' FUND.

At the meeting of the Assembly last resolutions were adopted which put this Scheme upon a more business like basis than it has heretofore been. It was unanimously resolved that no widow would be put upon the list of annuitants, whose husband was not connected with the Fund and paid the annual ministerial rate regularly. This is as it should be. A number of ministers were deterred from connecting themselves with the Fund, because from time to time, on the plea of sympathy, the Assembly placed upon the list of annuitants widows who had no valid claim, thus very materially weakening the Fund and rendering the reduction of the annuities a very probable thing. The Assembly also instructed Presbyteries to see that every minister, at ordination, is reminded of the Fund and of the desirability of connecting with it. It also gave discretionary power to the Committee to admit to connection with the Fund, prior to 1st January next, ministers desiring it, upon their contributing a sum equivalent to the total payments they should have made if they had connected themselves with the Fund at induction, together with interest from the date of induction. It is hoped that every minister in the Western Section of the Church will seek connection with the Fund without delay. The ministerial rate is payable in advance on the 1st Nov. for the year then beginning. It is a matter of very great importance that ministers who are connected with the Fund should ascertain exactly where they stand, as it is necessary in order that a widow may receive benefit, that the personal rates be paid up in full.

Special attention is called to the fact that the congregational contributions and donations are altogether insufficient. Last year, including the return of a loan, these only amounted to \$6,123. At least \$10,000 will be required from this source to enable the Committee this year to pay the annuitants at the present rate. This is a comparatively small sum for the Church to provide, and it only needs effort on the part of office-bearers to assure that it be got. There is more or less tendency on the part of office-bearers to delay effort upon behalf of the Schemes of the Church till the year is well advanced and in consequence the claims of some of the Schemes are not presented to congregations. It is

hoped that every session will take immediate action to bring the claims of the several Schemes before their congregations without delay. This is the more necessary because the Assembly changed the date of the ecclesiastical year, which now ends on the 31st of March instead of the 30th April as heretofore.

## SABBATH OBSERVANCE.

Rev. Dr. Caven's letter on Sabbath observance, in our last issue placed before our readers the terms of the Assembly's resolution. We earnestly commend it to the careful perusal of all under whose attention it may come. The more thoughtful ones in the churches, are realizing the great danger we are face to face with as to the holy observance of the Lord's day.

One extract from the Assembly's deliverance shows the conclusion deliberately and sorrowfully arrived at by that body:

"The General Assembly is painfully aware of the extent to which the Lord's Day is desecrated in nearly all Christian countries, and of the persistent efforts made in our own land to encroach upon the Sabbath, in the interests of business and pleasure. Unless the Lord's people shall recognize the danger, and unite in defending the Lord's Day from the assaults made upon it in so many forms and from so many quarters, we may before long find that Canada has lost its place as a land distinguished for 'keeping the Sabbath and reverencing the Sanctuary.'

"The General Assembly, therefore, earnestly and affectionately exhorts all those whom it represents to use faithfully the Lord's Day for the holy ends of its appointment, to refrain from all encroachment on its rest except what 'necessity and mercy' justify, and by all proper action strenuously to bear their part in defending the priceless inheritance of the sacred weekly rest."

The Canadian church does not stand alone in combating the swelling tide of Sabbath desecration. In Britain strenuous measures are being adopted by the leagues; and on the European Continent, the wantonness of the Sabbath breaker is causing a decided reaction in many quarters. The French correspondent of *Evangelical Christendom*, calling attention to the work of "The Popular League for Sunday Rest," says: "The Roman Catholic Church, in some localities, assist in the movement. The Abbot of St. Philippe du Roule in Paris preached an eloquent sermon on the Sanctification of Sunday, and the first condition of sanctification is rest. The preacher advised forming in parishes local committees whose members should preach by their example. All the chemists of the northern cities of Arras and Bethune have begun to close their shops on Sunday afternoon, a single one keeping open in turn. At Avignon in the south, M. Foureade has been very successful with a lecture inspired by religious motives. M. Foureade insisted on the necessity, for the family and the development of its life, of having a common day of rest." The correspondent from Berlin, Germany, says that "since the conference of the working class in 1890, Sunday is much better kept here." One writing from Berne, Switzerland, announces that "the contractors of the great tunnel through the Simplon have engaged themselves to employ only eighty men out of one thousand five hundred on a Sunday."

These various motives tend to one result, a gradual cessation of labor and amusements on the Sabbath. But with us "prevention is better than cure."

## THE LATE REV. JOHN BURTON, B.D.

It is with regret we announce the death of Rev. John Burton, M.A., B.D., which took place on Tuesday at Gravenhurst after a severe illness of several weeks duration. He was born in Hailsham, Sussex, England in 1834 and came to Canada at an early age, settling at Brockville.