

the whole scheme. Moreover, to raise a sum sufficient to provide against such amounts, while their number is so small, would require higher rates over the whole, and would thus press unequally upon the owners of the less costly churches through the body. The Committee therefore propose that no higher risk be assumed than what we have mentioned—that the trustees of the costly city churches be permitted and expected to enter the scheme to the amount mentioned, on terms to be afterwards fixed, and that for any sum above \$4,000, for which they might feel it necessary to insure, they should apply to the regular insurance companies.

We must next inquire what would be the total amount that would require to be insured. Of the sums suggested, we think that but very few would adopt the lowest; and from the increased cost of building, and the improved style now being adopted, the number is likely to be less hereafter. Moreover, it may be expected that henceforward the cost of all will increase. The Committee think that the average may be safely set at somewhere between \$2,500 and \$3,000, say \$2,500. At this rate, the whole amount to be insured on 200 churches would be \$500,000. The following calculations are based upon this estimate. It is to be observed, however, that should the amount be above or below this sum, it will not affect the validity of our conclusions, inasmuch as the charges being made rateably, the receipts will still be in proportion to the sum assured.

The next inquiry is as to the risk. At the first glance, it must be evident that this is the very lowest. Our churches generally are detached from all other buildings, and even in towns are often partially so, and even in our closely-built cities are so far separated from one another that it would scarcely be possible for two of them to be burned down in the same fire. The difference which this makes in the risk and consequent rate of insurance, is now a fact so well recognized that companies are formed, such as the Agricultural and the Isolated Risks Companies, which, by confining their business to detached buildings, or at least by taking only single risks within a specified distance, are able to insure at rates much below the ordinary companies, and yet with equal or even greater safety, as they can never be exposed to the heavy losses which a large city fire occasions.

But this is not all. It must be evident that the risk of fire in a church is much less than in a dwelling house. In the latter there is fire every day in the year. In the former for five or six months of the year, there is no fire at all, and during the remaining six or seven, there is fire in many cases only one day in the week, and rarely

more than twice, and this only for a part of the day, and that under closer supervision than, in most cases, it is possible to exercise over a house. Taking all the circumstances into account, then, it must be evident that the risk is reduced to a minimum.

This, we think, is confirmed by facts. We are able to look back for a period of 25 or 30 years, and yet with all the inquiry we have made, we cannot hear of more than six churches belonging to this body that have been burned during that period. Of these, two were burned while constructing, viz., at Casumpeque and Strait of Canso. From the much greater risk at this time, in consequence of the amount of combustible material about, and the carelessness of workmen, the risk must be much greater than after the church is finished and in use. The Committee therefore recommend that churches while building be not included, and that the risk under this scheme should be assumed only after the church is completed and in actual occupancy. If the Synod should desire otherwise, we must remark that the risk is so much greater in buildings at this time, that they could be included only by a largely increased charge on them, or by a considerably higher rate over the whole than would otherwise be required.

Looking, then, at the churches actually built, we find not more than four burned down in a period of twenty-five or thirty years, besides some cases of injury by fire. But say four in twenty years. This would be one for every five years, which we are certain, so far as the past is concerned, is above the truth.

But assuming this as the basis of our calculations, it will be easily seen that all that would be required would be to assess the value of one church upon the amount of the whole, and spread this sum over five years. But losses of this kind spread over a large area, or over a lengthened period of time, become so certain that they may be calculated on with the regularity of a law of nature; yet, over a limited number of cases or for a short period, they become matter of the greatest uncertainty. Thus, for example, for ten years previous to 1871, we do not know of a single church being burned; but in that year there were two, and that within a few weeks. So, there may not be a call upon this scheme for ten or twelve years, but there might be one or even two within twelve months, so that it would not be safe to rest on payments to be made five years hence. It will be necessary to have a fund at the very outset sufficient to guard against a loss, should one occur near the commencement of our operations. The Committee therefore propose that each, except as hereafter