

Synod at York, on the third Tuesday of June 1832, at six o'clock p.m.

ERRATA. A few errors crept into print with my last article, some of which require correction. That "Durham boat" bore its previous freight of Presbyterian ministers, July 8th, 1812, not "down Lake St. Peters," but down Lake St. Francis. In the third column, page 407, fourth line from bottom, the words "at Montreal" should be omitted. Under the heading "The New Presbyteries," the thirteenth line should read "Presbytery of Cornwall had *had* but two meetings," etc. The "trouble in the camp" began in 1822, not 1812. Mr. Bell desired "union with the Kirk" not "where" but "*when*" it could be accomplished" etc. Other errors will be readily corrected by the reader. H. S. M.

SUSTENTATION OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

BY THE REV. JAMES AMESON.

There are *five* ways in which men employed in the Christian ministry may find sustentance while employed in their Master's work.

WORKING WITH HIS OWN HANDS.

1. The minister may provide sustentance for himself by combining with his ministerial work some secular calling. It was thus Paul sustained himself while in Corinth. Against this way Paul, while following it for exceptional reasons, entered his earnest protest (1 Cor. ix.) as being against the *light of nature* (v. 7); as being against the *law of Moses* (v. 8); as being against the *light of principles of honesty and fair dealing* (v. 11); as being against the use and *account* of all religions (v. 13); and as being against the *express command* of our Lord (v. 14). The experience of the Church has shown clearly that this mode is dishonouring to religion, and injurious to the Church and its pastors.

ROBBING OTHER CHURCHES.

2. The minister, while at work in one congregation, may be sustained by the bounties of other congregations who share no portion of his services. Paul was often thus enabled, by the liberality of such churches as that of Macedonia, to labour where the people were unable or unwilling to sustain him. It is on this principle missionaries to the heathen are sustained. This way is good as a temporary arrangement, but it is wrong and injurious to minister and people when adopted as a permanent mode even in the poorest heathen congregation.

STATE ENDOWMENTS.

3. The minister may be paid by the State. It is not fitting to touch here the difficult and delicate question of the relation of Church and State, nor is it necessary to give any opinion as to whether it is always, everywhere and forever, the duty of the Church to refuse government money. It is enough that in this Dominion men are generally agreed that, in the past, State endowments have been hurtful to the Church, and that, in the present, it would not be right for a Christian Church in British America, to throw on the government the sustentation, total or partial, of its pastors. Enough on this point the statement of Dr. Buchanan, the convener since the death of Dr. Chalmers, in 1847, of the Sustentation Committee of the Free Church of Scotland, made in his speech last year before his General Assembly.

"For my part I greatly prefer this noble annual revenue for the support of the Gospel, coming in as it does from the countless and continuous free-will offerings of the Church's own members, rather than to have it provided by the gigantic and once for all contributions, whether of a whole community (State endowments) or of half a dozen millionaires. I frankly confess I was once of another mind. . . . I can now look at it from more sides than one. I have now had a pretty full experience of both systems, and I have come to a clear and conclusive judgment in favour of the one with which Christ's Church began and which He evidently meant to be permanent when, by His Holy Spirit, He guided an apostle to say, 'Let Him that is taught in the word communicate to Him that teacheth in all good things.'"

CONGREGATIONALISM.

4. The minister may be paid by his own congregation. This mode is justified by reason, by Scripture, and by the practice of many congregations of the Primitive Church. It is nearer, indeed, the right mode

than any of the modes above stated; but it is not the mode with which the Church of Christ ought to rest contented. It is liable when carried out fully to these objections: 1. It leaves poor congregations without pastors if they are not able to support them. 2. It suppresses the corporate spirit, so beautiful and healthy in a Church, by which each member has a care of the whole body, and the body a care of each member. 3. It develops a selfish spirit, similar to that rebuked by Paul in its manifestation round the Lord's table in Corinth, "For in eating every one taketh before his own supper; and one is hungry and another is drunken." 1 Cor. xi. 21. Under the operation of this mode we see, in the same Church and doing the same work, some ministers in dangerous affluence, while others are in abject poverty, rendering necessary for Churches on this continent the advice of Paul, "Wherefore my brethren when ye come together to eat (to divide the revenues of the Church) tarry one for another." 4. It lowers the independence of pastors. If the Church as a whole may suffer from the tyranny of a magistrate, is there no danger that individual pastors may suffer from the tyranny of the "mixed multitude" that is found journeying, since the days of the desert, with God's Israel? When the stipend comes direct from the hands of his congregation there is often no break-water in money affairs between the floods of ungodly men and the servants of Jehovah, over whose head the billows often go though, indeed, they cannot overwhelm him.

PRESBYTERIANISM.

5. The minister may be paid by the Church. The word Church is used here in the Presbyterian sense, collectively, like the word nation, as meaning all the adherents, communicants, office-bearers and congregations that meet by their representatives in one common Synod or general Assembly. And as the servants of the nation are paid by the nation out of the national funds, so, according to this mode, the ministers of the Church being in the service of Church, under law to the Church, should be paid by the Church out of Church funds. The difficulties in the way are: 1. That it might encourage idleness on the part of the pastor who is paid, not in proportion to his own exertions, but in proportion to the exertions of others. 2. That it might encourage stinginess on the part of congregations whose pastor would be paid whether they did or did not give. 3. That in the tone and temper of Presbyterianism at present the scheme would be found impracticable. The force of these objections largely disappears in the face of these facts following: 1. The sustentation of pastors by the Church in general was the rule under the law of Moses. 2. It is an instinct of the Christian Church's best life thus to scatter abroad, as we see from the spirit manifested after the outpouring of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, "They sold their possessions and goods and parted them to all as every man had need." 3. The principle of the whole caring for each part runs like a golden thread through the web of primitive Christianity. "The active brotherly love of each church," says Neander, writing of early Christianity, "was not confined to its own immediate circle; it extended even to the wants of the Church in distant lands." 4. This principle is implied in Presbyterianism according to which each minister belongs to the whole Church, and the whole Church is therefore to be responsible for his teaching, his character, his work, and therefore, surely his maintenance. To maintain the opposite is to abandon Presbyterianism as far as finances are concerned and take the first step towards Congregationalism. 5. This principle has been successful wherever it has been fairly tried in *living* churches all over the world under two forms; of which now a few words.

SUPPLEMENTARY FUND.

The principle of the whole Church being responsible for the decent maintenance of all its pastors exists in a modified shape in most Presbyterian Churches under the form of a *supplementary fund*, such as is found in the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland, and all the Presbyterian Churches in Canada, out of which fund poor congregations receive help as a matter of *charity*. The same principle exists in the fullest proportion and most advanced development it has yet received in Christendom (though not yet perfect) in the sustentation fund in the Free Church of Scotland, out of which each congregation receives an equal share as a matter of *right*, on the belief that when each congregation does its best, the rich and the poor, there will

always be bread enough and to spare in the Father's house for all His servants.

SUSTENTATION FUND.

To understand what are the leading features in a scheme of finance to which the eyes of all Protestant non-endowed churches are now directed as containing the probable solution of one of the great questions of the day, let us hear a few leading principles as laid down by Dr. Thos. Chalmers, its illustrious founder, before the *Convention* that met in Edinburgh in the month of November, 1842, to prepare for the impending disruption of the Scottish Established Church.

In laying his financial scheme before the meeting, he expressed great confidence in its success, and then went on to say:

"The arithmetic on which, under God, I found the confidence I feel, is soon told. It is not because I count on a multitude of great things. These may be either more frequent or more numerous than I shall attempt to specify. But I do count on a multitude of little things. It is not on the strength of large sums that I proceed, it is on the strength and accumulation of littles. I am not looking for much that is remarkable in the way either of noble efforts or noble sacrifices; nor yet is it on the impulse of strong but momentary feeling that I at all reckon. It is on the assiduousness of habit and principle, such as a very common and every day exertion in each district of our land might secure if begun, and such as the general influence of custom alone might suffice to perpetuate. Such is the character—the plain, unimaginative character—of the premises with which I am now dealing; and the conclusion I draw from them, what I call my minimum result, because the very least to which I aspire is a hundred thousands pounds in the year."

After a full exposition of the grounds on which his confidence rested, he summed up the principle of his scheme as follows:

"*Firstly*, then, the money raised in any given locality ought not to be reserved for the expenses of that locality. All the means raised throughout all the localities should be remitted to a large central fund, whence a distribution of it should be made of the requisite sums or salaries for the ministers of all our parishes. The benefits of such an arrangement are manifold and inestimable. It becomes an operation of infinitely greater delicacy and good taste when the offerings called for, in any given neighbourhood, are for the direct and personal behoof of their own clergymen. He could do nothing to extend or stimulate such a process. But his deacons and even himself might, without the violation of decorum, bestow upon it their full countenance and activity when seen in its true character, as part of a general scheme for the high patriotic object of supporting a ministry of the gospel throughout the whole of Scotland.

"*Secondly*, and what gives still more disinterested character to the scheme is the noble resolution announced at the memorable meeting held in the West Kirk (of Edinburgh), in the month of August, 1841, wherein the town ministers—the ministers of the most opulent parishes, and whence the largest contributions will be made to the general fund—agree to share and share alike with the ministers of the poorest parishes in Scotland. This law of equal division among the clergy will give rise to the operation of pure and high principle both in the rich and in the poorer parishes. The liberality of the former will be stimulated, not by the near and narrow consideration of a support for their own minister, but by the great and soul-expanding consideration that they are helping out a provision for the gospel in the most destitute localities of the land. And the efforts and sacrifices of the latter will be stimulated by the honourable ambition of raising their contributions as near to the dividend as possible.

"But, *thirdly*, you will observe that on this system of the equal division, right and beautiful as it is, yet did our financial operations stop here, and proceed no farther, then the clergy in the different parts of our establishment, with nominally the same means, might yet fare very unequally." After explaining how this inequality would necessarily arise under such an arrangement, owing to the great differences in the cost of living, house rent, etc., in towns, as compared with the same charges in remote and rural parishes, he went on to say: "It is for this reason that our financial system ought not to stop at the lowest point to which I have yet carried up my explanation of it. There is one step more . . . After that the organization had been set up in each parish for behoof