

Rev. W. Mitchell formerly of Chalmers Church Montreal, to the pastorate of the oldest and one of the most influential congregations in St. John, New Brunswick. And, not to speak of other evidences of the practical benefit which has resulted, it is enough to point to the very general, and, upon the whole, very liberal support which has been accorded to the various missionary and benevolent Schemes of the Church since the Union. In a very short time we may expect to find that there will be no such terms in our ecclesiastical vocabulary as "Eastern" and "Western" Sections, but that the Home and Foreign Missionary work of the Church, in all its departments, and the support of all our Theological Colleges, will be recognized formally, as they now are essentially, to belong to "The Presbyterian Church in Canada" quite irrespectively of geographical boundaries, or local predilections.

A General Sustentation Fund.

As the subject of a Sustentation Fund for our Church is now under consideration in the Presbyteries, it will not be out of place to put before your readers some information which may be of use in the discussion. In one branch of the United Church this subject has been more or less debated for 20 years, and at the Assembly of 1877 it really became a practical question; a committee having then been formed to consider the practicability of such a scheme, and to report to the next Assembly. This committee presented its report at Hamilton and so meagre was it in details and soacular in its tone, that it failed to satisfy the Assembly and the whole question was sent down to presbyteries, so that now at least a full discussion of the subject is secured, and wise legislation may be looked for at the Assembly to be held at Ottawa next June. There are some of our leading men who seem to have thought this discussion unnecessary and who have already pronounced the scheme impracticable, but as they have never given any satisfactory reasons for their opinion we cannot allow ourselves to be guided in such a grave matter by their ejaculations: "It will never work," "It cannot be done," &c. We know to begin with what a Sustentation fund has done for the Free Church of Scotland and for the Irish and English Presbyterian Churches, and we have yet to learn what the insuperable barriers are to its proving as successful in the Presbyterian Church in Canada. We are all agreed that the time has come when something must be attempted to raise the standard of ministerial support throughout the Church. Here are facts which make us blush. At least 80 of our ministers are labouring for an annual stipend of less than \$600, ranging from \$250 to

\$570. 64 of our ministers receive \$600 per an., and 98 from \$650 to \$700. Many of these ministers have been labouring for 20 or 30 years at these salaries, and though in the meantime the farmers composing their congregations have left their log-houses and built splendid homesteads and many of them become rich, the minister's pittance remains the same and no such thing is thought of as the increasing of his income in proportion to the increase of the cost of living or to the ability of his people to support the Church. Now we venture to assert that in the ranks of these brethren who have been so unhappily situated are to be found many of the noblest and most devoted of our ministers, and were it not invidious to do so we could give many proofs of our statement from cases personally known to us. Is it right then that the Church should continue indifferent on this subject when at least 200 of her ministers are compelled to bring up their families, to entertain strangers, and to help the needy, out of a sum which no skilled mechanic would work for, and which, inadequate as it is, has often to be waited for till months after it is due? Surely not, and if there is any generosity or any Christianity among our people this state of things will now be brought to an end. But look at the result of this treatment of our ministers. We complain of their preaching, but I wonder how our great city lights would succeed if they were burdened constantly with a load of debt, if they had not money to supply themselves with a commentary or a periodical, or even to provide themselves with the regulation broadcloth which in their present position, gives them such moral power in the community. Can we wonder that a man who is in such circumstances should lose self-respect, and, unless there is extraordinary grace bestowed, should lose preaching power? Well, then, let us consider what is to be done, for I know every honest man who reads this will be impatient till he comes to the remedy for such a disgraceful state of matters. The Assembly's Committee recommended a supplemental fund and we see that one presbytery has already bowed to the wisdom of their suggestion. There seems to us to be many grave objections to a supplemental scheme and of these objections we will state three. First,—Such a scheme destroys the principle of Presbyterian parity, makes an invidious distinction between the ministers of supplemented charges and those who are settled over the richer congregations. The supplemented minister is at the mercy of a committee of his brethren who often may abuse their power through failing to understand the minister's position, and may suddenly take away his supplement without just cause. Second,—A supplemented scheme really puts into the hands of a committee the patronage of all our weaker charges and gives them therefore a power liable to abuse. Third,—Such a scheme would never command the