

## XV. BENEFIT FUND FOR AGED MINISTERS

**E**ARLY in its career in America the Calvinistic Methodist denomination came to realize that some provision should be made for the protection and comfort of the aged ministers of the gospel and of their widows and orphans. A denomination in which compensation to the minister for his service had been almost negligible for several decades had many trying and some heartbreaking experiences, and was confronted by alarming conditions on frequent occasions. Settled pastorates were few, and those which did exist were in cities. Even in these compensation was meager. In rural regions the minister was a circuit preacher. The first ministers in such communities were farmers or tradesmen, and their compensation for preaching on Sundays was small if anything. Some did not possess farms and had only a small home and garden spot, and for these the income was indeed limited. Those who occupied small farms had to divide their time between farm work through the week and preparing for pulpit work on Sundays and, besides, had to do pastoral work in the community. There were the sick and the aged to be visited, the distressed and dying to be comforted. Such conditions also invaded the preacher's own home. When the Church observed this, it was aroused to a sense of responsibility for the man who had faithfully given so freely of his time and energy to the spiritual welfare of the community and had received so little compensation that nothing could be saved for "the rainy day" or for unforeseen emergencies.

In the 1840's and 1850's frequent references are found to offerings made for ministers' widows and orphans who scarcely knew where to turn for the necessities of life, but who faced the future in the new land with a wonderful faith in the kind Ruler of providence. Having in mind such brave, self-denying souls, the Church resolved that something must be done for the security of its faithful servants against the distress incident to broken

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health and old age, and for the protection of their families in the event of their demise in the prime of life.

Rev. John Edwards, of Portsmouth, Ohio, died early in 1861, and the Ohio Gymanva in session at Moriah Church, Jackson County, referred to him in the following affectionate manner: "He had a personal experience of religion such that no man doubted its genuineness; he was 'an Israelite indeed.'" The clerk was instructed to write expressing to his widow, in her sorrow and distress, the deep sympathy of the gymanva, and it was resolved:

"To take a collection in every church, within the bounds of the gymanva, for the widow and if, perchance, an occasional five dollars may come from without the churches, it will be very acceptable."

Such consideration on the part of the gymanvas and presbyteries for bereaved and needy families of ministers was not uncommon in that day. And even later, when the churches were able to extend a regular amount to the minister, they realized that it meant a very meager living to one who was ambitious and anxious to accumulate a working library and who, at the same time, was striving to give educational advantages to his children.

Facing such conditions, the denomination came to realize its responsibility and obligation, and soon it began wrestling with the problem. The New York Gymanva in session at Rome in March, 1864, discussed the need of a fund and the idea received unanimous indorsement. A committee was appointed to formulate rules to be presented to the gymanva for consideration. Unfortunately nothing more was heard of this worthy venture. At the spring meeting of the Wisconsin Gymanva, in 1872, opinions were expressed that some provision should be made for needy ministers, and here again a committee was appointed to draft a plan for the purpose and to submit the same to the consideration of the gymanva. The Minnesota Gymanva likewise, in the autumn of 1872, discussed the need of such a fund, concluding that it was a real necessity. Having no well-defined plan along which to proceed, the gymanva passed a resolution to present the matter to the attention of the General Assembly.

The General Assembly, in session at Racine, Wisconsin, in May, 1873, appointed a committee to consider the overture from Minnesota relative to a relief fund, and the following was reported to the Assembly:

"Inasmuch as we require of our ministers to relinquish worldly cares and avocations so far as possible, we recognize the necessity of making some provision for them and their families, their widows and orphans, in view of age, illness, and death.

"Resolved:

"1. That we see the necessity of establishing a fund designed to meet this condition in a practical and effective way.

"2. That we present the matter to the deliberate consideration of our gymanvas in the hope that they may appoint committees for the purpose of drawing up plans for the fund and to submit their respective plans to a committee to be appointed by the General Assembly.

"3. That a permanent committee of the Assembly be appointed to formulate an effective measure to bring this about, and to receive the suggestions made by the various committees of the several gymanvas. The plan then shall be published in *The Friend* in order that it may become operative immediately."

The idea involved in these resolutions was that after the committees appointed by the several gymanvas had drafted plans for the creation of a fund and had submitted the same to the Assembly's permanent committee, this committee would then issue a final plan compiled of their best suggestions. Pursuant to this, the state bodies appointed their committees for the purpose of drafting a proposed constitution for the ministerial aid fund. Minnesota appointed such a committee in 1873. In the New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Wisconsin Gymanvas committees were appointed in 1874. The New York Gymanva expressed fear that the time for such a step had not yet arrived, but to test the matter it appointed a committee, thus conforming to the request of the Assembly. Ohio turned over to the Jackson Presbytery the task of appointing a committee from its own personnel to formulate a plan to be submitted to the General Assembly. The Wisconsin Gymanva's committee drew up a proposed "Constitution of the Calvinistic Methodists of the United States of America for the Aid of Aged and Infirm Ministers," which was published as the proposal from Wisconsin. The Ohio Gymanva also

submitted its plan, which was likewise published. Whether or not the other gymanvas submitted their plans is not known.

To the General Assembly of 1875, in session at Hyde Park, Pennsylvania, the permanent committee of the Assembly made its report in the form of the following constitution, which was adopted by the Assembly:

#### CONSTITUTION

##### "Article I

"The name shall be: The Fund of the Ministers of the Calvinistic Methodist Church in the United States of America, Their Widows and Orphans.

##### "Article II

"The General Assembly shall elect a General Committee for the fund, consisting of fifteen (15) persons. A chairman, a secretary, and a general treasurer shall be elected from among the members of said committee, the committee to continue in office from one General Assembly to another, and to act under the direction of the General Assembly, its transactions to be reviewed by the General Assembly. Also each state gymanva shall elect a committee of seven (7) persons, and shall elect a chairman, a secretary, and a treasurer for each gymanva, and this committee shall continue in office from the first session of the gymanva immediately following the General Assembly to the first session of the gymanva following the next succeeding General Assembly. The gymanva committees are to act under the direction of their respective gymanvas, and their transactions are to be reviewed by the gymanvas. Five members of the General Board and four members of the gymanva boards respectively will be sufficient to constitute a quorum.

##### "Article III

"A fund of at least ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) shall be raised by the state bodies, to be placed on interest by the general treasurer, according to the advice of the General Committee, and none of the principal of the fund shall be used under any circumstances. All the gymanvas are at liberty to employ the method which they deem expedient for soliciting funds, and the amount raised shall be announced through the columns of *The Friend*, together with the names of all persons who contribute five dollars (\$5) or more.

##### "Article IV

"An annual collection shall be made, in the month of November, in every congregation within the General Assembly. The treasurer will also receive subscriptions, gifts, and legacies for the fund.

## "Article V

"The treasury of the fund shall consist of the interest accruing from the fund, congregational offerings, subscriptions, gifts, and the annual dues of the members.

## "Article VI

"Every minister who desires to become a member of the fund shall pay six dollars (\$6) annually into the treasury in the month of June, and neither he nor his family shall receive aid until four annual payments have been made, or twenty-four dollars in cash. Every member is to pay interest at the rate of ten per cent per annum for the amount which may be in arrears. He must pay all into the fund before he or his family become eligible to receive aid; and if he does not remit by the third year, he shall lose all rights to the fund. If a member is suspended from the ministry, he shall lose all rights to aid from the fund; if such a one be reinstated as a minister he may be reinstated also to his privileges as a member of the fund by paying all remittances due up to the time of his reinstatement or, if he should prefer, he may pay all that is due up to the time of suspension (if he was in arrears), and start anew by the payment of twenty dollars, or by making four annual payments of six dollars each.

## "Article VII

"Moneys may be issued from the fund as follows:

"1. Five dollars per week to a member unable to preach because of illness (or any other affliction), for the first twenty weeks of illness, and three dollars per week for the remaining period of his illness.

"2. Three dollars per week to a member unable to preach because of infirmities of age, this to continue to the end of life.

"3. Thirty dollars to the family of a member, upon his demise, to be applied toward his burial.

"4. One hundred dollars per annum for the widow of a member, while she so remains and is a member of the denomination or of some other evangelical Church. If she shall discontinue to be a member of an evangelical body, the annual payments will be withdrawn, but she shall be entitled to receive an amount equivalent to all her husband has contributed to the fund, less the amount he and his family have received from it.

"5. Seventy-five dollars shall be paid to every widow of a minister of the denomination who was in widowhood when the fund was inaugurated, while she continues in widowhood and a member of an evangelical Church.

"6. Ten dollars per annum to the widow of a member for every child under twelve years of age, while the widow is living and while she is entitled to aid from the fund.

"7. Forty dollars per annum for every orphan of a member who has

lost his mother, provided the mother has continued her privilege to share in the earnings of the fund until her demise, while the orphan is under twelve years of age. If a member of the fund, after he becomes incapacitated and is likely to continue so, shall marry, neither the widow of such a one nor the orphans will be entitled to aid from the fund.

"8. Thirty dollars per annum shall be allowed every orphan of a minister of the denomination, deprived of both father and mother, when the fund was inaugurated, while he is under twelve years of age.

## "Article VIII

"Every application for aid shall be presented through the chairman or secretary of the gymanva committee, with assurance of satisfaction that the applicant is entitled to aid under the rules of the fund, this to be certified in writing by two church officers, or by a certificate from a physician, and this certificate to be renewed, according to conditions, from month to month. And if the chairman and secretary (or the entire committee) are satisfied that the case is worthy, they are to instruct the treasurer to make remittance.

## "Article IX

"If the fund is, at times, too much depleted to pay out according to Article VII, the remittances shall be reduced proportionately in all cases.

## "Article X

"The gymanva committee shall have charge of all receipts and remittances, and all other transactions of the fund, within the bounds of the gymanva, and shall submit a report to the General Assembly's committee before the end of February of each year, for the year preceding. The Assembly's committee shall make a report of the whole and submit the same to the General Assembly, and a summary of the report shall be published in *The Friend* each year, together with the names of all who subscribe five dollars or more to the fund.

## "Article XI

"The treasury shall be under the control of, and in possession of, the General Assembly. Should the General Assembly be dissolved, each gymanva shall receive its proportionate share according to the amount which each contributed to the fund, and received from it.

## "Article XII

"These rules are not to be changed in any respect by the General Assembly without all the state gymanvas having a suitable opportunity to consider such change; and there must be, as a result, a two-thirds vote of the members of the General Assembly in favor of the change."

This constitution of the Fund of the Ministers was adopted by the Assembly, and fifteen of the leading laymen of the denomination were elected as the board of directors of the fund. When the board was organized, Mr. Uriah Davies, of Columbus, Wisconsin, was elected chairman; Mr. John Humphrey, West Bangor, Pennsylvania, secretary; Mr. Robert R. Owen, Newark, Ohio, treasurer. It then remained for the several gymanvas to organize as provided by Article II of the constitution, and to proceed with soliciting subscriptions. There was every evidence of enthusiasm in favor of an early completion of the amount specified as a minimum. At its fall meeting, immediately following the General Assembly, in November, 1875, the Welsh Prairie Presbytery, after listening to the report of the General Assembly pertaining to the ministerial fund, resolved:

"That every congregation in the presbytery take an offering between the date of this meeting and the first Sunday in January, 1876."

At their spring meetings each one of the five gymanvas set up their organizations as defined in Article II of the constitution. The Pennsylvania Gymanva, in session in May, 1876, appointed its committee of seven and the officers of the committee were chosen. Four ministers of the gymanva deposited sums in partial payment of their membership, and the committee was earnestly encouraged to proceed without delay to solicit funds. In the New York Gymanva, which convened in New York City in June, 1876, the fund was discussed and two elders—Owen Owen, of Fair Haven, Vermont, and T. Solomon Griffiths, of Utica, New York—subscribed fifty dollars and one hundred dollars respectively. A committee of the gymanva was appointed to carry on the work according to provisions in Article II of the constitution. The Minnesota Gymanva, in like manner, appointed its committee in June, 1876. To the Wisconsin Gymanva, in session at Cambria during the same month, the committee appointed on the fund for aged ministers reported:

"The committee feels that it is high time for us to begin soliciting for the fund in obedience to the article of the constitution, as was recommended by the General Assembly in October, 1875."

The committee then named the members of the board for the

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Wisconsin Gymanva and solicitors for the several presbyteries. It stated that it considered the present the most opportune time for pastors and preachers in the gymanva to subscribe as members of the organization, as doing so at that time would prove a stimulus to others to contribute generously to the fund. The Ohio Gymanva, at its meeting in September, 1876, also elected its committee for the organization within the gymanva.

Just what took place after the completion of the local organizations in several of the gymanvas is not known. Some may have met defeat or discouragement; others may never have seriously tried. But, whatever the reason, the enthusiasm was lost before the next meeting of the General Assembly at Chicago, Illinois, in September, 1880. To this Assembly the permanent Committee on the Benefit Fund for Aged Ministers submitted the following resolution:

"That we urge keeping alive the matter of the fund before our churches, as circumstances may permit, to the end that an effective result may ensue."

The resolution is not vigorous and savors of discouragement and even of defeat. From this time on for a period of years the gymanvas had various experiences and assumed a variety of attitudes toward the ministerial relief fund. The Assembly's fund was never formed.

A final attempt to secure relief aid for some of its ministers was made by the General Assembly when, in 1907, it resolved to petition the Gymanvas of North Wales and South Wales in the interest of a particular group of ministers in this country. There were ministers of the denomination in America who had come from Wales in recent years and who had been members of the relief fund of the Church in Wales before leaving their native land. The General Assembly of 1907 resolved to renew an appeal which it had made before on two occasions, asking the denomination in Wales to revise its by-laws and thus permit such ministers as were members of the relief fund in Wales before they left to continue their membership in the fund, provided the ministers should continue to contribute regularly to the funds in Wales after coming to America. This appeal appeared to the General

Assembly of the Church in America to be fair and in no way to interfere with the operation of the relief fund in Wales while; on the other hand, it conferred a favor upon ministers of the denomination who were then laboring in America. Evidently there were conditions attached to membership which could not be overcome, for to the General Assembly of 1910 came replies from the South Wales and North Wales Gymanvas stating that the rules could not be so changed as to allow ministers who moved to America a right to continue their membership in the ministerial funds in Wales.

The Wisconsin Gymanva was persistent in its determination to create a relief fund. The fund was simultaneously discussed at the spring meetings of two presbyteries. The Waukesha Presbytery, in March, 1883, resolved after discussion to overture the gymanva concerning the creation of a fund for aged ministers. *The Welsh Prairie Presbytery, at a meeting in May of the same year, passed a resolution to the same effect and instructed its delegate, William W. Rowlands, to bring it to the attention of the gymanva. At the gymanva which convened at Waukesha in October, 1883, it was announced that the rules governing the relief fund for ministers had been revised and would be published in The Friend in order that all members of the gymanva might read them. The revised constitution was published and is as follows:*

"Article I. The name is: A Fund for Aid of Ministers of the Calvinistic Methodist Church in Wisconsin.

"Article II. The object of the fund is to extend aid to disabled ministers and preachers of the Calvinistic Methodists within the bounds of Gymanva Wisconsin, together with their widows and orphans.

"Article III. A fund of ten thousand dollars shall be raised, in the state, by voluntary subscriptions, the amount to be placed on interest by the treasurer subject to the advice of the board of trustees; and none of the principal of the fund shall be used—the interest only.

"Article IV. The board shall consist of nine persons, five ministers and four elders, who shall be elected by the gymanva. The nine shall be divided into three equal classes . . . each class to remain in office until its successors have been elected. The Board shall have the right to fill vacancies, which may occur through death or any other cause, to continue until the next spring gymanva, at which time members will be elected to fill the unexpired term. Five members shall constitute a quorum."

Articles V and VI deal with officers of the board and their duties.

"Article VII. Members.

"Section 1. Any minister, or preacher, desiring to become a member of the fund may do so by making payments according to the following schedule:

"Those received under forty years of age, four dollars per annum.

"Those received between forty and fifty years of age, five dollars per annum.

"Those between fifty and sixty, six dollars per annum; and all over sixty, seven dollars per annum dues.

"All members will be entitled to receive aid after four annual payments have been made, either annually or in a lump sum, payments to be made annually in the month of June. If any member has been in arrears for two years, or has been suspended, neither he nor his family shall have the right to a claim for aid. If a member shall be reinstated to office, he may also be reinstated into membership in the fund, either by reuniting or by paying in full for the period of his suspension.

"Section 2. Every application for membership shall be made through the board, which shall reserve the right to exercise its discretion in accepting or rejecting the same.

"Section 3. Should a member withdraw from the Wisconsin Gymanva to unite with some other gymanva in the denomination, he may continue his membership by continuing to pay his annual dues.

"Section 4. If a member departs from us [the C. M. Church] to unite with another evangelical denomination, by a regular letter of dismissal from the gymanva, he shall lose his membership, but the entire amount paid by him into the fund shall be remitted, after the deduction of all aid which he formerly may have received from the fund.

"Article VIII. All requests for aid must be presented, through the chairman and secretary, to the treasurer, with a certified statement from a physician or from the officers of the church of which he is a member. If he is judged worthy by the chairman and secretary, they shall direct the treasurer to make remittance. Each request shall be renewed monthly, unless considered unnecessary by the Board.

"Article IX. Withdrawals.

"Section 1. Five dollars per week shall be allowed a member unable to preach because of illness, or whatsoever affliction, for the first three months; and four dollars for the remaining period of his illness.

"Section 2. Three dollars per week shall be paid to a member unable to preach owing to the infirmities of age, this to continue until death.

"Section 3. Fifty dollars shall be paid to the family of a member to apply on his funeral expenses—if such be requested.

"Section 4. One hundred dollars, more or less, according to the discretion of the board, shall be paid to the widow of a member while she

remains as his widow and a member of the denomination, or of some other evangelical persuasion; provided that removal to such denomination received the approval of the board. Should the widow marry again, or cease to be a member of an evangelical church, the annual dues will be withheld.

"Section 5. Twenty dollars shall be paid annually to the widow of a member for each child under fifteen years of age; and if she remarries, the child or children shall be entitled to the sum herein mentioned.

"Section 6. Twenty dollars per annum shall be allowed to the orphan of a member, who has lost father and mother, until he is twelve years of age, and its continuance thereafter is left to the discretion of the board.

"Article X. Amendments.

"This constitution may be changed or amended, after due consideration, by a majority vote in two gymanvas."

The Wisconsin Gymanva, in session in June, 1884, adopted the constitution of the ministerial relief fund. Thereupon plans were made for soliciting subscriptions for it. Strong appeals were made for liberal subscriptions, gifts, and legacies. The fact was stressed that the then rising generation of ministers would be required to devote all its time to preaching the gospel and pastoral work; the day of part-time service had passed. The compensation for service, on the other hand, would be too small for them to provide, as others do, for themselves and their families against conditions incident to illness, orphanage, and old age. "Some, who are faithful on their fields of labor, are in a distressed state of mind as they anticipate the future. Others, who might be coöperating with us in the affairs of the denomination, have left for other fields to avoid the possible distress anticipated if they remained in the service of the denomination." The fund, it was contended, would remove an important source of hindrance to the success of the Church in the future.

Rev. John R. Daniel, of the Welsh Prairie Presbytery, and Rev. R. H. Evans, of the Waukesha Presbytery, were appointed the two chief solicitors for the fund. They were heartened at the outset with the announcement that a legacy of fifteen hundred dollars was promised by a friend in Liverpool, England; another friend had subscribed one thousand dollars. Later, solicitors for all the presbyteries of the gymanva were appointed and soliciting was prosecuted with vigor. In June, 1888, a total of nearly sixty-five hundred dollars was reported to be on hand. The fund con-

tinued to grow, and its benefits were shared by many recipients. The remittances, though not large, came at times when they were needed and much appreciated, and helped to relieve conditions of dire distress.

One of the disappointing situations, as viewed by the promoters of the fund and the board of trustees, and indeed the whole gymanva, was that some ministers were reluctant to identify themselves as members. Repeatedly, in the minutes of the gymanva, references were made urging all ministers to unite, and even urging the churches, in some cases where the minister's income was small, to assume a part of the minister's annual assessment. What per cent of the ministers declined to unite is not known, but nothing short of one hundred per cent would satisfy the worthy purpose for which the fund was created. In 1903 it was reported: "We rejoice that some additional ministers have enlisted as members, and we urge all to follow."

Demands on the fund's earnings were sometimes heavy. In 1900 an appeal was made for additional freewill offerings in the churches, and the reason stated for the appeal, at the time, was that interest rates were low and the appeals for grants were many.

Some amendments to the constitution of the fund were made. In June, 1887, Article VII, Section 1, was amended to permit a minister past sixty years of age to be received into membership upon the payment of three dollars annually instead of seven dollars. But it was specified that those who wished to avail themselves of this privilege must do so before the expiration of a twelve-months period. This change was designed to make it possible to induce some ministers to join who had hitherto refused. Several drastic changes to the constitution were proposed in 1896, but on motion of the board of trustees a resolution prevailed to leave it intact.

An unusual ruling, under suspension of the constitution and with the approval of the entire gymanva, was made in 1898. In answer to an inquiry made by the board of trustees, asking if it might have the privilege of recommending aid to one who was not legally a member, provided there was money on hand to apply on such recommendation after meeting in full all obliga-

tions to regular members, the gymanva voted to grant such a privilege. Fifty dollars was recommended to be paid the widow of the late Rev. John R. Daniel, who had been one of the pioneers of the gymanva and also a pioneer in the movement of establishing the fund. This gracious action of the gymanva was intended, no doubt, as a small expression of its appreciation for the service of the man who had lavished his energy in its behalf as an agitator, writer, and solicitor for the fund.

When the Calvinistic Methodist Church united with the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America in 1920, a new situation developed with respect to the ministerial relief fund of the Wisconsin Gymanva. It continued for some years after 1920 to serve its members as heretofore, but with the organization of the pension fund in the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, which began to operate as of April 1, 1927, the relief fund of the Wisconsin Gymanva became obsolete. The board of the Wisconsin relief fund reported to the gymanva of June, 1927, with the recommendation:

"That the same be done with the relief fund as has already been done with the Gymanva's educational fund, inasmuch as there will be no more call for its operation because of the new pension plan which all the ministers are urged to join."

The Board recommended that the fund be placed in trust with the Presbyterian Board of Pensions, with the understanding that those who were then receiving aid from it would continue to receive aid from the earnings of the same fund so long as they lived and that, after their day, the entire fund would become the property of the Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.

In June, 1929, the board of the relief fund for aged ministers reported that the work of transferring the fund in trust to the Presbyterian Board of Pensions had been completed. The amount of the fund, when turned over to the care of the Board of Pensions, was twenty thousand six hundred and sixty-six dollars, the earnings of which were to be used according to the constitution of the fund under the direction of the Wisconsin Gymanva.

Thus ends the story of a useful institution which faithful men struggled and sacrificed to create—an institution which was a

source of comfort to the minds and spirits of many who would otherwise have been distressed; and one which continues, and will continue, to serve the very wholesome purpose for which it was formed: the aid of ministers and their dependents in their need and distress.

It is regrettable that the General Assembly's plan for a relief fund failed to mature and that the committees in the several gymanvas failed to function to the extent of soliciting funds to make the Assembly's relief plan a reality. Some of the gymanvas made attempts in later years to form relief funds, but without success. The Minnesota Gymanva, while it was the first to overture the General Assembly concerning the need of a relief fund, did nothing more than to appoint a committee within its bounds to conform with the Assembly's request. With the appointment of this committee the story ends; the committee never functioned. The Presbytery of Nebraska, in October, 1891, resolved to bring to the attention of the Western Gymanva the advisability of having "a treasury for ministers" in the gymanva. But the Western Gymanva, in session at Brush Creek, Missouri, later during the same month, resolved "to let alone, for the present, the suggestion of a treasury for ministers under the auspices of the gymanva."

After the General Assembly's plan for ministerial aid had failed, the Ohio Gymanva made several attempts at forming a fund for aiding its aged and disabled ministers. The Western Presbytery, at a meeting held in Cincinnati in October, 1889, adopted a measure prepared by the elders of the presbytery in a separate session, proposing:

"That we consider the matter of having a fund for aged and disabled ministers belonging to our gymanva to be a subject worthy of consideration, and we desire a thoroughgoing discussion of the subject by our fellow elders in the churches, and that a report of the same be made at the next meeting of the presbytery."

The action of the elders, meeting in the Western Presbytery, evidently received some publicity, for at the spring meeting of the Ohio Gymanva at Oak Hill the matter of establishing a fund was under consideration and a committee was appointed for that purpose. It reported to the October meeting of the gymanva the following resolutions:

"1. That a fund be formed to aid the Calvinistic Methodist ministers within the bounds of the Ohio and Western Pennsylvania Gymanva.

"2. That a committee of three be appointed to ascertain what may be necessary in order to form such a fund in accordance with the laws of Ohio; also that this committee draft a plan of constitution and report to the next gymanva."

After the appointment of the committee nothing further is recorded regarding the relief fund in Ohio until 1904. A renewed interest in the fund was stimulated when Mrs. J. C. Jones, the widow of an elder in the Oak Hill Church, made the offer of one thousand dollars toward a fund on the condition that the gymanva raise an additional two thousand dollars for the same purpose. This generous offer made by Mrs. Jones and the condition attached to it appealed to the gymanva and plans were made to begin with vigor the formation of a relief fund in Ohio. The cumbersome routine of sending the measure to the presbyteries and the churches for approval absorbed the interim between the two gymanvas in 1904. The committee, appointed in the fall gymanva of 1904, suggested as a possible plan the uniting with the Wisconsin Gymanva in the matter of a relief fund (as Minnesota had formerly sought to do with its plans for an educational fund) only to receive the same reply as Minnesota received, namely, that there were legal obstructions to such an arrangement. When this fact was reported to the gymanva which convened in May, 1907, a resolution prevailed that the practical thing was for Ohio to proceed to form a fund of its own. After four years of delays and postponements, a committee reported in June, 1908, that "after long consideration and conference we have come to the conclusion that there is not a sufficient amount of sympathy with the idea of having a fund, and therefore we release Mrs. Jones from the promised aid." This concluded the effort on behalf of relief in the Ohio Gymanva. Four years' delay was time enough to wear out sympathy for any worth-while project.

In the Pennsylvania Gymanva the partial payments already made by four ministers when the gymanva organized according to Article II of the General Assembly's plan, in 1875, were returned to them by the action of the gymanva in session in the spring of 1880. In 1883 the matter of a relief fund was again

discussed and tabled. The Southern Presbytery in 1897 over-tured the gymanva on the advisability of establishing a fund for aged ministers and in May, 1898, it was resolved to lay the matter on the table indefinitely. In 1901 the gymanva over-tured the General Assembly, favoring a fund for aged ministers, but the Assembly was busily engaged with plans for its Century Fund.<sup>1</sup> In 1905 Pennsylvania again, on the recommendation of its meeting of elders separately convened, resolved to solicit a joint fund for aged ministers and for educating candidates, but this never materialized.

To the gymanva of May, 1908, the board of trustees submitted a recommendation that the gymanva establish a fund for aged ministers. The proposal called for a fund of two thousand dollars, five hundred of which was to be paid from the trustees' fund and fifteen hundred to be raised by public subscriptions in the gymanva.<sup>2</sup> On the basis of this proposition by the trustees, the gymanva proceeded to organize for the creation of a fund. In the spring meeting of 1909 a constitution was adopted, but for some reason the fund never came into existence.

When Rev. Hugh Davies, of Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, retired from the active pastorate after long years of service to the Church, the Pennsylvania Gymanva decided to honor him with a testimonial in the way of a substantial purse. Mr. Davies was a veteran minister and one of the most distinguished preachers of the Welsh pulpit in America. Mr. Davies died, however, before the purse was presented. It was then decided, after consultation with Mrs. Davies, to use the money contributed as the basis of an endowment fund for aged and infirm ministers of the denomination in America. The committee in charge of the memorial fund in Pennsylvania, at the direction of the gymanva, presented the matter of a "national endowment fund" to the General Assembly of 1913, and instructed its commissioners to vote favoring that "all the money collected be applied on securing a 'Fund for Aged and Infirm Ministers' of our denomination according to the wish of the departed himself." The General Assembly, in session

<sup>1</sup> On Century Fund, see pages 285 and 286.

<sup>2</sup> The trustees made a similar proposition for an educational fund.



at Utica, New York, in September, 1913, took no definite action other than to postpone the matter until the next General Assembly. The General Assembly of 1916, at Lake Crystal, Minnesota, returned the matter of the "Hugh Davies Memorial Fund" to the Pennsylvania Gymanva with the suggestion that the money already contributed to this fund be turned over and applied to the "New One Hundred Thousand Dollar Fund for Home and Foreign Missions" then being raised by the General Assembly.

The final disposition of the Hugh Davies Memorial Fund was that the Pennsylvania Gymanva turned it over to Princeton Theological Seminary, as may be seen in the chapter on education, and in a manner worthy of one of the greatest preachers of the Welsh pulpit in America.

The New York Gymanva did not interest itself extensively in the matter of a relief fund for its aged ministers after the matter was suspended by the General Assembly. It did, in 1909, attempt to form an alliance with the North Wales Gymanva, for in the record of the gymanva held in Utica on May 28-30 of that year we read: "It was resolved that we make an appeal to the North Wales Gymanva, that they permit our ministers to unite with their ministerial fund." To the 1914 gymanva the matter of considering the advisability of establishing a fund to aid aged and disabled ministers was presented by the Oneida Presbytery. A committee was appointed to convene at the next gymanva and to make a report. So far as the records show, nothing of permanent value was reported by the committee.

A careful examination of conditions prevailing in some of the gymanvas, which tried to accumulate a benefit fund for ministers and their dependents but failed, reveals that drought and crop failures in the West and unstable conditions in mining industries in the East militated against a successful prosecution of their plans, which they were reluctantly forced to surrender.

## XVI. THE FRIEND (Y CYFAILL) AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCH

THE first periodical printed in the Welsh language in America was *The Friend, Y Cyfaill*. At first it bore the name *Y Cyfaill o'r Hen Wlad*, The Friend from the Old Country. It is related that when Dr. William Rowlands first discussed publishing a Welsh magazine in America, he consulted a friend in Wales as to what the publication should be named. The friend replied, "Call it The Friend from the Old Country." The name suggested was adopted and was a fitting name for the early period. Most of the leading articles and essays, apart from editorials, were from men in the Old Country. The magazine came into Welsh pioneer homes as a friend from the land of their fathers, and as such was heartily welcomed. American Welsh writers were then comparatively few in number. But with the passing of time and the growth of Welsh settlements in America articles by local men increased and productions by writers from Wales gradually decreased, until finally all contributors to the magazine, generally speaking, were either men who had made America their adopted home or American-born Welshmen.

Observing this tendency, the General Assembly of 1880, through its board of publishers, recommended that the words, "From the Old Country," be dropped from the title of the magazine, and that thereafter it be called "The Friend."

At the beginning *The Friend* was an undenominational publication. The first number appeared in January, 1838, and issues of it continued to appear each month, without the lapse of a single number, for ninety-six years, the final number being the issue of December, 1933. *The Friend* had a remarkable career of inestimable service to Welsh Churches, and especially the Calvinistic Methodist Church, in America. It was described as a magazine of useful knowledge to the Welsh people, consisting of various articles of a religious, moral, and educational nature, together