

ciety was hoarding up resources in the shape of investments instead of using all available funds in its legitimate work.

A minister who was present during most of the sessions said, "It is seven years since I attended a meeting of the Board, and I am simply amazed at the vast increase of business." Another minister said: "This is my first experience as a member of the General Board, and I confess I had no idea of the amount of work devolving upon the Board and upon the General Secretary." These two brethren are representatives of a large class. Only those who have attended sessions of the Board, and have made themselves familiar with the details of the mission rooms, have any adequate conception of the amount of work to be done, or the care necessary in doing it.

Two important documents were laid before the Board by the General Superintendent. The one was a report concerning the work in Bermuda, and the need of exceptional treatment in regard to term of service and conditions of furlough. The other was a report of a visit to British Columbia, especially the Kamloops District, and made clear the importance of some method by which financial aid and efficient supervision could be given in establishing and developing the work in new and rapidly-settling regions. Verily, our Presbyterian brethren are wiser in their generation than the children of John Wesley—in this country at least.

Dr. Carman touched upon another most important point when he referred to his visit to the Christian Endeavor Convention at St. Catharines, the vast possibilities for good in such an organization, if wisely guided, and the possibility of friction between the various young people's associations and the General Missionary Society in the raising and expenditure of missionary money. The danger lies in the multiplication of organizations, and the starting of small, independent missionary efforts, instead of rallying to the aid of the established missionary organizations of the Church. Our hope is in the good sense and loyalty of the young people themselves. They can do much to strengthen our missionary work, and they can do much to weaken it by a divisive policy.

Another matter of great importance which came incidentally before the Board was a memorial from the Japan Conference asking for complete autonomy. We say "incidentally," because the memorial is addressed to the General Conference, as the legislative body, and came before the Board of Missions only for information. There can be no doubt, however, but that the whole subject will be carefully considered by the Board during the year, and that recommendations will be sent forward to the General Conference in September next. The question is one of profound importance. The whole tendency of the churches in Japan is towards absolute self-government; but at this early stage in their history there are practical difficulties in the way, requiring careful thought and wise handling.

It was foreseen that a number of questions pertaining to the constitution of the Missionary Society and the administration of its affairs would require the attention of the next General Conference. It was also foreseen that it would be quite impossible for the General Board to give the time necessary for a full consideration of these questions. It was therefore decided to refer all such matters in the first instance to the Committee of Consultation and Finance, with instructions to print the results of their deliberations, and send a copy to each member of the General Board in time for a thorough revision before the assembling of the General Conference. We venture to say that no more important matters will engage the attention of the Conference than those that concern our missionary work.

### The Society's Anniversary.

ON the evening of Tuesday, October 10th, a fair audience assembled in the Centenary Church. Devotional services were conducted by General Superintendent Carman and Rev. W. R. Parker, D.D. The chair was occupied by the Hon. W. E. Sanford, who presided with his usual ability and tact, and choice selections of music were rendered by the efficient choir of the church. The following abstract of the Annual Report was read by the General Secretary:

To present an abstract of the Society's operations, even for a single year, is no easy task. The field is so wide, the work so varied, the incidents so numerous and interesting, that to condense the information without omitting much that would be eagerly read, seems to be an impossibility. And yet a bare outline is all that is practicable in a report like this.

#### THE FOREIGN WORK.

In Japan, after twenty years of labor, we have a missionary force, all told, of some sixty-four persons. This includes both foreign and native missionaries and all classes of native helpers who are supported, in whole or in part, by missionary funds, but does not include the agents of the Woman's Missionary Society. The number of communicants is 1,987; and the minutes of the last annual Conference report 1,697 as the average attendance at public services, 1,445 children in Sunday schools, and church property valued at 66,433 yen, equivalent to about \$46,500. So far as material prosperity it concerned, the results are encouraging, and in some of the congregations there are cheering evidences of spiritual growth; yet it cannot be said that results, on the whole, have equalled the expectations which the missionaries and the Board alike were led at one time to cherish concerning the rapid spread of Christianity in Japan. Perhaps we expected too much, and did not make sufficient allowance for prejudices arising from race, religion and national sentiment, which in Japan, perhaps more than in any other nation, raise a barrier against the spread of an alien faith. Certain it is that for some years past converts to Christianity have not multiplied rapidly in Japan, nor has the attitude of the people towards Christianity been as friendly as many expected it would be. This condition of affairs is not peculiar to the missions of the Methodist Church. It is equally true of all Churches laboring in Japan, and shows that Christianity is now passing through a most critical period in the land of the rising sun. At the same time it is cheering to know that our missionaries abate not one jot of heart or hope, but confidently anticipate the triumph of Christ's kingdom through the length and breadth of Japan.

From West China, our new foreign mission, there are tidings of good cheer. Thus far the work has been of a preliminary kind, and the missionaries, with the exception