

British Wesleyan, one to six and a half.

Maritime Conferences, one to six.

In the Canadian conferences related to this Fund in the year 1886 the proportion was one to six and a half, the same as the British Wesleyans; four years later it was one to six; then one to five and a half; it is now one to five. It is significant that with death as the determining factor the proportion of widow claimants is the same in all the Methodist Churches; but when administration and expediency determine the number of claimants, there is a wide disparity between our own and other Methodist Churches.

THIS DISPARITY IS EVIDENTLY CAUSED BY PREMATURE SUPERANNUATION.

There has been for many years a steady increase in the longevity of our ministers, but the added years are spent in the superannuated relation rather than in the active work. A comparison of the average number of years spent by ministers as claimants on the Fund is also significant in this connection. The average term on the Fund in the British Conference is eight years. This was the average in the Methodist Church of Canada prior to the year 1884. Since that time it has steadily increased till now the average is twelve and a half years. It is quite evident that Canadian preachers, when given a superannuated relation, are not as nearly worn out in the itinerant service as are the preachers of the British and Australian Conferences. An average of two more years in the active work would add 10 per cent. to each annuity; and if the average term on the Fund were the same to-day as twenty years ago we could pay eleven dollars per year for each year of service.

The arrangement of circuit work in Great Britain and Australia favors a longer term of active service. A station occupied by one pastor is very rare. It is usual for two or more married ministers to be stationed on a compact circuit having a town or village as its centre. The superintendent is relieved of the more arduous physical work, and his colleagues meet the sentiment of those who desire junior ministers; in this way the elderly minister is able, with comfort to himself and gain to the connection, to continue in the pastorate several years longer than the brethren in our own conferences. So deeply ingrained is this British policy, that the Superannuation Treasurers frequently request the appointment, and pay the salary, of an assistant for an elderly minister, this in the interest of the Superannuation Fund.