

### Another Self-Denial Object.

DO not let the Self-denial week be forgotten. In the January OUTLOOK we mentioned a number of special objects to which the money might be devoted. Since then another object has come to the front. By letters in another column, it will be seen that the commodious new church at Shizuoka, Japan, has been burned, a month after its dedication, and the native congregation are literally "on the street." To what better use could the self-denial fund be put than in helping them to rebuild? But what is done should be done quickly; the matter admits of no delay. Let us hear as quickly as may be from our Epworth Leagues, Societies of Christian Endeavor, Mission Circles, and the like; and let the older people join in this good work, so that as speedily as possible words of cheer and substantial help may go out to Shizuoka. "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."

### The Divine Plan.

THE supreme wisdom is to find out God's plan in our generation, and then to fall promptly into line with that plan. To cross it is folly; to oppose it is madness; to misunderstand or misinterpret it, is the worst calamity that can befall us. That plan is revealed in prophecy, and unfolded in history. To the devout student every day makes the divine purpose clearer; but many will neither read nor understand. As of old, they "can discern the face of the sky," but they "cannot discern the signs of the times." God's great plan for the world is "the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." Its central thought is the redemption of mankind; its scope the spread of the Gospel to all nations; its instrumentality a consecrated Church; its animating promise, "Lo, I am with you alway"; its glorious outcome, the reign of righteousness, and the manifestation of the sons of God.

### Conference of Missionary Secretaries.

ON invitation of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, a Conference of Secretaries and Treasurers of various Mission Boards was held at 53 Fifth Avenue, New York, on the 12th ult., "for the purpose of discussing practical questions of missionary policy, and learning whatever is best from the methods and experience of each." There was a fair attendance of representatives, and the meeting proved so interesting and profitable, that it was decided to hold another similar gathering at a future date, when questions of importance could be more fully discussed. The Secretaries of the American Presbyterian Board were unremitting in their attention to the visiting delegates, and contributed in no small degree to the success of the occasion. A report of the Conference will be published by the Presbyterian Board, to which we shall refer more fully when it appears. In the meantime we can only indicate the titles of the papers read and discussed: Mis-

sion work in the New Testament as related to mission work to-day. Should native converts be discouraged from coming to Europe and America for education? Should natives educated in America be commissioned on the ordinary missionary basis? Economical disbursing of mission funds. How to develop spiritual power and stimulate missionary effort in the native churches. Relative importance of evangelistic work in relation to other forms of effort. Methods of educating and inspiring the churches at home on the subject of foreign missions. Relation of Young People's Societies to the work of Foreign Missions.

### Joy and Sorrow in Japan.

THE BEAUTIFUL NEW CHURCH AT SHIZUOKA DEDICATED AND SOON AFTERWARDS BURNED.

THE mail of Dec. 19 brought the following cheering note from the Rev. F. A. Cassidy, M.A., Chairman of the Shizuoka District, dated Nov. 28, 1892:—

DEAR DR. SUTHERLAND,—I am happy to say that our new church has been completed and opened ("by your honorable shadow," as the Japanese would say), and is most satisfactory. I had too much to do with it to say much in its praise, but I am sure that if you saw it you would agree with those who have in saying that it is a wonderfully fine building for the price. One foreigner guessed it at 15,000 yen, but of course that was wild. All complete, it cost about 3,500, will hold 1,000 or more under pressure, and is convenient and respectable.

A month later, and while we were yet rejoicing in spirit with the native church at Shizuoka, another mail arrived, bringing the sad intelligence that the beautiful new church had been burned to the ground. Under date of Dec. 16, Bro. Cassidy writes:—

I am pained beyond measure to tell you that the whole centre of Shizuoka was burnt on the night of the 14th, and our beautiful new church swept away. Even the new imperial building beside it, which was supposed to be fire-proof, fell a victim to the terrible flames. I believe it was the work of an incendiary; 405 houses, including most of the public buildings, are gone.

What shall we do? We are not discouraged, but we are terribly disappointed. Eight of our families are burnt out, but our people all say we must double our energy and go at it again. Poor souls! they have all they can do to cover present liabilities. We must pull them through; \$2,000 in gold will enable us to go on. I feel that we must have that amount from somewhere at once. Mr. Saunby goes home by this ship, and will see you as soon as possible. I entreat of you to help us in our sad trouble, and as quickly as possible.

Emphatically we take up Bro. Cassidy's words, but with a different application, and ask, "What shall we do?" What the native Christians in Shizuoka intend to do is plain from their own noble words, "We must double our energy, and go at it again." But there is a limit to their ability. They cannot of themselves "revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish which are burned." Assisted by a grant from the Mission fund, they exerted themselves to the utmost to build the church that has been destroyed, and are not yet free of all the liabilities involved. Help from outside sources they must have, if the church is to be rebuilt. The General Board will not meet for months, and help is needed NOW. Let those to whom God