

Points Worth Pondering.

AN editorial correspondent of the *Halifax Wesleyan*, writing from St. John, N.B., has some suggestive remarks touching expenditure on our Home Missions. As these remarks apply to other Conferences quite as much as to New Brunswick, we give them the benefit of the *OUTLOOK'S* circulation, and trust that all concerned will "read, mark, learn and inwardly digest the same":

The ministers of the Conference of New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island preach in three hundred and ninety-nine different places within the two Provinces that constitute the Conference territory. The total Methodist population within that area is 49,100. That will give an average of 123 persons to every appointment in the Conference. Perhaps we do not often consider the matter, but it means that if next Sunday morning every Methodist in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island—infants in arms, the sick, the aged and the infirm—were to come to the place where the Methodist minister is accustomed to hold service in their locality, there would be just 123 persons present in each place. The spacious Centenary and other churches in St. John, the Fredericton church, the Charlottetown churches, every Methodist church or school-house or mission hall would have just 123 persons present. We know, of course, that all the city churches, and many of those in villages and country districts, have regular congregations very largely in excess of the figures named. And it is very doubtful if, when we exclude from our calculations infants, the sick, the infirm, the aged, it is possible for more than 75 per cent. of the Methodists returned in the census to be present at service at any one time. When, therefore, we reduce the number, 123, by these considerations, we shall see to how small communities of Methodists our ministers are carrying the ministries of our Church. We do not mean to say that service is held by them every Sunday at all these appointments. In some of them, service is fortnightly, and, in rare instances, perhaps once a month; but in these places other denominations are conducting service on the intervening Sundays, and cases are not rare in which the only reason why the Methodist minister does not hold service more frequently is, that he must await his turn with ministers of four or five other denominations, who each have an appointment at the same place. In view of these facts, we do not think we can be said to be guilty of neglecting our own people in the sparsely settled parts of our Conference territory.

It is sometimes urged that it is our duty to preach the Gospel to others as well as to our own people. That is true: but we then are entering upon missionary work, and the first questions in that case are, where can we do that work to the most advantage? and, where is the need the greatest? Now, we have no doubt that our Baptist, Episcopal and Presbyterian brethren would be greatly benefited by receiving Methodism, but we do not think that even the most bigoted Methodist—if a Methodist can be bigoted at all—believes that any member of those denominations will perish for the lack of it. Indeed, it is conceivable that there are persons for whom these Churches are better suited than even the Methodist Church.

If, then, we are called to mission work at all, it is to go where the needs are greatest. And with 40,000,000 Japanese and 400,000,000 Chinese almost at our doors perishing for the lack of the Gospel, let no man say that we are called to carry on missionary work among other denominations who are our neighbors, and many of whose members rebuke by their Christlikeness and devotion our own worldliness and un-Christian lives.

If, however, anyone still thinks the home fields need increased missionary cultivation, the great North-West and the Province of Quebec lie next us, and are inviting spheres of labor.

We hope that those charged with the responsibility in relation to the matter will not disregard two or three unpleasant lessons that some of the circuits sought to impress upon our minds at the last Conference. One of

our leading circuits reported a very large decrease in the contributions to the Missionary Society, and several others reported decreases varying all the way from \$30 to \$100. When an explanation was asked, the decrease was in each case accounted for in this way—that many of the regular contributors had given their subscriptions to the Woman's Missionary Society because in that way their money was used for Foreign Missions instead of being spent at home.

The representatives from one circuit were still more precise and circumstantial. They said that they had observed that a certain portion of their missionary contributions had been used as a grant towards the support of the minister on a circuit adjacent to their own. They were sufficiently well acquainted with their neighbors to know that they were easily able to pay their minister, if they would, without help from them. They therefore contributed a considerable amount of their usual subscriptions to the Woman's Missionary Society, that their money might be spent in the foreign field.

It is a most serious and unfortunate thing that the General Missionary Fund should suffer a decrease by the diversion of money even to so excellent an organization as the Woman's Missionary Society; but it is time to look the matter in the face when our people think it necessary, so to speak, to take the law into their own hands, because they wish that their contributions should reach the foreign work.

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Missionary Readings.

Woman's Medical Missionary Work.

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I THINK I have told you before of the sad results that often follow treatment by the native doctor in Corea. This year, for the first, I saw one of them at his work, and I will try to tell you about it. I was called one day to the house of one of the higher class to see a child who had become very sick two or three days before, after being carried a long distance, strapped to the back of his nurse, as is their custom, his bare head and the nape of his neck exposed to the fierce heat of a July sun. I found him in convulsions, and after a careful examination I told the father I feared there was little or no hope of his recovery. Both father and mother bowed before me and begged me to "give life," as they express it here. I told them only God could do that, but we would do all that we could, and I left them medicine and the necessary directions, with the promise to return in the morning. Now, this child was the only son of these people, and their love for him was just as strong as that of fond American parents, and, like them, they wanted to leave nothing undone that could be done for their darling. They had had the Korean doctor before they called me, and when they saw the child surely growing worse they thought they would try the foreign doctor; but now as morning dawned and no improvement they again sent for the Korean doctor, who arrived shortly after I did. The mother and Esther, who accompanied me, had then to leave the room, as no Korean woman may be seen by a man who does not belong to her own family. After examining the little boy I told the father that he was dying. I could do no more for him, that God was surely going to take him very soon to his heavenly home. Then the father bade the Korean doctor to again try his skill. The first thing the doctor did was to make a little pyramid of a brownish-looking powder upon each breast of the child and then to set it afire. As it began to burn the tender skin I begged the father to have it removed, and I said to the doctor: "You know it can do no good;" but he only calmly smiled, as he obeyed the now almost frantic father to go on with his treatment. He then took out from its sheath a needle, half way between a darning needle and a surgeon's probe in appearance, and this he proceeded to stick through each little foot, through the palms of the hands, the thumb-joints, and through the lips into the jaw, just beneath the nose. Again I tried to make him stop,