

SECOND ANNUAL REPORT OF THE UNION MISSION AT 29 CANAL STREET

By Anna W. Prosser

ANOTHER year of hard but willing service has rolled swiftly away. We have toiled and wept over many perishing beings; we have "reproved, rebuked, exhorted, with all long-suffering and doctrine." We have faced the most fearful storms of winter and the burning heat of summer day after day, with but one thought animating our minds and lifting us above weariness, exposure, and many serious obstacles, viz., the desire to carry the story of the Cross to the many immortal souls so madly rushing on to ruin in the locality where we labor. The services have been held nightly, with two exceptions, and during one week in the spring our rooms were closed for painting and repairs. The workers of the Franklin Street Mission very kindly offered us their room at this time, and we held several delightful meetings with them. Our hearts have rejoiced to see the steady attendance, excellent order and close attention which have characterized our meetings. Among the many conversions have been men of intelligence, education and good moral character, as well as many who were addicted to vice and crime. Both men and women of all ages and classes have risen for prayer; among them have been several visitors who came

out of curiosity to see the Mission, and were at once cut down by the "sword of the Spirit" and converted to God. Glory to His Name!

There is so much of the presence and power of the Holy Ghost, such inspiring singing and glowing testimonies in the meetings that it is good to be there. One of the most encouraging features of our work has been the eagerness with which the members of our Bible classes have listened to the expounding of the Word, and the rapid growth, which we have noticed many who have thus "received the Word with all readiness of mind." During the past year we have organized a Band of Hope among children. They meet on Wednesday evening, when we interest the little ones by scriptural and temperance drawings on the blackboard. A short talk, or a little reading follows this, and singing, after which as dismiss the children and talk to the adults present.

The children seem to realize the meaning and importance of their pledge, and thus far many of them have kept it. They are much more docile and obedient than a year ago, and seem truly attached to us. Two of them have found Christ during the year. During the past few months a noonday prayer meeting has been started, and

already several have risen for prayer and signed the pledge in this little meeting.

VISITING

Every Friday at 2.30 M. the lady visitors meet at the Mission for prayer before starting out to make their calls. The homes of our Sabbath-school and the wretched dens of infamy all about us are visited on these occasions. We sing, read and pray, and distribute a large amount of reading matter, both along the street and in every house, which we enter. This is a very important part of our work, and we need a dozen consecrated women, whose hearts are full of love and pity, to join us. Who will offer? The scenes, which we witness on these visiting days often baffle description.

We would faint by the way were it not for the Savior's promise, "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless (thank God for that word!) return with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." Death has entered Canal Street many times during the year. Three of the persons were buried from the Mission. The first funeral was that of an old man living in the adjoining house, who fortified himself against all our pleadings by quoting the writings and sayings of Robert Ingersoll. An inmate of the house told us, however, that he was heard to cry for mercy just before he breathed his last. Rev. J. McLachlan preached a very tender and impressive sermon.

The second was an elderly woman, mother of a large family, who had attended our meetings for over a year. We hope that she died trusting in Christ. Rev. P. G. Cook preached an excellent sermon.

The third and most heartrending of all was that of a young girl who had been "on the street" for a few years only, but in her shame and despair had drank herself to death. She died in the hospital. At the request of the wretched woman whose house she frequented, she was buried from the Mission. It was a scene never to be forgotten. She looked so young and pretty! And the pale hands were folded so meekly over her breast, as if to say, "Do not censure me!" Her last words were, "My Savior has forgiven my sins!" No one who looked at the peaceful face could doubt it. We labored earnestly with every girl in the house before going to the funeral, and all wept aloud as we pointed to the blood that can make the vilest "whiter than snow." The service was conducted by Rev. P. G. Cook and the writer, and was of the most affecting character. The Holy Ghost fell upon the place, and we believe that that funeral will prove to have been the birthplace of many a precious soul.

FINANCES

We continue to look to God alone for means to carry on the work. We have never solicited a dollar yet, and do not intend to do so, but look unto Him who has promised to supply all our need,

and He never fails us. Money comes by letter and in various ways, frequently from entire strangers, in answer to our prayers. We cannot help referring to the many generous and touching donations from the members of our Bible classes. The self-sacrifice attending these gifts would, if known, put many of our rich men to shame.

ENTERTAINMENTS

We have had several very interesting ones, viz., a Thanksgiving praise service, and supper to all who came in. Rev. Henry Ward preached a very appropriate sermon. We fed about 250 persons. Next came our Christmas tree for the Sunday school, which was loaded with useful and amusing articles for the poor little ones whose lives would be so sad and joyless but for the gleams of sunshine, which we have been enabled to fling at across their path. During holiday week the fourth annual supper of Miss Prosser's Bible class was held at the home of Mr. Angus Smith.

These have always been occasions of great delight, but who among the number present at the supper can ever forget it? Such unfeigned happiness and innocent merriment, and what roars of laughter ran around the board! Thirty-two persons were seated at the table; among them were many who have been wonderfully saved from lives of drunkenness, vice and crime. Now neatly dressed, with bright, beaming faces, the dark, sinful past forgiven, and a future of joy, and usefulness before them, they presented a picture

that happy Christmas Eve which we shall ever cherish. All praise to our blessed Jesus, who is so "mighty to save."

Later in the season we had a very nice entertainment for our Band of Hope. This consisted of temperance songs and recitations by the little ones, followed by a free supper to all who came in. The room was crowded, and the interest very deep. This was one of the most successful events, of the year. Easter and Children's Day were both observed, the children acquitted themselves very well. The room was beautifully decorated with flowers, the gift of one of the Mission men. In July we gave an excursion to our Sunday school to Fort Eric Grove, which all enjoyed.

Thus we have done what we could to cheer, to elevate, and, above all, to save the people; and as we review the year our hearts swell with praise to Him who has sustained and led us through it all. We need more consecrated players, singers, teachers, and visitors, and are praying that they may be sent. Expressing thanks to all who have aided us, either by money, clothing, or personal work, we commit our Report to the earnest consideration of all, and start in a new year hoping for greater manifestations of God's power than before.