

# Central Mission Gazette.

## The Semi-Jubilee of the Central Mission.

### Twenty-five years of Sustained Aggressive Work.

VI.—By A. J. Derrick.

Mr. Edgar was rather partial to a ritual in the morning service at Wesley Church, probably because of the Church of England training which he had as a boy. He was very fond of quoting the saying of a friendly critic, that our services were "ritualistic in the morning, socialistic in the afternoon, and evangelistic at night."

At the end of 1910, Mr. C. Spencer offered "The Olympia" (a great picture building across Princes Bridge) for Sunday night services. Successful services were carried on here for many months. Y.M.C.A. workers acted as stewards, and Mr. T. Hopkins organised and conducted a choir of seventy voices. A special movable choir gallery was purchased, at a cost of £25. It was found, however, that in the winter months the crowds kept to the city pavements, and did not congregate on the south side of the river, and for this reason the attendances dropped off, and the services were discontinued.

"The People's Night" was the name given to a great series of Thursday night entertainments, which ran weekly, with certain intervals, from May, 1895, to 1903—a period of over eight years.

## THE HOME OF THE C.M.M.

When the Rev. Mark Guy Pearce was in Melbourne, he was questioned concerning the establishment of a mission, and recommended as a sine qua non, a large mission hall. When asked what he would do with Wesley Church, he replied, "Pull it down, and build a hall in its place." This represents the prevailing idea of the time, that the masses could not be attracted to an ecclesiastical building. Our Mission has proved beyond question that it is not a question of building, but of interest. When people are interested, neither rain nor storm, nor class of building will keep them away. Moreover, the influence of a beautiful Gothic structure, like Wesley Church, upon the minds of most people, is not measurable, but is very real. The Roman Catholic Church knows much on this subject. One gets more attached to the grand old church as the years go by, and memories continue to gather. We recall ceremonies of the unveiling of memorials—to Rev. J. C. Symons, Dr. Joseph Dare, Dr. James S. Waugh, Rev. A. R. Edgar, Mr. J. W. Eggleston, Mr. W. H. Judkins, Mr. John Adamson, and the Revs. Thomas Adamson and Dr. Watkin—all added since the Mission started. The first four named are marble tablets, the next a brass, set in oak, and the last six (including Mr. Edgar) are beautiful stained glass windows. The Mission has also recently erected two windows as an Honor Roll, to those with Wesley Church associations who have enlisted in the great war. A copy of the Wesley memorial in Westminster Abbey was fixed in Wesley Church at the end of 1907. It is the work of the late Mr. Thomas Pearce.

### **late Mr. Thomas Pearce.**

By arrangement with the trustees, the Mission has had complete charge of the property, and many improvements have been made. The new ceilings and general renovations of the interior, in 1893, have been already referred to. In 1899 the sewerage and some shelter sheds, etc., cost £348. In November, 1895, outlet ventilation in the church was provided at a cost of £80. Electric light was installed in July, 1896. In September, 1901, the grass plots and hedges in front of the church were done away with, and the whole area asphalted. In 1906, the floors of the schoolrooms were renewed. In 1915 a new caretaker's residence, and additional outbuildings and boundary wall entailed an outlay of £850. The "Old Book Depot" and lower schoolroom have been converted into offices and three large class-rooms. These, with all sorts of minor improvements and upkeep, have entailed a fairly heavy tax upon the Mission resources.

### **Restoration of Wesley Church.**

The greatest task, however, was the restoration of the decayed free-stone, which had become dangerous, and which was undertaken in 1911-12. The spire presented the greatest difficulty. But this was scaffolded with a screw scaffold, reached by vertical ladders, with a swinging box for the workmen. The scheme was launched in July, 1910, and a general appeal made for funds. In November of that year, an "All Nations Fair" was held in the Masonic Hall. Some of the suburban churches as-

Hall. Some of the suburban churches assisted, and £424 was raised. Amounts from donations doubled this sum, and gave us a fair start.

The next November (1911) a Japanese Fair, in Wesley Church grounds, for this purpose, gave £256. Altogether the Mission raised £1463. The amount expended on the exterior was £1709, of which £982 went in masons' wages. In addition to this, and at the same time, £367 was spent on the interior of the church. The exterior work was continued in 1916-17, when another £220 was raised, and spent upon the western side of the building. While much remains to be done, everyone acknowledges the great improvements which the Mission has made in the grand old edifice—the Cathedral of our Church in Victoria. Mr. Thomas Lawry was caretaker of the buildings when the Mission began. He was succeeded, in March, 1897, by Mr. W. J. McCarthy, who continued until the appointment of Mr. and Mrs. Heyes, in April, 1901. Mrs. Heyes, who is so well and favourably known in connection with the property, took sole charge on 23rd June, 1904. She has therefore been closely associated with the old church for seventeen years. She has been very faithful to her duties, and has long since made herself an essential part of the varied operations at the Mission centre. An interesting feature of

the property is the row of bamboos and the splendid olive tree in the parsonage yard. These were planted by Mr. Mars Miller, the former twenty-five years, and the latter forty-five years ago. Mr. Mars Miller was a great old veteran. He had for twenty years taken interest in open-air work. We can see him now with his uniform and side drum. To him belonged

uniform and side drum. To him belonged the honour of giving the first donation to the Mission.

## OFFICE WORK.

Visitors to the Central Mission office frequently express surprise, at the numbers of people who come to us for assistance or advice; and this has gone on all through the years. The requests are many and varied. Sometimes humorous and grotesque, more often sad and distressing. Experience teaches in this matter, in a very special way; and we are thankful to believe, that in the thousands of cases which come to us, wise counsel and judicious help is, and has been the rule, and not the exception. At one time we kept account of these cases, and supplied information to the Charity Organisation Society; and these tests emphasised the volume of the work. All the ministers have given up much of their time to this work, and have not lost opportunity to advise the people, as to the source of all true help.

The sound of prayer from the minister's office is not a novelty. Of the Sisters, Sister Hannah, Sister Alice, and Sister Emilie have given most time and attention to this work. The work has been in Sister Emilie's hands for many past years. Tact, firmness, a good memory, and sound judgment, combined with sympathy and much patience, are essentials in this work; and these qualities have been developed and shown by these workers in particular, and by others in general. Since 1893, we have been privileged to obtain railway passes, for cases we desired to help, but this has been withdrawn during the last month or two, by the present Government.

We have recognised this as an important trust, and have not abused it. We

"We have recognised this as an important trust, and have not abused it. We have always received and distributed large quantities of left-off clothing, and a special room is devoted to it. The writer remembers the day when Mr. Edgar and he entered "The Old Book Room," to decide upon office accommodation. The Book Depot had been moved to the new Connexional Buildings in Lonsdale-street, and the front entrance of the school building led to one large room, large enough to be called a hall. We fixed on the south-east corner, and made two enclosures, with ledged partitions, about 8 feet high. We bought the furniture from the office of an architect, who had gone to West Australia, consequent upon the prevailing distress; and his plan drawers, copying press, book case, and counter front are with us to-day, relics from the

land boom wreckage. The present office and class room arrangements have gradually developed.

We cannot pass from this section without paying tribute to the careful and painstaking work of Miss Bertha Minns, who for fourteen years was Mr. Derrick's assistant in the office. She came in December, 1900, and continued a valued and much appreciated service, until April, 1914, when she left to be married. She was capable, thorough, entirely trustworthy, and devoted to her work. A heavy task, which she did cheerfully, came to her in 1913, during Mr. Derrick's absence in England. She was followed by Miss Vera Beck, who after a year and a half of very capable and satisfactory work, returned to her former position in the city. The position is now filled by Miss Ivy Vickers, who has taken up the work with heartiness and ability, and

WORK WITH HARTNESS AND ABILITY, AND SHOWS HERSELF EQUALLY WORTHY OF CONFIDENCE. THE WHOLE OF THE FINANCIAL WORK, AND THE GENERAL ADMINISTRATION OF THE MISSION IS DONE FROM THE MISSION OFFICE.

We are glad to find that appreciation of the work of the years, has led to many welcome bequests. Our various institutions and funds have so benefited on many occasions. The following are the chief amounts:—Mr. John Moroney, £100 (1902); Mrs. Charles Drew, £150 (1906); Mrs. Margaret Pratt, £450 (1906); Mr. Thomas Pope, £195 (1907); Mr. Alexander Miller, £125 annuity (1914); Mr. E. W. W. Hine, £50 (1916).

## LYGON STREET.

Lyon-street Primitive Methodist Church had suffered like all other city churches; and, with a depleted congregation, had come upon bad times. The Rev. G. H. Cole was appointed in 1898, to make another attempt, with the aid of the circuits, to establish Mission work. He was wise to see that, in view of Methodist Union, a federated arrangement with the Central Mission, had great advantage over a separate effort, in such close proximity. He accordingly approached the Rev. A. R. Edgar, and the matter was fully discussed. It was submitted to the C.M.M. General Committee in April, 1898. The matter was discussed sympathetically, and a special committee appointed, with power to send on the project to the Methodist Federal Council. This committee delegated it to a sub-committee of six. To these, on the nomination of the President of Conference, were added four leading ministers. This committee decided that for one year a federation for working purposes should be made, under the respective Quarterly Meetings, with the Rev. A. R. Edgar as

in made, under the respective Quarterly Meetings, with the Rev. A. R. Edgar as superintendent of the whole. The Primitive Methodist District Committee had agreed to the resolutions for Federation, and sent four representatives to this committee. The joint meeting was harmonious and enthusiastic. The Federal Council agreed to the recommendations. The opening services, which were very successful, took place on 15th May, 1898. Rev. C. Tregebar preached in the morning, and Rev. A. R. Edgar conducted a lantern service at night. A lantern concert followed on the Monday night. A large calico sign announced to passers-by the change that had taken place. In July, 1899, the Quarterly Meeting agreed to take over and manage the finances. It is well here to testify, that during the years that this tentative arrangement lasted, and until Methodist Union was consummated, the Rev. G. H. Cole "carried his end," and never allowed the ar-

rangement to be a financial tax upon Wesley Church; and also, that from the first, all personal relations continued with the greatest harmony. Mr. Cole was one with us from the first. From the stand-point of numbers in the congregations, the arrangement was never a great success. Its proximity to Wesley Church always militated against it; but it was a great success in respect to its influence upon the people of Carlton. The work of Mr. and Mrs. Cole, and other helpers, began quickly to tell upon the social conditions around. In the following year, 1900, suggestions were seriously considered for the sale of Lygon-street, and

sidered for the sale of Lygon-street, and the building of mission halls in Carlton; but nothing was done. The securing of the "Baptist Hall," in Bouverie-street north, in March, 1900, led to a work amongst boys; and other social operations. In September, 1901, the work was removed to another building in Bouverie-street further south. This building was held until October, 1903, when the Mission School was transferred to Lygon-street. In addition to evangelistic work, it was at Bouverie-street that the boy rescue work was developed. A Boys' Brigade paraded in uniform. A Club was formed, and large numbers of boys were attracted; and the needs of this work led to the establishment of our Boys' Training Farm at Tally-Ho. During Mr. Cole's absence in New Zealand in 1903, Mr. W. H. Judkins was employed at the Lygon-street branch, and both Sister Margaret and Sister Edith gave their time to this work. In January, 1900, an important open-air mission was held in a large tent, erected at the corner of Madeline-street and Lincoln Square, a part of Carlton known as "Irish Town." Mr. Cole was the missioner, and much good resulted. Some of the best workers at Lygon-street were converted in that tent; notably Mr. H. G. Wallis, who has for many years devoted himself to this work, taking the lead in all departments.

Two other agents employed at different times were Rev. J. Parker for three months in 1906, and Mr. E. F. Egan in 1909. In addition to Wesley Church, the Mission has had the onus of the upkeep of this property, and important items such as new **picket** fencing on both fronts, new ceiling in the school-room, internal renovation of church and school, sewerage, and the entire renovation of the

sewerage, and the entire renovation of the parsonage, have had to be faced.

From the time of the Rev. G. H. Cole's departure to the Boys' Farm, in March, 1904, to the appointment of the Rev. J. H. Cain, to Wesley Church in 1908, the parsonage was let to outside tenants. In April, 1910, the sale of a back portion of the land reduced the debt by £200.

## THE ENLARGED MISSION.

The Mission was enlarged in 1906, but there were several proposals prior to this. As early as 1895, proposals were made for the inclusion of North Richmond and West Melbourne. The District Synod turned down the North Richmond proposal. The C.M.M. General Committee more seriously considered the matter of West Melbourne, but in the following January decided against it.

About the middle of 1904, a movement began for the union of Brunswick-street and North Melbourne with the Mission. Members of both places had spoken to Mr. Edgar about it, and he decided to call the ministers of the three places together. Then the stewards were called into council. This meeting decided to call the

members of the three Quarterly Meetings together; and at a largely attended meeting in the Conference Hall, the subject was frankly discussed. From this, the project, as outlined, went to the three September Quarterly Meetings; and in each case, was approved by a majority. The C.M.M. resolution was: "While not desirous of increasing the burdens of the Mission, we will not put any obstacle in the way." From thence it went to the District Synod of 1904. The Synod an-

District Synod of 1904. The Synod appointed a large committee to gather facts, and report to Conference. This committee drew up a detailed scheme, which was passed on to the December Quarterly Meetings. It was again generally approved, and went on to the Conference of 1905. There it was strenuously debated, and as a compromise, it was sent on to a special committee, which had been appointed to consider the whole question of Metropolitan Methodism. The battle was fought again in this committee, and occupied several nights. A majority decided in its favour. It was decided upon as a part of a great forward movement scheme, to include South Melbourne, Footscray, and North Richmond. These recommendations went to the September Quarterly Meetings, and were explained by a commission from the Metropolitan Committee. North Melbourne adopted them by 19 to 1; Brunswick-street, by 17 to 6; and the Central Mission gave its decision in somewhat qualified terms.

The scheme passed the District Synod of 1905, and, after much debate, the Conference of 1906. The Conference resolution was "that North Melbourne and Franklin-street be separated from the present North Melbourne Circuit; that Brunswick - street, George - street, and Fitzroy-street be separated from the present Brunswick-street Circuit; and that these places be connected with the Central Mission, with five married ministers." The new constitution was passed.

The representation of the Melbourne Circuits on the General Committee of the Mission, which had obtained from the beginning of the Mission, was discontinued.

ginning or the mission, was discontinued. The Mission had, however, decided that this had served its purpose, and should be done in any case. The inaugural services of the United Mission were held on Sundays, April 22nd and 29th, 1906. An united inspirational meeting, in Wesley Church, on April 26th, and an Inaugural Demonstration, in the Exhibition Building, on Monday, April 30th. At this meeting, after the Rev. A. R. Edgar and the Lord Mayor had spoken, the Hon. Alfred Deakin (Prime Minister), and Hon. Thos. Bent (State Premier), moved the first resolution; Rev. E. H. Sugden (President of the Conference) and Mr. Stephen Barker moved the second. It was a great meeting.

The first meeting of the new General Committee was held on May 3rd. About sixty were present. Congratulatory greetings were exchanged, and the machinery clauses of the new constitution set in motion. Mr. A. J. Derrick was appointed managing treasurer, and Mr. R. B. Cottle, senior treasurer. The Executive included Messrs. A. Hoadley, W. B. McCutcheon, and L. J. Mountain, representing Wesley Church; A. C. Bowman, H. W. Hackett, and A. B. Millar, representing Brunswick-street; and W. Hill, W. H. Fuller, J.P., and C. Lavers, representing North Melbourne.

To be continued.