

HOW TO REACH THE MASSES WITH THE GOSPEL

THE FIRST FRUITS GARNERED FROM THE GAFF.

Another gem in the Saviour's crown,
Another saint in heaven.

Sister Francis was convicted while listening to the speaking in the open air. She was much troubled about her state, but the conviction wore away. One evening, more out of curiosity to see the Gaff as a mission hall than anything else, she, with another young woman, came to hear the preaching. While listening, her fears were again aroused; she saw what a sinner she had been, and before she left cried to God to have mercy on her soul. Her prayer was heard and she went home in peace. She continued to follow on to know more of God, and in a short time three of her children were converted also. About three months afterwards she was taken ill, and continued so, more or less, until the time of her death; but in the midst of poverty and suffering, she rejoiced in God her Saviour, and was enabled to say, "Thy will be done." On one occasion when I visited her, she said, "Oh, how glad I am that the Gaff was ever opened, and that the Lord led me into it and saved my soul. I might now have been still following in the ways of sin and wretchedness; but God had mercy on me, and snatched me as a brand from the burning." I replied, "Then you think if you die now you will go to heaven." She answered, "Yes; my lamp is trimmed, and I am waiting my Lord's coming."

Though severely tried with outward circumstances – her husband being out of work, and a family of little children wanting bread – she was enabled to cast her care on God, and would say to me, "He always sends us something; He will provide."

One evening while holding a meeting in the open air, some one came and told me that if I wanted to see her alive I must go at once. I did so, and found her much worse, but willing either to live or die. She said, "I do miss the singing so much; sing me one of our hymns." So I sang, "My Jesus, I love Thee, I know Thou art mine," &c. As I sang she raised her hand and said, "I do;" and when I came to – "In mansions of glory and endless delight, I'll ever adore Thee," she said, "Yes, I will." I said, "Would you like to die or get better?" She looked round at her children who were weeping by her bedside, and said, "For their sakes I feel sometimes as if I would like to get better; but when I think of the delightful place to which I am going, it makes me long to be there." I prayed with her and left her, expecting to meet her no more on earth, but she



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revived, and still lingered on for some time. One day two of our sisters visited her, and she asked them to sing "Rock of Ages, cleft for me." She said, "I am on that Rock, Christ Jesus." The other day I was sent for again, and I found her very much worse. I asked, "How is it with you now?" She answered, "All is well; religion is a reality." I read the 14th of John to her, and she said, "I shall soon be in my mansion above." I then sang, "In the Christian's home in glory, there remains a land of rest." "Yes," she said, "I shall soon prove what that rest is," and shortly afterwards fell asleep in Jesus.

BETHNAL GREEN. THREE COLT'S LANE.

In Three Colts Lane, a very dark part of Bethnal Green, we had, soon after the commencement of the Mission, a room that would contain about one hundred and thirty persons. This room was often crowded to excess, not only on Sabbath evenings, but on week nights. In it we were most pertinaciously and bitterly persecuted. If we opened the windows for ventilation, mud and stones, and occasionally fireworks, were thrown through, and in consequence we had to sit and endure the stifling heat until it was impossible for delicate people to remain in the place. Sometimes trains of gunpowder were laid right into the room. The dress of one devoted sister was thus actually set on fire during the service. The doors and shutters were continually battered, and almost every square of glass in the windows broken; while outside, the open-air gatherings were continually harassed by the police, set on by the landlords and frequenters of adjacent public-houses, an example of which is given at page 8. In the midst of these very trying annoyances, blessed meetings were held night after night. We believe many were truly converted, some of whom are among our most active labourers. Nevertheless, the opposing influence prevailed, and we were ultimately turned out of the place. We then took

AN OLD TIN PLATE FACTORY

in the Old Bethnal Green Road, and turned it into hall, school, and class rooms, which from the first were crowded; but this, after eighteen months' occupancy, came down for a railway; and ultimately our friends took refuge in an old chapel in Hart's Lane, Bethnal Green Road, in which they say John Wesley often preached, and which we call

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HART'S LANE MISSION HALL.

Here they have established themselves with schools, open-air services, and all the varied means and measures employed in the Mission. With larger premises, this band of brethren would be able, we doubt not, to do a great work. We hope the time is not far distant when they will possess a Hall equal to the necessities of this deplorably dark neighbourhood. Already God has commenced working with them, and is showing the signs and wonders which ever attend His presence. We gave an incident or two that have transpired in connection with the work in Bethnal Green, at page 20.

STRATFORD.

W. H. Crispin, Esq., a gentleman having a factory here, and anxious to do something on behalf of the spiritual interests of his workmen and others of the same class, erected a small room, and instituted some preaching services. Some time afterwards he invited us to help him, and the result was the commencement of a branch Mission. About that time the Unitarian chapel was for sale, and our friends enabled us to purchase it; and since then the work has been regularly carried on in it. In no part of London have we encountered greater discouragements, difficulties and persecution than here. The following extract from a brother who laboured here for a season will give not only some idea of the opposition we have met with, but also enable the reader more fully to understand the methods we have been led to employ:

A CAMP MEETING AT STRATFORD.

This is a quiet place, and yet thousands of the people seem literally given over to the devil: and the choicest sport of many of them consists in persecuting and blaspheming the children of God.

Though all denominations are represented in the neighbourhood, open-air preaching is so peculiarly confined to us, that for this one thing we have become the butt of the scoffers, and the song of the drunkard. But the saints are firm. Hallelujah. And God is faithful, and "the word which goeth forth out of His mouth, shall not return unto Him void!"



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June 28th was set apart for holding a Camp Meeting. At 7a.m. a prayer meeting was held for a baptism of fire. Before 10 a.m. the Poplar band of navvies and coal porters, with several brethren, came to the hall. After prayer, a procession was formed; and defiant of perils, and fearless of men, they marched on, making Bow Bridge and the Old High Street ring with the hymn,

“Jesus, the name high over all
In hell, or earth, or sky;
Angels and men before it fall,
And devils fear and fly!”

With this and similar strains, prayer, and exhortation, a number of streets were missioned. Some of the people blessed us, some cursed us, and we were made a gazing stock to all. But heaven smiled, and God was with us as, in the dust of the high road, our company knelt, and amid the commotion of excursion trips, and the grimaces of the infatuated crowds hastening out of London to a Sabbath’s revel at Epping Forest, asked the convincing Spirit of God to come down upon Stratford.

At a little past eleven we got to the stand, where a van and forms had been placed. These helped the order of the meeting very much. The sun struck down its burning heat on that 28th of June so that the speakers perspired as much on that day as on any of the previous six spent in the docks and coal barges, toiling for a crust to keep up the strength thus spent in the cause of God. They spoke, sung, and prayed only as men can speak, and sin, and pray, who are fully persuaded, blessed with a faith that works, a hope that’s lively, and a devotion that presents the body a living sacrifice.

In this spirit the services were continued through the day, and some of the roughest, rudest men and women in the East of London were constrained to listen for hours in unbroken attention, and on departing to confess that a religion like ours must be of the Lord.

At 7 p.m. the singing procession was reformed and marched to the Mission Hall, where an experience meeting was held. The Hall was filled. Those who stood up told with much feeling of the Divine power which took them from drunkenness, uncleanness, and all kinds of iniquity. And all hearts were stirred as those brands plucked out of the burning “sang unto the Lord a new song.”

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The next day a tent was pitched in the field. After tea the service was commenced by Mr. Booth, and as the factory hands left work, crowds came to hear. Many who had heard the word sounding through their windows on the Sunday came to the tent.

A RAGING MOB BAFFLED.

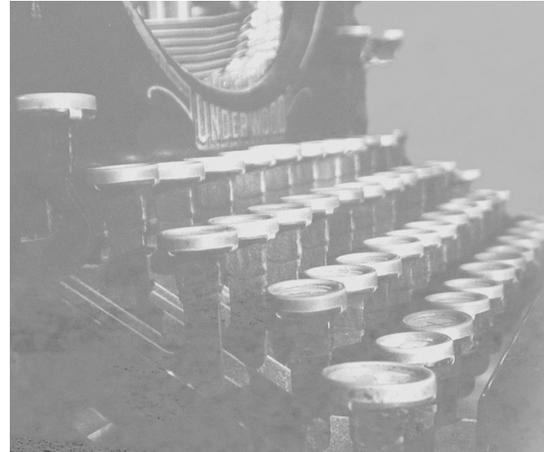
The speakers were enabled to put the plainest truths in the most homely way. But gradually a crowd gathered, who were evidently bent on mischief, outside the tent half-drunken fellows beat the tent with sticks, threw stones, and flung children through the canvas. A large number of low Irish Romanists, especially females, did their best to provoke a riot. Inside a number of youths intoned amens at the close of every petition, others laughed at the sport, and made most awful mockery. One batch of men who had come to cut the ropes, caught in the act, came by invitation inside, and these unexpectedly took up cudgels for us, and spreading themselves through the tent, did good service in ejecting four or five roughs, and holding in awe most of those who remained to annoy.

By this time many hundreds were come together in the field, and it became a necessity to close the meeting. This was a signal for a general tumult, in which the ropes were cut, the lamps seized and emptied on the ground, which set fire to the grass; and but for the diligent care of many hands, would have burnt up the tent.

Several of our friends received heavy blows, our opponents thus signifying their willingness to fight: but the Lord reigned, and kept His people in peace.

Several things were stolen, the tent sorely rent, and much crockery was smashed. About 10:30 the police came to our assistance, and very near midnight we returned home with hearts full of gratitude to Him who had restrained not only our enemies, but His own children; who, with far less provocation, a few weeks ago, would have fought like demons.

We might fill page after page in recording the discouragements we have met with at this station. We forbear, and give one as a sample case of many that have amply repaid all our toil, and kept us cheerfully working on.



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P —, a working man, strolling down the Bow Road, with head aching and heart heavy as the result of the pervious night's debauch, heard our Br. L— preaching near Bow Brewery; was convicted of sin, the word (as he said himself) going right through him; and, instead of making him happy, made him more miserable than ever. He followed our friends to the Hall, and attended every meeting, and sought God until He revealed Himself unto him as a God forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin. Some time has passed away since then, but he is with us still, walking consistently and standing firm, although called to suffer all manner of persecution from the ungodly men among whom he works. His conversion was the means of bringing his wife to Jesus. May we meet them both in heaven.

CANNING TOWN.

This place is about a mile and a half east of Poplar. Great numbers of men working in the docks and on the coal barges reside here. For some time three or four brethren, living in the neighbourhood, attended our meetings at Poplar; but finding the distance too much for them after the day's work, and anxious to do something spiritually for their own families and neighbours, implored us repeatedly to open a branch, promising to do their utmost to sanction its services. Regarding this as a providential call to visit the place, we took the public rooms, and opened them in the name of the Lord. The results have fully justified the steps taken. A number of brands have been plucked from the burning, and good congregations gathered to hear the word inside. And throughout the Mission there is not a better sphere for out-door work. Regularly every Sabbath do hundreds of rough working men throng to hear our brethren preach free salvation through the blood of the Saviour in the open-air.

In connection with this branch we have also a most interesting work among a number of gipsies who camp in the neighbourhood in the summer time.

The following account of a visit paid to this camp by a Christian brother appeared in a recent number of "The Christian," entitled,

THE CHRISTIAN MISSION AMONG THE GIPSIES.



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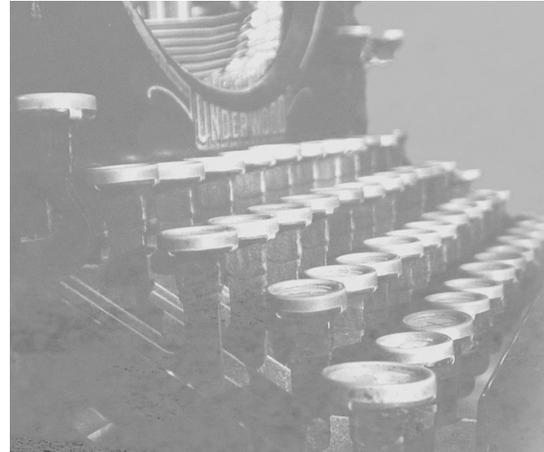
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Not far from the Barking Road Station on the Woolwich line, is a range of marshy land, known to the inhabitants as Cherry Island. On this island there is a sort of permanent gipsy encampment, containing some sixty persons. An interesting feature in connection with this encampment is that sixteen of them are on the Lord's side and connected with "The Christian Mission," and great number of people are weekly brought together here to "hear the gipsies preach."

Being about to go into Kent "hopping," they held a farewell tea and public meeting on the 16th ult., both of which had to be "done" in the open air. Having received an invitation, we, on the evening named, started for Cherry Island; arrived there, we found the encampment to comprise a dozen large caravans, and about the same number of tents. The tea gathering was quite picturesque; seated upon the grass in a large ring were about 200 friends from the different stations of the Christian Mission, who had come to bid them good-bye. In the centre was a long table holding the edibles; at each corner was hoisted a flag, whilst on the table were several beautiful and in some cases rare plants. Flitting about among the crowd were seen the gipsies – the women with their dark faces, jet black hair, and bright laughing eyes; and the men with their bright coloured neckties and vests, conveying tea here and huge plates of cake and bread and butter there. Happiness beamed on every countenance, but on none more so than the gipsies. As we approached a hearty welcome and a genuine "God bless ye" was given us. Tea being concluded, and all having joined in singing thanks, another ring was formed a few yards distant, and then commenced the public meeting. And this was a sight equally interesting with the former. Our gipsy friends occupied the inner circle; sitting in front of them were grouped their children, while round about were gathered the friends from a distance. Brother W– the superintendent of the Poplar and Canning Town branches of the Mission conducted the meeting, which was opened by singing the hymn,

There is a better world, they say,
O so bright.

After prayer and a short address, a big brawny man stepped into the ring and told us how God had converted his soul. He appeared to be the leader of the band. Out of a family of twelve brothers and sisters, nine of them were hopefully converted.



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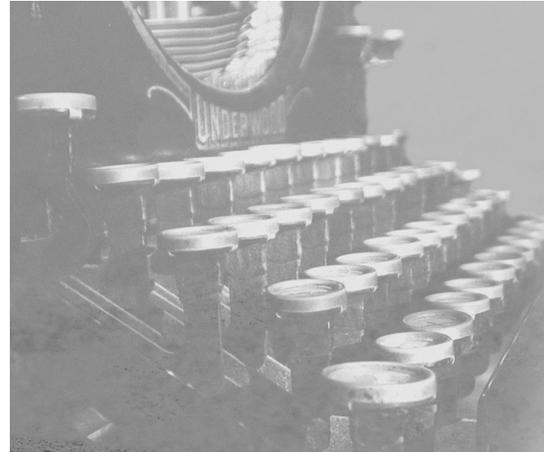
He said: "God's Spirit had been striving with me for years, but it was only seventeen months ago that I decided for Christ. Just as soon as I was converted I thought that I must go and tell my old father and mother about it. My mother began to cry, because she thought I was surely gone mad. After I had talked and prayed with her a bit, she said her heart was broke, and bless God she got converted. Well, then I prayed for my little wife – that's her standing there – I was afraid that she would be a hindrance to me, but she wasn't, for, praise the Lord, in a little while she got converted too, and now we are praying together for our little ones. When we went hopping last year our master didn't like our singing and praying, but one and the other spoke to him about his soul, and we all prayed for him, and after a bit he got converted. This year he has sent for us, and he says that we shall have his orchard to hold our meetings in. I am very sorry to have to leave the Mission folk, for they have been great help to us, but praise the Lord, we aren't going to leave Jesus behind; no, no! for we are bound to take Him into the hop country with us."

This man's wife spoke next, and our hearts rejoiced as she repeated promise after promise from God's sacred word; all of which she said were for her. Seeing that she had been converted but nine months, we were surprised at her knowledge of the scriptures; but hers was not the only case we met with, proving how wonderfully the Spirit teaches those who "hunger and thirst after righteousness."

Next came their niece, who told us that "she bean't fifteen till come November, but, bless the Lord, I haven't had my deserves, no, for instead of being in hell, I am on my way to heaven." And then in her uncouth but simple and affecting manner she related to us the story of her conversion.

Then stepped into the ring the first speaker's nephew. Who commenced by saying, "Although I live in a tent, I'll not be called a gipsy, because I am a King's son." He told us that he had been a fearful drunkard and blasphemer, but those were things of the past, for now his feet were on the rock Christ Jesus.

And now came a man who told us that he was awakened to a sense of his lost and ruined state while coming from Epsom races. He said he was so wicked then, that he would not have shirked even murder if he could have got anything by it. "But now," he



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said "if I can only earn my daily bread, I'll stick to chair mending." He said, "I don't know my A B C, but Jesus didn't refuse me on that account."

At this juncture Brother W— announced that the tea Committee had been settling their accounts, and found that they had a surplus of a few shillings, which the gipsies purposed distributing among the poorer members of the camp, amongst whom were two widows with large families.

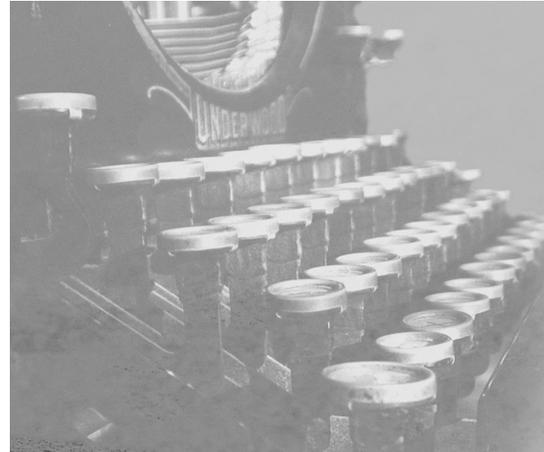
Next came a fine, intelligent looking man, who told us he couldn't speak much, because he hadn't been brought up in a college, and couldn't read; "but," he said, "I can read my title clear to mansions in the sky." Though far from discarding education, we thought this the best of all reading.

Several others spoke, but space will not admit of our giving even an outline of their experiences.

It was near ten o'clock, and reluctantly we were compelled to leave, but before doing so we visited the widows before spoken of. We found them sitting in front of the dying embers of a camp fire. We asked them if they loved the Lord, and were right for heaven. One replied, "I hope so." But the other, with her face beaming with hope and happiness, said, "Bless God, I do; I hate the things I once loved, and love the things I once hated; – I shun the appearance of evil; – I try to please God, and isn't that it?"

We returned to bid our friends good-bye, and found that they had commenced a prayer meeting. In the centre of the ring were three or four penitents, whilst one, they told us, had stepped into liberty.

We left them, truly delighted with what we had seen and heard, wishing that all the friends of the Christian Mission could have been there and seen its gipsy branch, and listened to the touching experiences of these once wild outcasts of society. Unpolished stones from nature's quarry indeed they were, but it could be seen that a hand, not mortal, had been at work on them, chipping off a rough corner here, and filling up an uneven fissure there, thus fitting them for a place in the temple below, and ultimately for a place in that...



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city which hands have not piled. That far away country by sin undefiled.

Long shall we remember our visit to the gipsy encampment.

J.F.R.

BOW COMMON.

Ever since we became more particularly acquainted with the East of London, we have felt specially interested in this deplorably dark district.

Here among manure manufactories, gas works, match factories, chemical works, and other similar establishments, live thousands of people in utter indifference and ignorance of spiritual things. About twelve months ago a Hall capable of containing about two hundred and fifty people was offered, and this we at once secured. And in dependence on the King of kings, we opened it two days after it came into our possession.

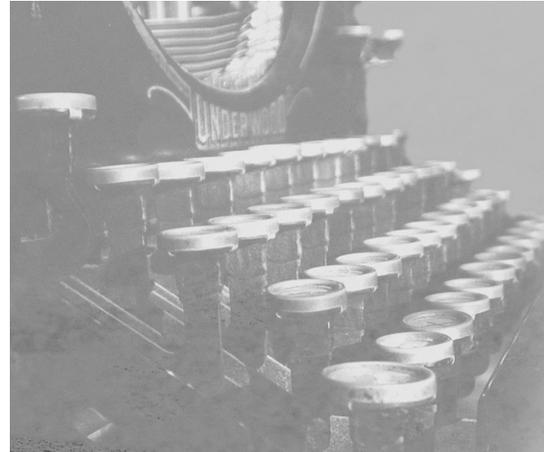
The following extract, received from a brother appointed to take charge of this station, from one of the first reports, will show how the commencement was made. He writes:

A START AT BOW COMMON.

On the Saturday evening we had a prayer-meeting, when one brother and myself were all that were present. The following Sabbath I preached in the morning to a small congregation, but Christ was precious to the few who were there.

In the afternoon we went into the open air. I said, " Take me into the worst neighbourhood you have." They did so, and all was peaceful; but, after we commenced the service in the hall, some one opened the door and threw in a couple of Yarmouth bloaters. I went to the door to see what was going to be next, and a pair of old boots came at me; but in spite of all this, God was amongst us. Bless His name!

At six o'clock, we took our stand at another part; and, while singing, a shower of manure came over a wall from a public-house, and the devil raged around us, but we stood our ground. I remembered I had never beaten a retreat since I had been a Christian; and when we had unfurled our banners we sang on to the Mission Hall.



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During the meeting, a drunken man came to upset us; but God was there, and although I had to stop and put the man out in the middle of my sermon, we had a good time, and two professed to find liberty. To God be all the glory!

Such was my start at Bow Common, with many others I might name; indeed, it seemed to me that, what with unruly lads, opposing policemen, scoffing publicans, drunken men, and storms of manure, herrings, and boots, this was indeed "Satan's seat."

In the Hall, and in connection with it, there have been here, as elsewhere, many gratifying cases of conversion. We give one from the journal quoted from above:

A ROMAN CATHOLIC.

Our open air meetings, among others, have been useful to a Roman Catholic. She took me aside the other night, and said, "For twenty-one years I have been a Roman Catholic. All that time I could not bear the name of these people I now love so much. But one night I heard them singing, and stopped to listen to what was said, and the Spirit led me to follow them to the Mission Hall. Here I found peace, and I am now very happy in Jesus; to Him be all the glory!"

THE DYING INFIDEL.

On Wednesday I was requested to visit a man, who, I was informed was dying without God and without hope. When I entered the room, my soul was deeply moved to see quite a young man, evidently on the verge of eternity. He held out his hand to me; and, as I held his bony fingers, I asked him how matters stood for the next world, and pressed upon him the importance of being ready to meet God, urging him to seek mercy while it might be found through believing in the Son of God, who died for sinners. As I talked to him, I shall never forget the bitter, contemptuous expression which sat on his face, as, fixing his rolling eye on me, he said, "It is very nice for you to talk in the way you do, but I do not believe a word you say. Religion," he added with an oath, "is all humbug." And then, turning to his wife, he said, "Give me the Bible, and I will prove it to be a lot of lies." After quoting several passages which seemed to contradict each other, and I had given him my opinion, he said again, with an imprecation, I was a blackguard – that he had talked to the first men in London, and



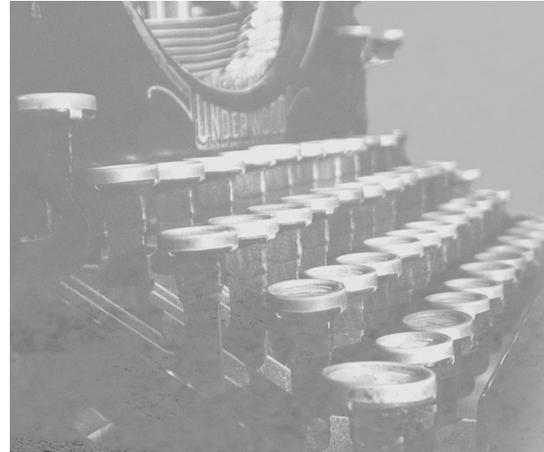
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the Bishop of London had confessed to him that there were several portions of God's word he could not explain, "and do you think of putting me right?" he said. "It is all humbug; I have read and studied as much as any man in London." And now he was obliged to cease talking, to catch his breath; and as he grasped, I put in, "My friend, you may read and study yourself into hell; you will never get to understand your Bible without prayer; you must pray, and unless you do, you will be lost for ever." And then Brother A., who was with me, talked a bit, and then we prayed and left him to himself and God. Many times that day, and many times during the night that followed, I cried, "Lord, save the poor infidel." The next morning I again made it a matter of special prayer; and, while praying, I was impressed to send the man one of Mr. Booth's tracts, entitled "Undo your Work." I at once complied with the suggestion, and wrote a kind note and enclosed the tract, praying that God would bless it to the salvation of his soul; and, while praying, faith said "It shall be done." The following Saturday I decided to pay him another visit, and took with me the little book, "Come to Jesus." When I entered the room he was out of bed, on a chair, and he looked me in the face, and said, "Sir, did you send me a letter and a tract?" I said, "Yes; did you get it?" And with a smile playing upon his countenance, he said, "Yes; and I shall have to bless God for ever that you did send it; it has done me more good than all the reading and talking I have had in my life. I read it again and again, until I wept over it. It pictured out my own history, I felt I was a sinner, and began to pray, and have been praying ever since." I said "Hallelujah! I have brought you another little book, entitled 'Come to Jesus.' I thought you would be ready for it by now. Let us pray." And the burdened sinner said, "Sir, I will kneel down; it is a long time since I did." Down we went; and if ever my heart yearned for a sinner, that was the time. We had not been long on our knees before I began to sing-

" I do believe, I will believe,
That Jesus died for me ;
That on the cross He shed His blood,
From sin to set me free."

After singing some time, I went on praying again, and then I sang, "I can, I will, I do believe that Jesus died for me." At that moment the man ventured his all on Jesus, and said, "I do believe the Lord has saved me."



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He was made very happy, and when the doctor told him he could not live more than a few days or weeks at the most, he replied, *that he felt he should live for ever.*

He laid four mouths afterwards, testifying constantly, and to the last moment, to the power of the blood to cleanse, and of the Holy Spirit to comfort and support. Just before his death he told his wife confidently that he was going to Him, and died in peace. The visits of our friends, and the influence of the death of her husband, led to the conversion of the wife.

MILLWALL.

As at Stratford, so here, a gentleman, CHAS. OWEN, Esq., Honorary Secretary of the Mission, commenced religious meetings for the benefit of his workpeople. Having occasionally met with us at a theatre service, he invited one of our workers to speak at a meeting held in his works. This led to a closer acquaintance, and finally an invitation for us to carry on the movement in connexion with the Mission; he throwing himself into the work, and becoming one of the most earnest labourers in it.

At first a large room in the works was occupied, but afterwards a small hall was obtained in which meetings are now held. Here is a Sabbath school, a believer's class, preaching out-doors and in, &c., and here, as elsewhere, signs and wonders have been wrought in the saving name of Jesus. We select the following of many cases given in the various reports received from the station:

SAVED BY FAMILIES.

A WORLDLY AND GODLESS LAD

attended one of our meetings. The truth, as it is in Jesus, went home to his heart with power. He came again, and professed a change of heart. He at once forsook his "swearing and Sabbath-breaking companions," and entered with lively interest into our services, He then became anxious about

HIS MOTHER,



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and begged me to pray for her. He lost no opportunity to speak to her about her soul. She treated the matter with cold indifference, and told him that "the affair was all excitement, and that the fever would leave him in a few days." He urged her to "come and judge for herself," and at length succeeded. She came, and the Lord met her; and He who is the "resurrection and the life" breathed into her the breath of life, and she lives in Him; and the mother and son are now walking consistently and humbly with their God. But my narrative ends not here.

HIS FATHER,

The head of that family, was a sore persecutor of godly people, and determined that his wife should not attend the meetings. Her change of heart and life presented too strong a contrast to his own. He threatened violence if she dared to hear that madman, as he was pleased to style me; and, upon her expressing her resolve to "serve God rather than man," he cursed both his wife and the preacher, and expressed the hope that God would strike her dead if she persisted in attending the services. He further promised that, "if his prayers were not answered, he would for ever close the door against her." The day of service arrived, and he asked whether she intended to hear me. She replied, with promptness, that "she did; and would rather die in our midst than at any other place." The reader of this story of grace can imagine the astonishment of the wife when told that her opposing husband proposed to accompany her. She was speechless. She tried to break the silence, but her heart was too full. "We may be happy yet," thought she. As the time for the service approached, she became uneasy lest she should be too late. I ought to have said that we had been in earnest prayer for some time for this poor and unhappy man. He came, he listened to the "old, old story," was interested; he whispered to his wife, "the speaker is not mad, he is perfectly sane.", He was moved to tears on hearing that there was pardon for his sin. Again he whispered, "I am the madman, not the speaker. That man professed the "new birth" at the following meeting, and although he fell away into sin, he is restored, and is now one of the happiest men in Millwall.

A JUDGE CONVICTED.

T. is possessed by nature of a measure of wit, and "love of fun," that has cost him dear. He is just the kind of "jolly fellow" whose services the publican, wishing to "draw a



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trade," likes to secure in order to keep out the "devil of gloom," who will insist on intruding his unwelcome company even into the palace of the drunkard. He was, too, eminently cut out for his work, for a harder drinker, and a "better follow," could not easily be found. For evidence of the appreciation in which he was held, he was duly elected a "judge" to a "judge and jury" holding its sittings on the Lord's day in "a low public." One Sabbath evening, however, while on his way to the "sitting," he stopped to listen for a few minutes to some of our brethren who were preaching at the corner of the street where he resided. The arrow of conviction reached his heart, and he was found the same evening in the Mission Hall, sitting, attentively listening to the story of the cross from an ordained navy – a man of spiritual education, schooled in the fire of daily conflict with the world. Conversion was the result. The drunkard is now a sober man, and the drunkard's home is the head-quarters for our cottage meetings; and T. may now be found testifying for the Lord that taught him and many others to flee from the wrath to come, in the same street where once he was a ringleader in drunkenness and revelry.

OLD FORD.

Some of our people who had been much blessed in the Mission moved away from Whitechapel to this place. They were deeply impressed with the open and avowed wickedness of the people, and the very natural question at once rose to their lips, Can't we do something? They thought if a branch could be established there, a testimony for God could be borne in the open air, and a few souls might be gathered in. But where must it be? As a beginning, two rooms were knocked into one, and these were occupied for a season; but soon becoming too strait for us, a comfortable hall was obtained, in which a little company were gathered from the world. This place we have had to leave, and again take refuge in a room; and now our friends are trusting in the Lord to open their way to a larger and more suitable place.

STOKE NEWINGTON.

In the spring of this year (1870), Mrs. Booth held a series of special services in this place. They were much blessed, and considerable interest was awakened. When Mrs. Booth announced that her labours must terminate, a few friends requested that a branch of the Mission should be established there, in order that the work might be continued. Accordingly, a place was looked for; the British School, a capacious room,



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was taken, an earnest brother was stationed on the spot, and, as the result, a number of poor people have been gathered out of the world und united into a society. Large congregations are obtained; many of the roughest class have been saved, and may be seen regularly sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in their right minds; and there are not, we are sure, many churches, chapels, or rooms in London in which such a congregation of real working people is regularly gathered to hear the word.

The following extract from the journal of the brother stationed here will, we think, interest our readers, showing something of the rough and earnest work done in the Mission:

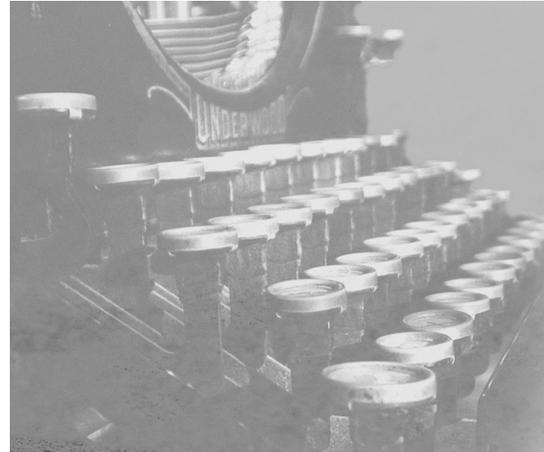
A MOCK RELIGIOUS SERVICE.

On the following Sabbath the agents of Satan got up an opposition open-air meeting. One was put up to preach, and the others sat round shouting "Amen." The Lord have mercy on them and save them. As our singing procession passed in the evening, one of them danced before it. But the Lord was with us of a truth, so that our brethren were ready to leap for Joy. In the Hall the word was accompanied with the power of the Holy Ghost; many went away weeping on account of their sins, and were followed by the Spirit to their homes, some of whom came again on Monday and found peace in Jesus.

On Sunday, the 14th of August, the Lord revealed himself in a way that I never witnessed before in a public meeting. Many souls came to our precious Saviour; but some went out because they could not bear the presence of our God. This was a glorious week. There was not a meeting held without some poor sinner coming to the foot of the cross and entering into liberty.

A CAMP MEETING

Having been appointed for the 4th of September, we had prayer meetings at seven and nine o'clock in the morning, and then proceeded to the ground at Clapton in procession, singing and telling the people at their open doors, that by God's help we intended to bring the gospel to them, so that they would be without excuse at the bar of God. Many were affected to tears at the open-air meetings, which were followed by meetings at the Hall in the afternoon and evening. Several hundreds attended, and



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about four hundred were present at the love-feast. In the prayer meeting afterwards two souls sought and found mercy.

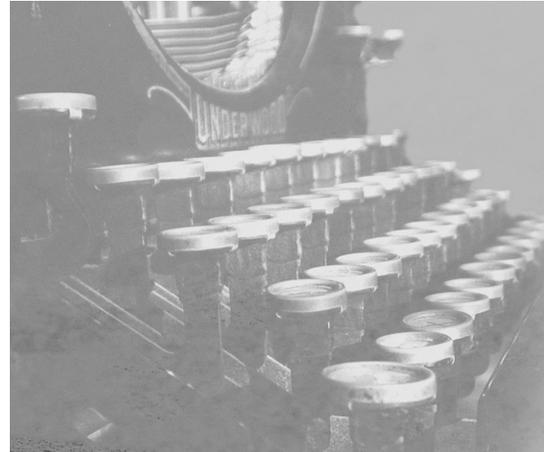
HACKNEY.

In the north-east of London is a considerable piece of waste ground commonly known as the London Fields. Once doubtless there was some appropriateness in this designation; but now the green grass grows only in tufts here and there, few and far between. The place has, however, from time immemorial, constituted an open space where infidels have argued, and all kinds of heterodoxy and orthodoxy have been most freely discussed and published abroad. In the summer time hundreds – nay, thousands – of people flock hither for a little breathing room; and here, by this oft-frequented highway side, the Lord put it into the heart of our dear brother, Mr. Eason, who resides in the neighbourhood, to erect a tent, that he might sow broadcast the seed of eternal life.

The first tent was erected six years ago; this soon becoming too small, a larger one was procured, and in it the word of life has been since proclaimed to thousands, and in it, we have no doubt, many have been born for heaven. The preaching has been continued every Sabbath on this tent through the summer, and in the winter the work has been carried on in a good room in Lodiges Road.

Our brother on whom the burthen of this work has so long rested, has for some little time been anxious for co-operation, and circumstances making him more particularly acquainted with the practical working of this Mission, it appeared, after prayer and conference with the friends associated with him, that it was of the Lord that they should unite with us, and accordingly they did so.

Soon after the amalgamation it was our privilege to spend a Sabbath with our Hackney friends, and of our day's experience in the Tent, and of our estimate of the London Fields as a sphere for Evangelistic work, we can only speak in the highest terms. The tent is a large one, but every seat was occupied in the afternoon, and numbers stood listening all along one side left open for this purpose. At night it was packed, and would have been crowded had it held twice the number. We never saw in any place of worship people listen more attentively than did this audience, many of



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whom, we doubt not, had strolled forth without any intention of hearing a message from God concerning their everlasting welfare.

At the close of the evening sermon, we cleared a form and invited the anxious, and although the tent was crowded, several came forward for Jesus. One man who had been attending services on the fields for years, being concerned off and on about his soul, fell on his knees, and in a perfect agony cried out to God to save him. It was late before we could get the people away. Again and again we sang a hymn of praise and joy, and then we parted. The tent was kept up till the following night, when it was again crowded, and a soul professed to find the Saviour.

The union of this station with the Mission has so far worked well. True, only a few weeks have passed, but already there are signs of "abundance of rain." The interchange of labourers and the new methods of organisation employed, have encouraged the workers and consolidated the work. The offerings of the poor people have greatly increased, and the young men are going forth in bands to seek the crowd without, and altogether there is every prospect of this becoming a centre of blessed influence for the neighbourhood.

CROYDON.

During the months of April, May, and June of 1869, Mrs. Booth preached in the Public Hall, Croydon, and of those services the following brief notice appeared in the EVANGELIST:

MRS. BOOTH AT CROYDON.

Lord's-day, June 20th, was Mrs. Booth's twelfth Sabbath in Croydon. She has preached twice each day, and on one week-night. From the commencement the attendance has been excellent; and throughout, very gracious influences have rested on the congregations, and accompanied the word. The good pleasure of the Lord has prospered, through the instrumentality of his handmaiden. In much physical weakness, she has sown the seed of divine truth; and the word of the Lord has not returned to Him void, but has prospered in the thing whereunto He has sent it.

It has prospered in the conversion of sinners. There have been about one hundred anxious inquirers on the course. Some of these have been. Remarkable conversions;



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and already by many evidence has been borne as to the genuineness of the change so satisfactory as to fill the hearts of God's people with joy. Will the readers of the EVANGELIST pray for these new converts?

One young woman wept and sought the Saviour one Sabbath, and professed to find him as her Saviour on the way home. Before another Sabbath came round she was in the grave!

The word has also prospered in the quickening of believers. It has been pleasing to see so many of different denominations sitting together, service after service, hearing and uniting in the after meetings, pleading for the salvation of the people, or pointing the anxious to the all-atoning Lamb. Night after night a little band of earnest workers has stood by Mrs. Booth, labouring most cordially and affectionately with her; and many have felt quickened and encouraged to live for God and eternity, *O, may they be kept near the cross!*

We were present at the tea and public meeting which closed these special meetings. During the evening a few friends who had taken a very prominent part in them asked the question of each other, "Ought not these meetings or something similar to them, to be continued? There is a great need, for them in Croydon, especially among the poorer classes." And then they turned to us, and asked "if we could not help them with some of our East End labourers?" We answered that we only saw one way, and that was the establishment of "a branch;" and that, though our hands were full with London work, if they would bear the financial responsibility, we would try. This was at once cheerfully acceded to and announced to the audience. The Workmen's Hall was engaged, and on the following Sabbath the services were commenced, which have been continued ever since with as great a blessing as has been experienced in the East of London.

At the first we occupied the Workmen's Hall on the Sabbath only, and during that period we were indebted to kind friends for the loan of several small halls for week-night work; but for the last six months we have had the Workmen's Hall altogether. We have taken it now for twelve months, by which time our friends are full of hope that they will be able to build one for themselves. They have made a commencement



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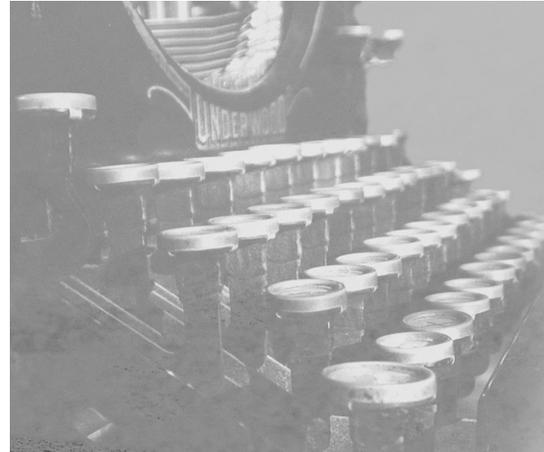
in the way of obtaining funds, and are looking out for a site; and in the coming spring they hope to begin building operations.

In no part of the Mission have we a more determined band of workers. The pertinacity with which they have stood by the open-air work, as described in page 7 of this Report, will show this; and we trust God has great things in store for them.

As illustrative of the blessing which has been vouchsafed at this station, we give the following letter, which we have read with peculiar interest and gratitude. We print it with scarcely any alteration from the writer's own words. Of course, the italics and capitals are ours, intended only, as in other places, to draw attention to features in it which appear to us particularly interesting:

THE STORY OF A CONVERTED THIEF AND GAMBLER.

Dear Sir, – At the request of Brother T., I send you a brief account of my past life and conversion. It is now thirteen months since God, in the plenitude of His grace, arrested me in my course to destruction. From my earliest recollection I was A VILE THIEF; as a rule, robbing my kindest and best masters the most, and boasting myself in this my wicked profession. I had many warnings from God, but I rejected them all. There was nothing I set my covetous eyes upon, but I soon invented some scheme to obtain it, and I always succeeded; and yet, at the same time, I never prospered. Eventually I took GAMBLING, but not being very expert, I lost heavily. Notwithstanding this, my love for the accursed game increased with my losses, and my wages not being sufficient to meet the requirements of my play, I sought to supply my wants from my master's store. This went on for about four years. when God saw fit to open their eyes to a conviction that there was something wrong, and I was discharged on suspicion. For about two years after this I was an outcast, when I was induced by one of the brothers in the Mission, and from curiosity, to hear a female preach, and through dear Sister T.'s sermon on the text, "How wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?" the Lord smote my conscience mightily. These convictions I could not shake off; indeed, they followed me so closely that I could not work. Still, as I would not yield, they wore away. Then the Lord, seeing that this would not do, tried me another way. That part of the sermon which had affected me most, was where Sister T. had spoken of a parent loosing a child; and now the Lord removed *my* child; and when I thought how it might



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have been with me, the heavy scales fell from my eyes. I saw it was the Lord's doing; and then I went to His feet, confessed all my sins, and found His pardoning mercy.

RESTITUTION.

During the four years I was in the employ above mentioned, I had stolen timber enough to make the greater portion of my household goods; and I had sufficient at the time to consign me to seven years' penal servitude; but I resolved, the Lord helping me, to give again all that I had robbed before that year expired. On the last night of the old year, the Lord opened the way, and in His hands I placed myself. I hired a horse and a large cart and filled it with the furniture made out of the stolen wood; but unfortunately the cart would not hold it, so I had to go first with a part. My poor wife was sorely distressed, being full of fear that she would not see me back. The night was wet and cold and dreary, and I had ten miles to go on this melancholy errand; but the Lord enabled me to stand to my purpose, assuring me that He would send me home a happier man than ever. And so it turned out, for my late masters freely forgave me; and though we were so reduced as to be compelled to come to have the clothes-box for a table, bless God! we were happier than we had been with a four-legged oak one; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

THK STOLEN WRENCHES.

Before this I had also stolen two wrenches from a marine-store dealer and at first I feared to take them back; but I remembered God's promise that He would deliver all who put their trust in Him. Accordingly, I took them to the man, and he forgave me; and so again I proved the Lord's faithfulness.

In connection with my employment I had an opportunity of adding two shillings to my earnings by helping at funeral work; but seeing that this led to Sabbath labour, although I did it once, and though work was very slack at the time, and I feared my master would discharge me, still I said in my heart, I must give this up. I had better lose the half-crowns than lose my soul. And so, trusting in the Rock which was higher than I, I gave it up; and I did not lose my situation, nor my faith in God; and He made



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up my loss double another way; for when a man's ways please the Lord, He maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.

THE WINE BOTTOMS.

On another occasion, being removed to another situation, my present master gave me a hogshoad of wine-bottoms, for which we generally get a sovereign. Though I took the money from the party to whom I sold it, I gave it my master, resolved, although in great need at the time, not to have anything to do with the drink traffic; and now the Lord has opened a way by which I can earn a little extra money by honest labour.

HIS CHRISTLESS BOOKS.

At the time of my conversion I had a quantity of books that had nothing of Christ in them, some rather expensive; and although tempted to sell them as waste-paper, I said, No; if they are not fit for me to read, they are fit for no one else; so I destroyed them all.

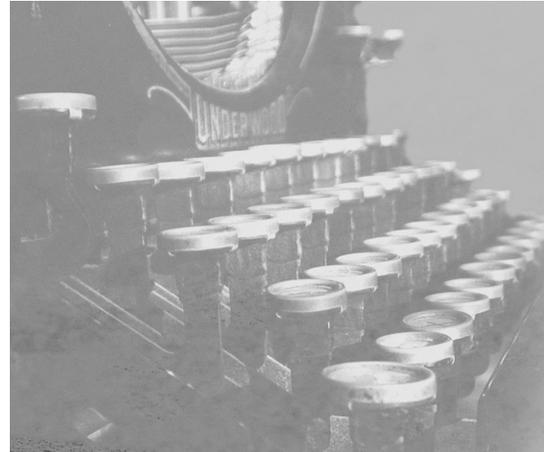
I sincerely trust that many may be brought to the feet of Jesus. This is the humble prayer of one of God's unworthy children.

A. T. B.

P.S. Should you feel disposed to use my name in full, you are quite at liberty to do so; thinking that it may fall into the hands of some one who knows my former life, and thus lead them to feel that if God can save such an unworthy being, He can save them if they will but come.

BROMLEY IN KENT.

This small town of about 10,000 inhabitants is six miles from Croydon. A brother who had joined with our friends in the meetings at the latter town, thinking how useful our agencies would be in Bromley, invited the Croydon friends to visit them. Accordingly, a few Croydon friends procured a waggon and paid the place a visit. Hymns were sung and tracts distributed to the villagers as they passed on; and alongside the Town Hall, in the midst of the fruit-vendors and stall-keepers, they conducted a religious service. It was a good meeting, and many listened with much attention. They then



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held a meeting in a school-room, and afterwards passed through the market singing hymns and held another short open-air service.

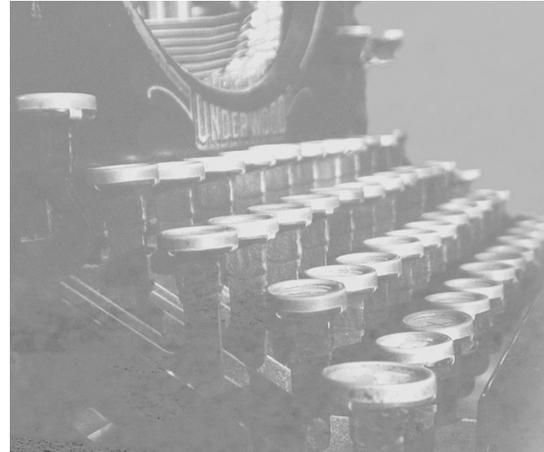
The Town Hall was then secured for Sabbath afternoon and evening meetings, and the Independent friends kindly lent us their school-room for the week nights. After the second Sabbath, the lord of the manor sent for the brother in charge of the movement, and said to him that he was pleased with what he himself had heard at the Town Hall and what others had told him of the operations of the Mission, and that we were welcome to the use of the Hall free of charge. At present we cannot say more. It certainly appears to be an open door; if so, may the Mission have grace to enter and occupy it for the Master.

TOTTENHAM.

A branch has been just opened at this place, which is about one mile and a half from Stoke Newington. An earnest brother who resides here has for some time been visiting us at Shoreditch, and assisting at the open-air meetings, and very often expressed a wish that the Mission would visit Tottenham. A committee had been for some time holding services for the working classes; but not succeeding as they wished, they invited us to take the place, most cheerfully offering to work with us as they had opportunity. Accordingly, the Lecture Hall was engaged for Sabbaths and Tuesday evenings, and two other small halls; for the other week nights; and on Sunday, October 16th, the first services were held. Though the day was very stormy, preventing any open-air work, and greatly interfering with the people getting out, still there was a good audience in the afternoon, and about two hundred were present at night; and, best of all, there were eight anxious souls, six of whom professed to find peace. A few warm-hearted friends have gathered round us, and we feel confident that we shall see a blessed work.

EDINBURGH.

Two years ago a gentleman from Edinburgh visited our Mission in the East of London, and, as much impressed with our measures, He had for some time been engaged in a somewhat similar work at home, and he returned and put in practice the different plans that he had observed working so effectively with us. He became from that time very anxious that we should make the cause which he had originated in Edinburgh a



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branch of our Mission. This was done on the understanding that no financial responsibility was to be incurred by us in London. After a season, however, circumstances led us to withdraw from all connection with this society, deciding to give up Edinburgh altogether. But a number of people there who had been blessed in the Mission would not hear of this; and, though only very poor, they united together, engaging to take all monetary responsibility, and to carry on the meetings among themselves, begging us to allow them to be considered as a branch of the Mission. This we could not very well refuse, and evidently a real, though it may be a small, work is being done; and who knows but it may be as the grain of mustard seed which may yet grow to be a power and a blessing among the thousands of poor degraded people in that great city. The following is an extract or two from letters received from the brother who takes the oversight of the station:

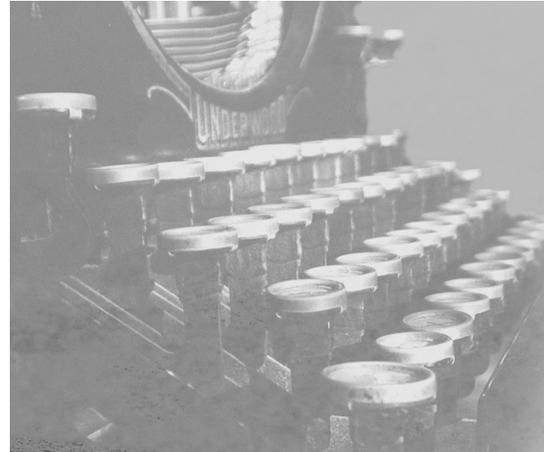
We are still continuing the work of the Christian Mission in this city. The troubles and trials through which we have passed have more firmly attached us together, and we think we are willing to become all things to all men, so that we may win some to Christ.

We find much pleasure in open-air preaching, and in pressing home on all hearts the love of God. We wish to preach, not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves the servants of all for his sake. We have arranged to have open-air meetings in several parts of the city and neighbourhood. In this city of learning and churches the ignorance of the people regarding the way of salvation by simple faith in Jesus is very great. And but few come forth to proclaim the glad tidings in the streets and lanes where wickedness so much abounds.

Again this brother writes:

We have left Dunedin Hall, because we were neither allowed to preach within a hundred yards of the place, nor to sing up the street to it. The fact that the owner is a Roman Catholic is, perhaps, the reason for this prohibition. There was also another mission at work close by, with which we did not wish to interfere, and so we have returned to

HYNDFORD CLOSE HALL,



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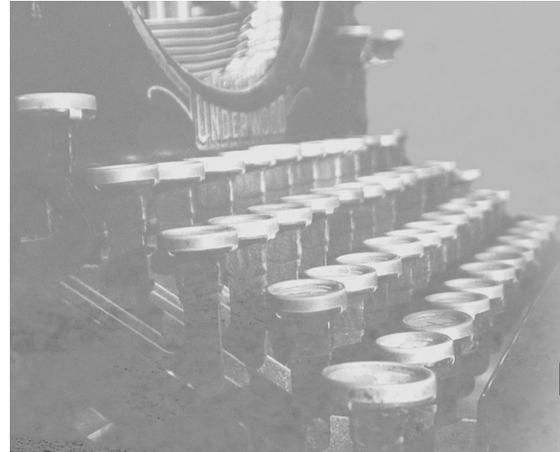
where we have nothing to hinder our preaching out of doors except the wild people of the locality. But we have counted the cost. We want to work among these heathen-like inhabitants, and tell the glad tidings of Jesus' salvation to the truly destitute and ignorant. Although circumstances may change, and old friends may leave, there are others of a steady mind willing and anxious to work, joining our numbers. In the Lord only do we put our trust. Our object is single – for His glory, not man's.

BRIGHTON.

Mrs. Booth held services in the Dome at Brighton for about thirteen weeks, and God in a remarkable way gave her the ear of the people, blessing the word she spoke to many hearts. At the close of this effort, as at other places, the friends were anxious for a continuance of the work, and a branch Mission was established. This has grown and prospered greatly; but a few weeks ago the members decided to separate from the Parent Society, and chose the agent whom we sent as their minister. Therefore, although originating with us, and having grown up under our superintendence, it has no longer any connection with us, and our responsibility with respect to it has entirely ceased. We very much regret this step on the part of Brighton, and have no doubt that time will prove it to have been a very unwise one.

HASTINGS.

For thirteen Sabbaths, Mrs. Booth preached in the Mission Hall here to overflowing congregations. The Holy Spirit graciously owned the word, and many were awakened and led to Jesus, while a very blessed quickening was realised by many of the Lord's people. We went down to the concluding tea on Monday, Dec, 12th, and were delighted with the warm loving spirit of the people. All seemed anxious, as it had been in other places, for a permanent revival work to grow out of the effort, specially adapted to reach and bless the common people. On the following Sabbath we preached in the Music Hall, and conferred further with the friends. As the result, it was resolved to form a branch of the Christian Mission; and a small committee, consisting of persons belonging to different other churches, volunteered to take the financial responsibility for the first three months.



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If suitable places can be obtained for the services, of which we are full of hope, we believe a branch will be established here, which will be made an everlasting blessing, especially to the hardy fishermen, and all but untouched sons and daughters of toil who occupy the narrow crowded streets of the old town.