

Methodist Missions in Toronto

BY REV. S. W. DEAN.

"A CITIZEN of no mean city," the resident of Toronto may with all modesty say. "Beautiful for situation," splendid in its architecture, mighty in its commerce, rich in its institutions of art and education, multiplying with great rapidity its population, philanthropic in its spirit, and inherently religious, it has sometimes been spoken

It would require a volume, rather than the limited space of this article, to describe in detail the work which is being done at the various branches of this Society's work. We simply call attention to some of the more important of these, and would refer interested readers to copies of our annual reports, which will be cheerfully mailed to all making application therefor, either at the office of the Fred Victor Mission or from Dr. F. C. Stephenson, Methodist Mission Rooms, Toronto.

I. AT THE FRED VICTOR MISSION.

One day's activities will suffice to illustrate the work there. We will suppose it to be a winter day, when all departments are running.

As early as seven o'clock in the morning, a company of 75 or 100 men will be found waiting at the office door to register for work in the kindling wood yards. These men will be assigned work of sawing kindling wood in shifts of 16 each. In return for the hour and one-quarter's work they are given a ticket for a meal or bed. Or should married men having families be amongst the applicants, one-half or a whole day's work will be given in return for an order for groceries or money to be applied on rent. This department was started only one year ago, and has already proven of indispensable value. It has demonstrated to us that the cure for pauperism lies largely in having an abundant supply of work at a minimum wage. The worthy are willing and glad to get it, and yet, because of the small wage, will seek other work as soon as it can be found. The unworthy will not come near it at all, but prefer to impose upon a "gullible" public with tales of woe which too often are a mere fabrication.

THE INQUIRY OFFICE AND EMPLOYMENT BUREAU.

While these men are out cutting the wood, the employment bureau in the inquiry office may be answering appeals for

either of a temporary or permanent nature. In the case of the men, we send from our wood regiment, or family applicants, to fill these positions, and from lists always on file in the office women are furnished to those wishing help. The 'phone is not long idle. If it be not a call for help, it may be an order for wood, or some kind friend asking that our driver should call for a parcel, for clothing, or some neatly suffering creature may be seeking one of our deaconesses.

THE SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE.

Meantime, across the hallway will be found one or other of the superintendents, answering correspondence or receiving calls from people in all manner of difficulty, and from all parts of the city. It may be the wife of some drunken husband, with whom she has borne as long as she possibly can, or the mother of a wayward boy, or perchance the husband of a deserting wife, or heart-broken father, weary with the search for work which cannot be found, while hungry children await his home-coming, only to be disappointed, or perhaps some unfortunate victim of drink, who has lost his position for the 'steenth time, or some other poor fellow, "down and out," with boots worn off his feet, and clothing disreputable. All of these people have to be helped with counsel or material aid, and that in such a way that instead of being pauperized they must be elevated and helped towards self-respect. On the walls of the office is our motto, "Charity is not our forte; we aim to help men to help themselves."

THE MOTHERS' MEETING.

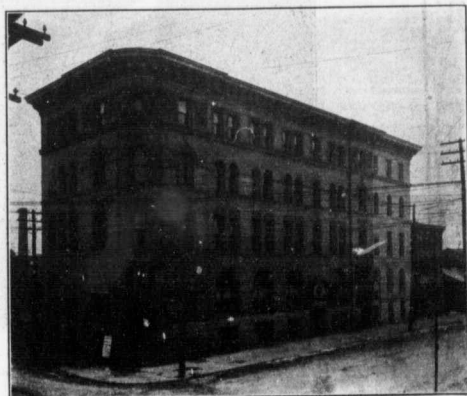
In the afternoon at 2.30 mothers and children will be found gathering in large numbers to the Assembly Hall. When all have come you would see possibly 180 or 190 mothers seated in groups of 12 or 15 around a large table. In the midst of each group is a worker, who seeks to engage them in profitable conversation, and instruct in simple or com-



REV. G. N. GREY
Associate Superintendent

of as "the best city on the continent." Be that so or not, those who see Toronto with "the lid off," who are familiar with its vices as well as its virtues, who are penetrating beneath the social crust, trying to rescue the fallen and the outcast; who are seeking to prevent the lapse of masses on the border land between respectability and degradation, view Toronto with some other thought occasionally. As in other cities, we have at once the best and the worst classes of people in our city. How to deal effectively with these classes and apply the regenerating power of the Gospel to their needs constitutes one of the greatest problems of our civilization.

To the "Toronto City and Fred Victor Mission Society of the Methodist Church" falls the responsibility of working in the "border land" and among the fallen. Its work is distinct from that which any other church is doing. And that not because of greater zeal, but of greater facilities and constituted authority to do such work. The headquarters and chief institution of the Society is the Fred Victor Mission, at the corner of Queen and Jarvis Streets. In addition to that is "The Italian Mission," at 88 Edward Street, and "The Victor Home" for young women at 266 Jarvis Street. In the summer time a gospel wagon works nightly on the street corners and in the slums. Down at the Union Station travellers will find the representatives of the Traveller's Aid Department meeting. In co-operation with the representative of the W. C. T. U., all incoming and outgoing trains. The work of directing and helping the immigrant has also been relegated to our Society.



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men to do odd jobs about the homes of the citizens, or a man may be wanted to go to the country to some farmer. Or mayhap the inquiry is for female help,

plighted sewing. The children, possibly sixty or seventy of them, have been taken to a large room downstairs, where they are entertained with kindergarten