

Northern Messenger

VOLUME LXXIV., No. 38. 41

MONTREAL, OCTOBER 13, 1899.

39 Cts. Per An. Post-Paid.

Methodist Hall For South London.

REMARKABLE DEVELOPMENT OF GOSPEL WORK.

During the last ten years a wonderful work for Christ has been done in the Southwark district through the ministry of the Revs. J. H. Hopkins and H. T. Meakin, who have had charge of what is known as the South London Mission. This work can justly be characterised as one of the greatest of modern movements in the huge metropolis. We give a picture of the

Chapel, the chair was taken by Mr. J. V. Early, who has taken a great interest in the movement, and the speakers included the Revs. Walford Green, J. H. Hopkins, H. T. Meakin, C. H. Kelly, and Thomas Champness.

ORIGIN OF THE MISSION.

About eleven years ago the 'Bitter Cry of Outcast London' was published, and its revelations of the sin and misery of the London slums produced a wonderful sensation. When the excitement was at its height, a meeting of the London Wesleyan ministers was held in Wesley's Chapel, City Road, the outcome of which was the establishment of the Wesleyan London

a place which had been described as the 'White Elephant of London Methodism.'

EARLY STRUGGLES AND VICTORY.

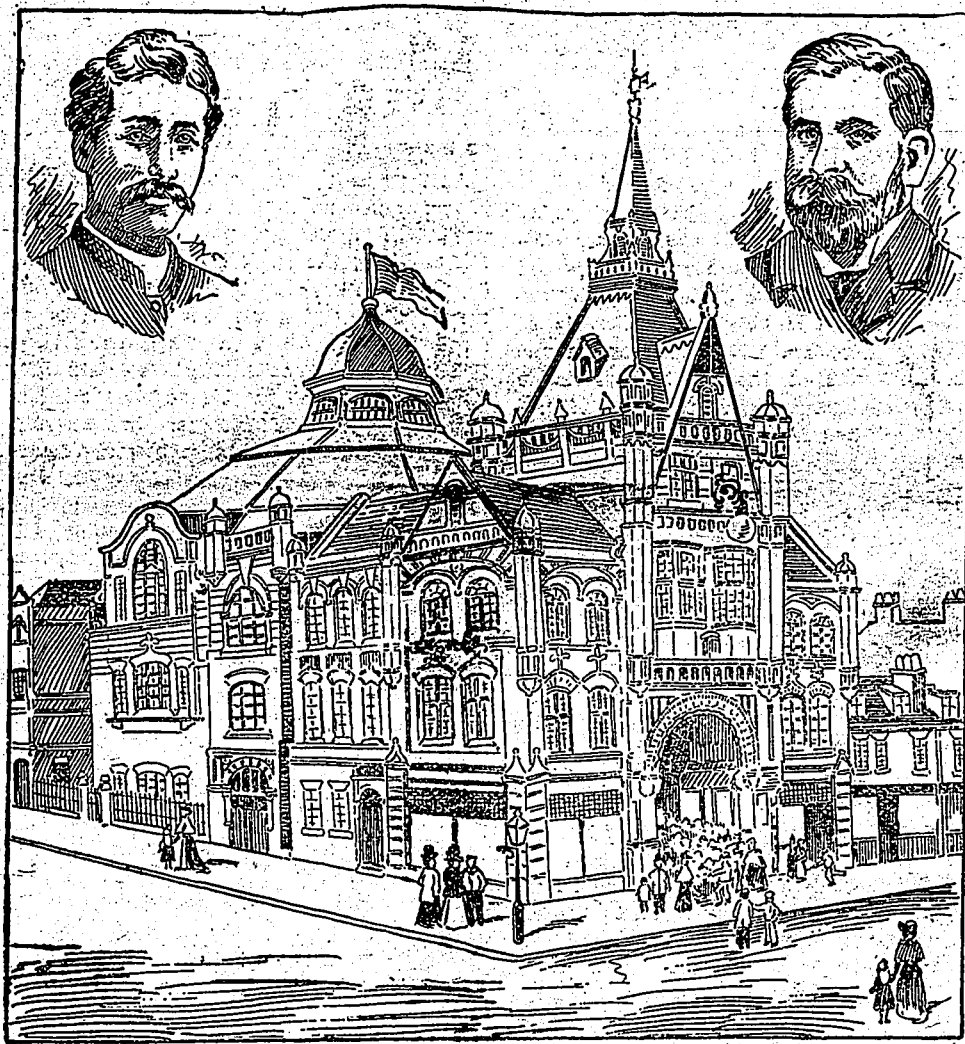
Messrs. Hopkins and Meakin found the beginning of their mission work most laborious and trying, and nothing but the grace of God could have held them up. In their district was Collier's Rents, one of the three first dealt with in the 'Bitter Cry,' and this was but a sample of the whole neighborhood. Everywhere misery, vice, and crime abounded, but these noble pioneers were inspired by true zeal and faith, which met with its true reward; and to-day there are marvellous records to be placed to the credit of the Mission. In about two years Locksfields Chapel became so crowded that it was enlarged to seat 1,000 persons, while large schoolrooms were built in the rear, and upon the first Sunday night of its reopening every seat was occupied, and this success has continued to the present time. The large schoolrooms are also regularly filled to their utmost limit. Every Sunday night in the galleries of the chapel may be seen groups of people—costermongers and the like—such as are not often seen in churches or chapels. The other day Mr. Meakin announced a service for bird-catchers, and the publicans in the neighborhood, who had discussed the matter in their bar parlors, came to 'hear what the chap had got to say.' The result was a curious illustration of his text: 'In vain is the net spread in the sight of any bird.'

Long Lane Chapel, the headquarters of the Mission, unlike Locksfields, has always had a good membership, and under the Rev. J. H. Hopkins it has been a highly successful centre—so much so, that the Bermondsey Town Hall has had to be hired on Sundays as a branch mission for workmen's services.

THE NEW CENTRAL HALL.

The two missionaries now felt that a further extension of their work was necessary, and a site for a proposed Central Hall was secured within a very short distance of the Tower Bridge. Owing to alterations which had been made in cutting the new road, a block containing twenty-two miserable houses and shops, the inevitable public-house, and some land, was, with the exception of the public-house and two shops, for sale. This was purchased for the sum of £8,000, including freehold.

As will be seen from our picture, the building now being erected has nothing of the ecclesiastical appearance. The object is to gain the masses of poor, wretched outcasts of society, and it is well known that to these, until they are renewed in heart, the idea of entering a church or chapel is repellent. Passing through the entrance hall, a noble hall is reached, capable of seating 2,200 persons—1,200 on the ground floor, and 1,000 in the gallery—the seats of which are so arranged that every person will have a clear view of the preacher, who will occupy a platform brought well forward into the hall. The basement floor, which will be well lighted from the streets, is provided with a hall seating 800 persons—which can be subdivided—and also six class-rooms with kitchen and other rooms for social purposes. On the gallery



NEW METHODIST CENTRAL HALL FOR SOUTH LONDON MISSION WITH PORTRAITS OF LEADERS.

South London Central Hall, as it will appear when finished. This building is the latest development of the Mission, and its erection has been rendered necessary by constant growth of numbers and influence.

The ceremony of laying the foundation stones of the South London Central Hall was carried out on Thursday, July 27. Tea was provided in the Southwark school-room, where previously the invited guests had been received by the chairman of the district the Rev. Walford Green, and Mrs. Green. After tea, led by the Southwark Military Band, the assembled crowd of distinguished Methodists and local mission workers and friends started for the site, where the stones were duly laid. At the meeting subsequently held in Southwark

Mission. The Rev. J. H. Hopkins undertook the work of the Mission in South London, Long Lane, Chapel, Southwark, being its headquarters. While organizing the Mission, Mr. Meakin was, in 1899, invited to join the work. Mr. Meakin was at that time a railway employee in Derby who had considerable success in mission work in that town, and who, at the very time of the invitation, felt an irresistible call to devote his time entirely to mission work, a desire which, unknown to him, had also taken possession of his wife. This call, which they rightly believed to be of God, was immediately accepted, although greatly opposed by many of their friends. On coming to London, Mr. Meakin was placed in charge of Locksfields Chapel, Bermondsey,