

WOMAN'S FOREIGN MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

Annual Meeting Held in Ottawa.

A SUCCESSFUL YEAR JUST CLOSED.

FIRST DAY.

The interior of the Bank Street Presbyterian Church presented a charming appearance on the occasion of the eighteenth annual meeting of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Western Division of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. Handsome flowers were tastefully arranged around the seats of the presiding officers, and the decorations throughout reflected much credit upon the local ladies who had that task in hand. Among the delegates in attendance were the following:

FROM TORONTO: Mrs. Ball, Mrs. T. Bryce, Mrs. Brockmole, Mrs. Bertram, Miss J. Caren, Miss Craig, Mrs. Wm. Campbell, Mrs. Ewart, Mrs. Fraser, Miss McMurchy, Mrs. McLaren, Mrs. McClelland, Mrs. McEavish, Mrs. J. D. McGillivray, Mrs. J. H. Robinson, Mrs. John Ross, Mrs. and Miss Shortreed, Mrs. Smith, Mrs. H. Wardrop, Mrs. Hodgson, Mrs. Jeffrey, Mrs. L. George, Miss L. Gordon, Mrs. Geo. Gall, Mrs. K. Grant, Mrs. Gibson, Mrs. Toller, Mrs. J. Trail, Mrs. Playfair, Mrs. J. Park, Miss Patterson, Mrs. H. M. Parsons, Mrs. F. Pierce.

SOUTH FALLS: Miss A. Keith, Mrs. A. Foster, Mrs. Cooke, Miss M. Campbell, Mrs. Baird.

FROM VARIOUS POINTS: Mrs. D. Hossack, Lucan; Miss J. Johnstone, Agincourt; Mrs. Tarte, Quebec; Mrs. Walt, Bolton; Mrs. Groves, Marathon; Miss McWilliams, Hespeler; Mrs. P. McGregor, St. Elmo; Mrs. D. McKetchen, Tayside; Mrs. McMaster, Laggan; Miss Cuthbertson; Miss Beckett, Portage du Fort; Mrs. H. Crozier, Grand Valley; Miss Baker, Dundee; Mrs. McAuley, Woodville; Mrs. Campbell, Winnipeg; Miss Pettigrew, Norwood; Mrs. McBrayne, Belmont; Miss Richmond, Kingston; Mrs. (Prof.) Ross, Kingston; Miss Moffat; Mrs. Wm. McCann; Mrs. McNair, Carleton Place; Mrs. W. A. B. Knox; Mrs. McRostie; Miss B. Sinclair; Miss M. Munro, Martintown; Miss Scott, Martintown; Mrs. Blackwood, Martintown; Mrs. Faulds, Martintown; Mrs. (Dr.) Allan, Osgoode; Miss E. Allan, Nelson; Mrs. VanAllen, Osgoode; Mrs. A. Baird, Windsor; Mrs. Brownie, North Bay; Miss Brown, Prescott; Mrs. Bryce, Gananoque; Mrs. Blackstead, Aultsville; Mrs. Steele, Dundas; Mrs. Smith, North Bay; Mrs. W. Scott, Lancaster, Mrs. Sutherland, Warkworth; Mrs. J. C. Stewart, Lancaster; Miss M. Scott, Perth; Mrs. J. Scott, Brockville; Miss M. Thorn, Appleton; Miss Tennant, Cold Springs; Mrs. A. Wilson, Appleton; Mrs. Whittaker, Barrie; Miss Ward, Laskey; Miss R. Wilson, Marathon; Miss Wightman, Lancaster; Mrs. Hunter, Pembroke; Mrs. Hastie, Cornwall; Miss K. Jackson, Kenmore; Mrs. Grant, Hamilton; Mrs. Greenhill, Prescott; Mrs. Goodwillie, Vernon; Mrs. Gracey, Gananoque; Mrs. R. Grant, Brockville; Mrs. P. Gray, Brampton; Miss Reid, Cardinal; Mrs. Robertson, Kenmore; Miss Reid, Osgoode; Mrs. J. B. Stewart, Perth, Centre; Mrs. Stewart, Maxville; Mrs. J. Stevenson, Barrie; Miss Straith, Chatham; Mrs. McKenzie, Moose Creek; Mrs. McIntosh, Moose Creek; Mrs. McCulloch, Hallville; Miss Cameron, Gananoque; Mrs. McLean; Belleville; Mrs. McLennan, Cornwall; Mrs. McMillan, North Bay; Mrs. Neelham, Orillia; Mrs. Cameron, Iroquois; Miss M. Curtis, Paris; Mrs. Cameron, Barrie; Mrs. Colquhoun, Colquhoun; Mrs. J. Currie, Belmont; Mrs. Connery; A. Cameron; Mrs. T. Campbell, Dalkeith; Mr. R. M. Craig, Ferguson; Mrs. Campbell, Cheltenham; Mrs. J. M. Campbell, Vernon; Mrs. Childer Hose, Cobden; Mrs. W. Duncan, Deer Park; Miss Dickson Peterboro; Mrs. A. Dickson, Lancaster; Mrs. Dafos, Aultsville; Mrs. H. D. Fraser, Orangeville; Mrs. A. Ketchen, Brookline; Mrs. J. S. Lochead, Osgoode; Mrs. Leech, Peterboro; Mrs. McAllister, Iroquois; Mrs. Dr. McIntyre, Glencoe; Mrs. A. MacLennan, Hothead; Mrs. T. McCosh, Thomfield; Mrs. Dr. McDermid, Maxville; Miss McConkey, Barrie; Mrs. McNachtan, Cobourg.

At three o'clock the President, Mrs. Ewart, of Toronto, called the meeting to order. All the delegates were present together with a large number of friends and ladies interested in mission work. The meeting was largely of a devotional character. Prayer was offered by Mrs. McLaren, of Toronto, after which Mrs. McLellan of Owen Sound, gave a very pointed and practical address. The topic was "The Spirit and the Church Invitation." Referring to the spirit she said: "We cannot see the spirit any more than we can see the air we breathe, yet we know we are breathing it and that without it we die. So we feel that unless we are guided by the spirit we cannot live in Christ and walk with him. Just as in our physical natures, the heart which is the seat of life and the blood driven from it to the extremities makes us living, moving beings instead of dead clay, so the spirit quickens our moral natures and sends grace through them. Through timidity or lack of zeal deemed proper we do not extend the invitation which has given us so much happiness; we think we have so much to do in our own homes and our own congregations, that others who have leisure should do more, but we must remember that each one is responsible for all she can do, and the spirit will follow up the church's invitation. Just as the circles formed by the pebble thrown in the water, enlarge and widen until stopped by land, so our invitation sent through our missionaries reaches further and further into heathendom, and may it be said as our motto does, 'The World for Christ.' Let us not weary in well doing and may it be said of each of us as was said of old, 'She hath done what she could.'"

"What shall the answer be?" was afterwards sweetly sung by Miss Code, and Mrs. Thorburn followed with the reading of the 22nd chapter of Revelations.

When the meeting adjourned a conference of the board was held to complete arrangements for the business meetings to follow.

SECOND DAY.

Bank street church was crowded to-day with the Presbyterian missionary workers.

The first business session of the convention was opened at ten o'clock. After devotional exercises, the president, Mrs. Ewart, delivered her annual address.

Reports were then read from the presbyterial societies within the Dominion.

Mrs. Thorburn read the report of the Ottawa Presbyterial Society showing that there were 23 auxiliaries and four mission bands. During the year the Ottawa Union Auxiliary organized in 1878 has disbanded, and as a result six new auxiliaries were established in the city. The contributions were greatly in excess of the amount of last year.

Miss Bell, of Pembroke, presented the report of the Lanark and

Renfrew Presbytery showing there were 37 auxiliaries and 19 mission bands with a membership of 1,250. The annual contributions had been increased by \$330.

Mrs. Dowley, of Prescott, reported for Brockville Presbytery 27 auxiliaries and 9 mission bands with a membership of 710.

Mrs. Beckstead, of Aultsville reported that Glengarry Presbytery had contributed \$1,922 to missions last year, an increase of \$109.

Miss Fowler reported Kingston Presbytery as having 25 auxiliaries and 3 mission bands and a membership of 520. Increase in donations \$420.

Toronto Presbytery was reported for, by Mrs. Gray, of Brampton. It contained 52 auxiliaries and 25 mission bands. Five new auxiliaries formed during the year. Clothing weighing 2,661 pounds had been sent to the Northwest Indians.

Mrs. Alexander, of Ottawa, read the report of the Saugeen Presbytery.

Mrs. E. H. Bronson, of Ottawa, stated that Winnipeg had 15 auxiliaries and four mission bands with a membership of 458. The contributions amounted to \$541.76.

A number of similar reports were presented.

GREETINGS.

Greetings were tendered the delegates on behalf of the Episcopalian churches of Ottawa by Mrs. Tilton; the Congregational church by Mrs. Stevens and the Baptist churches by Mrs. (Rev.) McKay.

Telegrams of greeting were read from the Eastern branch of W.F.M.S. and the Methodist Missionary Society; also letters of greeting from the W.F.M.S., of Philadelphia, Pa.; Women's Mission Board of the North West, W.F.M.S. Board, of St. Louis, Mo.; W.F.M.S. of New York; Women's Occidental Presbyterian Board of San Francisco, Montreal Missionary Society and the McCaul Mission Board.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

The afternoon session of the convention opened at half past two o'clock. After the joining in singing "O'er the gloomy hills of darkness," Mrs. Blair Prescott asked the divine blessing on the work. Mrs. Playfair, recording secretary presented the

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT, which is as follows:

Another year has passed, and again we can report a conscientious desire on the part of members of the Board to fulfil the responsibility laid upon them, evinced by their faithful attendance at the weekly meetings, which this year number more than last. Forty-three in all have been held, at which the average attendance of the whole Board has been thirty, and of the managers, twenty-six. Twenty Executive meetings have also been necessary, when an average of thirteen have been present. Owing to lengthened absence from home, one member sent in her resignation, and Mrs. Ball, of Westminster Church, was appointed to fill the vacancy.

In May a committee of the Board met in conference with several members of the Foreign Mission Committee, when a number of subjects were presented for consideration, among others, the recommendation that the contributions of the W.F.M.S. be reported in the Blue book, separate from the General Foreign Mission Fund of the Church. This met with the approval of the members of the Committee present.

The suggestion has been frequently made, that a plan should be devised whereby valuable original papers read at meetings of the Presbyterial Societies, Auxiliaries or Mission Bands, might be passed on to other places where they could be of great use. Your Board decided to establish a Bureau for this purpose. The Corresponding Secretary, Miss Haight, has undertaken the charge of this department.

In order to relieve the Treasurer and prevent confusion in the work, Miss B. MacMurchy has been appointed to take charge of the Certificates of Life Membership.

It has been found that the Deaconess Home, established in Toronto during the year under the auspices of the Episcopal Church, could not be of use to us. A committee of the Board was, therefore, appointed to take the matter fully into consideration. After much careful thought, they recommend that in view of the importance of the work, arrangements be made, whereby women applying for service in the Foreign field may be tested as to their suitability for this difficult work, and may at least receive some preliminary training in Biblical subjects and in practical Mission work, before their applications are finally considered by the Foreign Mission Committee. The arrangements suggested will be found in the January Letter Leaflet.

In common with other societies, the Board received a circular containing reasons for forming a "National Council of Women" and inviting the W. F. M. S. to affiliate with it. After due consideration it was decided that, "It seemed to the Board that while a 'National Council of Women' might be of benefit to charitable and other societies, it could hardly be so to the Foreign Missionary Societies belonging to the various denominations. Besides, we, as a Society were Auxiliary to the Foreign Mission Committee of our Church and could not, or rather should not, affiliate with the 'National Council of Women.'"

Your Board felt that in order to fully understand the needs of our schools in the North-West, we should have some more definite information in regard to the amount of the Government maintenance, etc. The Foreign Mission Committee granted permission to correspond directly with the North-West Committee, and certain questions were put to and answered by Mr. Baird; but that matters pertaining to our schools may be better understood and managed, the proposal of sending one or more ladies to visit them has been favourably entertained by your Board, and they desire to bring the subject before you for consideration.

Under the impression that our Society held a large surplus, a request came from the Eastern Division, that we should aid them in their time of difficulty, to the extent of six thousand dollars. It was felt that this request could not be granted, as our estimates for the current year were likely to be very heavy, and in any case the Board could not pay over such a large sum without the sanction of the Society.

Co-operation with the Woman's Conference, held during the World's Fair, was not deemed to be advisable.

In June the Board had the privilege of greeting Dr. Marion Oliver, of Indore, at present home on furlough. At her request, and for the purpose of saving the strength of your missionary as much as possible, it was decided that the Board should make all arrangements for meetings to be addressed by her. Miss McWilliams, late of India; Miss McIntosh, of Okanase, and the ladies who have recently gone out to the foreign field, have, at various times, been present at our weekly meetings. It has also given us pleasure to welcome friends and fellow-workers from many of our branches.

The meeting for special prayer on behalf of Foreign Missions, under the auspices of the Board, was held during the week of prayer, was largely attended, and, we trust, may be the means of quickening and strengthening the interest in this part of the Master's work.

And now in closing the record of the eighteenth year of our existence as a society, let us look back with thankfulness over the past

and forward to future work, earnestly desiring our God to give us new power and faithfulness and zeal. Let us in the coming year with grateful hearts, show "our faith by our works," and give more constant and earnest prayer, remembering that God's blessing alone can give power and efficiency to any human effort.

FOREIGN SECRETARY'S REPORT.

The report of the Foreign Secretary, Mrs. J. L. Harvie, comes next. It goes over in detail the whole field of the work of the Society. From it we gather that Christian work is carried on among the Indians of the North-West and British Columbia by Industrial Schools, superintended by one or more teachers and a matron at the following points: Alberta, B.C., Fife Hills, Round Lake, Lakesend, Regina, Crowstand, Portage la Prairie, and Birtle. At the following places there are only Day Schools: Mistawasis Reserve, Prince Albert, and Okanase Reserve. At Bird Tail, Pipestone, Sioux, and Rolling River there are no schools but a missionary is at work at each place.

In China work is carried on at Formosa and in the province of Honan at two points. The chief scene of the foreign work of the society is in Central India. Here the chief seats of work are Indore, Mhow, and Neomuch. The operations of the society at these points are varied, including a college, medical mission work, visiting the Zenanas, conducting schools and preaching regularly at central points and in the villages during evangelistic tours. In connection with all this work the Foreign Secretary, speaking generally, says:

The general features of the work accomplished by the missionaries of our Society in heathen lands, and among the Indians of their own land, vary but little from year to year. In hospitals, dispensaries and the homes of the natives; in zenanas, villages and schools; in Bible classes, woman's meetings and Sunday schools; in industrial training of all kinds, our missionaries, teachers and helpers with faithfulness and patience sow the seed of the Word beside all waters.

Much of their work is educational, therefore preparatory; and as it is impossible fully to understand the scope of efforts thus largely educative, it is also impossible to sum up with accuracy the fruit-bearing which must assuredly follow seed-sowing of this kind.

We can give figures and say what our missionaries (physicians, teachers and zenana visitors) aim to do, and the means employed, but the real results are written, not only in the Lord's great Book of Remembrance, but in the changed lives, the happy homes and the improved communities which, by the blessing of God, are springing up in heathen lands under the fostering care and through the Christian teaching and consistent example of our missionaries.

But while much attention is naturally given to the training of the young in the various fields, woman's work in all its departments, medical, zenana and evangelistic, is steadily carried on, and always with more or less encouragement.

It need scarcely be stated that the active interest and efforts of our Society are centred mainly in the fields of Central India, Honan, Formosa, and the North-West and British Columbia in our own Dominion.

Again with gratitude we refer to the great encouragement in our work given us from time to time by the members of the Foreign Mission Committee and the North-West Committee, and their kindness in assisting us with wise counsel on various occasions.

In this record there is much that calls for thanksgiving, and again much that should lead to humble and thoughtful self-examination. We praise Him who by His blessed Spirit first prompted this great movement, for the loving service, the self-denial, the patience and the prayer given to the cause of missions by the women of the home land. We praise Him for the untiring labours, the devotion and the faithfulness of the workers in Foreign fields. But when we hear of "open doors" which cannot be entered, when we see our missionaries breaking down from overwork, as we listen to the call for more helpers, we humbly acknowledge the feebleness and the inadequacy of our efforts.

May the time speedily come when, in reference to the evangelization of the world, it may truthfully be said of every Presbyterian woman—"She hath done what she could."

We hope from time to time to draw the attention of the church to many of the interesting details of this valuable report.

After the very full and comprehensive report of Mrs. Harvie came the

HOME SECRETARY'S REPORT,

presented by Mrs. Shortreed.

In some respects we cannot report the advance of previous year in the Home Department of our work, but faithfulness and activity, self-denial and devotion have, on the whole, characterized the efforts of our members. No large gifts reached our treasury, but there has been growth in systematic offering and ordinary giving. The envelope system has been more generally adopted, and many of the reports emphasize the fact that their funds were raised wholly by voluntary giving.

Business depression throughout the country told in some measure upon our work, but not to the extent our weak faith led us to fear. One Secretary writes: "It has been a hard year, especially in the farming districts, yet the money seems to have come in so willingly." From another we learn that, "on account of the depression in commercial circles, many left the city, consequently our society suffered both as regards numbers and means. Auxiliaries and Bands in the larger cities seem to have suffered most, but, notwithstanding difficulty and loss, the careful gathering of small sums by the 'willing hearted' has resulted in a total greater than that of any previous year."

PRESBYTERIAL SOCIETIES

report many items of interest which speak for themselves. The officers, as in the past, have done faithful service, visiting and encouraging the workers within their bounds. To their kind and judicious oversight much of the success of our work is due. Several of our experienced officers have, through force of circumstances, been constrained to give up Presbyterial duties for the present. We very much regret the loss of these efficient helpers, but feel sure they will still take an interest in and aid the work as opportunity offers. While regretting the loss of these tried and valued officers we extend a cordial welcome to those who have undertaken to fill the vacancies, and congratulate them on having been called to such honourable position in the Master's service.

One Presbyterial Society mourns the death of an esteemed President. Other loved officers have been called to rest from earthly service, and those accustomed to look up to and lean upon them, sadly miss their loving counsel and help. We deeply sympathize with the sorrowing ones, and pray that Divine comfort and guidance may be granted them.

AUXILIARIES.

A little more than a year ago it was our privilege to welcome to our ranks an Auxiliary from outside our own denomination—the "Farrington," Brantford. Their first report evidences deep interest and activity and gives us reason to rejoice that they are co-workers with us in this service of love.

The Auxiliary reports are, on the whole, full of encouragement. In a few, however, we find the disheartening words: "We have disbanded for the present." Varied reasons are given, and sometimes the words are accompanied by a small remittance, which, past experience leads us to fear, will prove the dying effort of discouraged ones. We know that many of our workers have great difficulties in their way, and with all such we truly sympathize; but we would most earnestly urge them not to disband without at least making known their difficulties to Presbyterial or Home Secretary. In not a few instances where this has been done the suggestions received have encouraged them to continued and successful service.

Should the difficulties prove insurmountable hindrances to meeting as an Auxiliary, there is still the possibility of keeping in touch with the work as "Scattered Helpers."

Only those who have passed through the experience can have any idea of the discouragement it is to learn from the reports, for the first