

Our Mission Union.

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A Sunday Morning's Work Among the Prisons. No. 1.

B FINE bright morning. Nearly seven years experience of early morning work for Christ enables me to say that whatever the latter part of the day may be, the early portion of the day is almost invariably bright and fine. How much physical enjoyment we have had all through these years in the bright fresh air! I can say that the delight of working for Christ combined with the physical pleasure always produces a state of exaltation of spirit most delightful to experience and most helpful in enabling us to combat the sombre and sad aspects of our work. We will stop at the Mercer Reformatory first, at 9 a.m. The teachers of the Sunday School, all ladies with the exception of the Superintendent, gather together for a consecration meeting. A hymn, a few texts, with a simple application and an earnest prayer send us up to the unfortunate inmates with our hearts warm with love and full of confidence in the power of the Gospel message. Seldom except for some unavoidable necessity do we ever lose a teacher from the Mercer work, so great is the interest and the blessing.

In the chapel at the top of the house we find the inmates assembled, and when their faces old

and young are looked on, a deep aspiration for grace to help in this time of their great need, and our great opportunity goes up to the loving Father. Many of the faces bear marks of great suffering: but many oh how many are so young and kindly looking that you cannot realise the depth of misery and degradation they have been drawn up from. Our experience is that the circumstances in which they have been placed especially the degradation of parents by drink is the prime reason for the great majority of the all cases. I am satisfied that in this respect, they are more sinned against than sinning. Many of their histories are terribly sad and make you almost fancy that the world is peopled with devils.

To return to the Sunday School. After a short opening address, a hymn and prayer, the international lesson is taken up, and Bible in hand the faithful teacher unweariedly points out the way of escape to the poor fallen one, with, in a most cheering number of cases, gratifying success. The interest aroused in spiritual things among them is very great. None are compelled to come to the Sunday School, but it is very seldom any are absent except from sickness. Never a Sunday passes that there are not a number of anxious enquirers, in fact it is seldom now that a Sunday passes without a conversion to Christ. Pointing out one Sunday morning to an anxious one the parable of the hundred sheep in the 15th of Luke, I directed her attention to the fact that as the Saviour was seeking the lost sheep it would be the blame of the sheep if it were not found—all that the sheep had to do was to turn at his call. "He is calling thee now and why will you not turn at his call and take him for your own Saviour." "I will take him for my own saviour" she simply said, and although this is some months ago, she has shown in a changed life, and a simple trust, that she really did.

W. H. H.

OUR WATCHWORDS.

"Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."—Zech. iv. 6.

"They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint."—Isaiah xl. 31.