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Published Quarterly

The Open Door

The Missionary Organ of the Methodist Church of N.Z.

DECEMBER, 1923



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METHODIST CHURCH.

THE OPEN DOOR.

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Editorial Notes.

Women's Work for Women.

The work of the Women's Auxiliaries receives special notice in this number. The Women's Auxiliaries have for many years been an educational agency in the Church, and much of the Missionary interest and activity to-day is directly traceable to the work of these devoted women. There are considerably over 2000 women banded together in this organisation with the object of promoting the imperial cause of Foreign Missions, and the no less worthy work of Home Missions. Their contribution to our Missionary funds is considerable. They provide the salaries of all our Missionary sisters in the Solomons. Their work is worthy of the warmest support of every woman in the Church. There are, however, many circuits in which this splendid organisation has not been able to obtain a footing. We appeal to the ministers and officials of our circuits to help in the establishment of auxiliaries in every circuit in the Dominion.

Where Are the Men?

The women of the Church have given a notable lead. Will the men follow? Past efforts to establish branches of the Laymen's Missionary Movement in New Zealand have met with scant success. Here and there in our Churches are men, Circuit Missionary Secretaries, and others, who are as keen as the keenest of the women. The splendid returns from a few of our Circuits are largely due to the energy and organising ability of these men. But there is no organised work among the men as there is among the women. Lack of interest is usually due to lack of knowledge. A campaign of Missionary education is urgently needed. If in every Circuit a few men could be found who would put their hearts into the business of securing the Missionary income, deficiencies would soon be a thing of the past. Men of the Church! Rally to the standard.

The Retiring President of the Women's Union.

Mrs. George Bowron, of Christchurch, who has filled the position of President of the Methodist Women's Missionary Union for the past three years retired from the office at the recent Timaru Conference. The Women's Auxiliary Movement owes much to Mrs. Bowron. Wonderful progress has been made during her term of office. She is a woman of ideas and vision. Not only does she excel in presiding in a business meeting, but she is equally at home in delivering a devotional address or leading a meeting for prayer. Every duty of the office has been discharged with ability and distinction and she has set a high standard for all her successors in office. The new President, Mrs. T. H. Stevens, of Auckland, is a woman of saintly life and spiritual ideals, and will maintain the high standard of efficiency and spiritual leadership set up by Mrs. Bowron.

A Fine Record.

Between twenty and thirty years ago the Helping Hand Mission was a flourishing institution in Auckland. Missionary meetings were regularly held and were largely attended. The missionary spirit was strongly in evidence. Some of its best workers in those early days are now closely associated with the missionary work of our Church. Mrs. M. K. Gilmour, of Papua, Mrs. T. H. Stevens, the present President of the New Zealand Methodist Women's Missionary Union, Mrs. Smethurst, the Dominion Box Organiser for the Women's Union, Mrs. H. E. Pacey, an ex-President of the Auckland Auxiliary and a member of the Board of Missions, the Rev. W. A. Sinclair, General Secretary for Foreign Missions, the Rev. F. Copeland, for some years a missionary in Samoa, and Mrs. A. C. Brown, nee Sister Blakeley, of the China Inland Mission and now of the Auckland Chinese Mission, were all at one time active workers in the Mission. Not many Churches can show a finer missionary record.

Twenty Years Ago.

By Mr. J. F. GOLDIE.

The Beginning of the Solomon Islands Mission.

CONCLUSION.

Somewhere about midnight on Easter Sunday, in the sixth year, I woke up startled to find all the boys on the station, and there were now nearly fifty, outside my window. They couldn't sleep, they said, and had come to ask me if the preacher really meant that Kerisito, God's only Son, died for us and rose again, or was it just another mistake. I gravely assured them that this was perfectly true. They had been anxious to follow Him for months, but didn't know the way. When Mr. Goldie heard, all the black depression of the past months vanished, not to return for a long time. We were sorry for the times we had almost given up in despair. It was the greatest day of his life. He put the boys on trial for a year, and Mr. Rooney came home to assist in that first wonderful service. There have been many baptismal services much larger than that first one of forty-eight converts, but not one which meant quite so much to us. Our people are not emotional, but the atmosphere was painful on that day. The courage of those boys was wonderful. Many of them were of the chief blood of Roviana and their relatives, fierce old warriors were frightfully angry, and were waiting outside the church with their axes and spears ready to attack as the crowd came out. There was much angry muttering as the service proceeded, but there was no indication of fear on the faces of those boys—only a beautiful uplifted look. They were the sons of brave men, anyway, and were not afraid of death. During this period we were driven to express our feelings in some way. I suppose as a man is driven to drink, ours was to the pencil—hence the translation of some of our grand old hymns, "Thou, Lord, art a shield for me," "Rock of Ages," and "Abide with me." One night when unable to sleep, I lit the lamp, found my pencil as usual, and tried to translate "Lead, kindly Light," but couldn't get beyond the second verse. After midnight I gave it up, and the leaves seemed to persist in turning to "Come, ye sinners, poor and wretched," a hymn I wasn't at all fond of, and I felt impelled to translate it. It just seemed to turn itself into Rovi-

ana. When finishing the last verse, about two o'clock in the morning, I was startled by a terrific row—rocks flying on the roof and walls, men yelling and banging the back door near where I was sitting. I discovered that the place was surrounded by a number of angry natives, all armed, and threatening to destroy the house. They were strengthened by a number of lawless regenade police boys, who had come to help them take one of our girls by force. Fortunately for me Mr. Goldie was home, was awakened by the row, and soon came to my assistance. I was too angry to feel nervous, and was determined that, whatever happened, they shouldn't take this girl of ours to a fate which was worse than death, so I hid her and myself for several days, Mr. Goldie pushing food through a small opening, and we were prepared to escape at night into the bush if necessary.

In those days life was a strange mixture of beauty and horror. Even the hymns are inextricably mixed with painful memories. One evening, when at lotu on our verandahs, whilst singing "Abide with me" on our knees, we were electrified by the sound of conch shells blowing from all directions. The whole lagoon re-echoed the sound. You could feel the struggle to keep kneeling, but it was impossible, and the lotu rapidly dispersed. The conch shells were heralding the approach of the head of the leading woman of Vela Lavella, who had been sacrificed so that our king "Ingava" should not go alone on his journey into the unknown. The head of this woman, with her long, flowing hair, the sign of her long widowhood, was taken all over our station and through the lagoon, so that all should share in the sacrifice and be blest. "Abide with me" is often strangely accompanied in my memory, for I could tell you many stories associated with this one hymn alone.

When the first girls on the station, nearly thirty of them, decided to follow the Christ, a period of terrible persecution began, for Roviana was becoming seriously alarmed, so the heathen world began to fight this new order of things. They cursed the Christians publicly. The old witches, the terror of

the place, would denounce them by name, and place the curse of leprosy, and insanity, and other horrors on them. We can't imagine the fight to overcome superstitious dread which took place in the sensitive minds of the young Christians.

The singing of hymns was prohibited in the villages, but the whole lagoon was soon ringing with "Onward, Christian soldiers." The spirit of the Lotu was like a mighty fire which nothing could quench, and the greater the persecution the greater it grew. The people in terror removed their principal

gods far from the sound of "Onward, Christian soldiers." You can still see them there if you are a man, on that beautiful island in the Wana Wana Lagoon. Poor lonely gods! There is hardly any one left to worship them in the Roviana district. Even Gemu, the King, who took Ingava's place of authority, is at last following his people and asking to be received into the Church. Is it any wonder that on great occasions we sing "Cry out and shout, thou inhabitants of Zion! Great is the Holy One in the midst of thee!"

FOURTEEN POINTS ON THE BIBLE AND MISSIONS.

1. Every Book in the New Testament was written by a foreign missionary.
2. Every Epistle in the New Testament that was written to a church was written to a foreign missionary church.
3. Every letter in the New Testament that was written to an individual was written to the convert of a foreign missionary.
4. Every Book in the New Testament that was written to a community of believers was written to a general group of foreign missionary churches.
5. The one Book of prophecy in the New Testament was written to the seven foreign missionary churches in Asia.
6. The only authoritative history of the early Christian church is a foreign missionary journal.
7. The disciples were called Christians first in a foreign missionary community.
8. The language of the Books of the New Testament is the missionary's language.
9. The map of the early Christian world is the tracings of the missionary journals of the apostles.
10. The problems which arose in the early church were largely questions of missionary procedure.
11. Of the twelve apostles chosen by Jesus every apostle except one became a missionary.
12. The only man among the twelve apostles who did not become a missionary became a traitor.
13. Only a foreign missionary could write an everlasting Gospel.

14. According to the apostles the missionary is the highest expression of the Christian life.

William A. Brown.

STAMPS AND MISSIONS.

The Rev. T. Coatsworth, of the Franklin Road Church, Auckland, is a stamp enthusiast, and sees in this hobby a source of missionary income. He is prepared to take charge of a stamp department in connection with our Missionary Society. Stamps of any denomination and of any country may be forwarded to him and he will dispose of them to the best advantage. Already one fairly large collection has been promised from Central Otago. Many members of the Church have collections of stamps lying unused and almost forgotten. Good use can be made of these by Mr. Coatsworth if forwarded to him, and a considerable amount of revenue derived therefrom. Will all willing to assist communicate with the Rev. T. Coatsworth, Collingwood St., Ponsonby, Auckland. The whole of the proceeds of the sale of these stamps will be handed to the Treasurer of the Missionary Society.

Illiteracy is much greater among the women of India than among the men. While 106 men in each 1,000 are literate, only 10 women in each 1,000 can read and write. Only 18,000,000 people can read, out of a population of 315,000,000.

The Indian Christian saint, Sundar Singh, says: "There are many beautiful things in Hinduism, but the fullest light is from Christ. Hinduism has been digging channels, Christ is the water that flows through these channels."

Educational Work in the Solomons.

Introduction of New Methods.

At the fine missionary meeting in Timaru held in connection with the Conference of the Women's Missionary Union, Miss Lina Jones, who has been accepted by the Board of Missions for service in the Solomons, in a few telling sentences related how the call to the Mission Field came to her. It was at the Young Women's Bible Class Camp in Timaru last Easter that the vision of the Solomons and the need of an experienced school teacher there, became so real, and the call to her so insistent, that she could



MISS LINA JONES,
who is shortly to leave for the Solomons.

do no other than say "Here am I, Lord, send me." At that very time the Rev. J. F. Goldie, the Chairman of the District, was writing pointing out the urgent necessity for the appointment of a trained lady teacher. The offer of Miss Jones was gladly accepted by the Board of Missions, and she is now preparing to leave for the mission field early in the new year. Miss Jones is an experienced and successful school teacher and her action in volunteering for the mission field, will mean a big financial sacri-

fice, probably the loss of her interest in the Teachers' Superannuation Fund, but she has not allowed financial considerations to influence her. The call to the work was so definite and clear that she dare not disobey or disregard it. Her parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Jones, prominent workers in our Addington Church, cheerfully give their consent to her going. Miss Jones, after being farewelled at the Conference in Christchurch, will leave for Sydney, where she will spend a short time in one of the best Kindergarten schools to gain further experience before proceeding to the Solomons. She will specialise in Kindergarten work in the Mission Schools, and it is proposed to utilise her services in training native teachers, so that more up-to-date methods of teaching may be introduced into the schools. It should be remembered that the Missionary Societies are responsible for all the educational work in the Solomons, the Government taking no responsibility in this matter.

With regard to the equipment necessary for this work, Miss Jones writes:—"A lot of money goes a little way when it comes to buying apparatus. The individual method of teaching requires much more apparatus than the class method. The former method is the modern, and I take it that is the method Mr. Goldie wishes me to use. I am enclosing a list of the articles which will be of use to me in my work." There are doubtless many readers of the "Open Door" who could supply some of the articles named by Miss Jones. These could be sent to her at Harman St, Addington, Christchurch, or to the Rev. W. A. Sinclair, 509 N.Z. Insurance Buildings, Auckland, or to the officers of the Women's Auxiliaries.

(List of Articles on Page 6).

"I am thankful that the Methodist Church is a Missionary Church. Methodism and evangelism ought to be one and the same thing. If you took out of our hymn-book all the hymns that breathe the missionary spirit, you might have a hymn-book left, but it would not be the Methodist Hymn-book."—*Isaac Foot, M.P. (at the Albert Hall Thanksgiving Service).*

For Those Who Stay at Home.

By F. SHEPPARD GREEN.

During the last Dunedin Conference, at the close of the time set apart for the "Conversation on the Work of God," three members were talking. One of them, a keen observer in our midst, said that New Zealand Methodism often seemed to him a Church without a God. Deliberately, and fully conscious that his statement involved a contradiction of terms, he laid the charge. At first (to put it very mildly) it seemed a gross exaggeration. But the phrase stuck in his hearers' memory, and when they definitely set themselves to refute it they were faced with difficulty.

* * * *

Taking two Districts they both knew well, and going over their Circuits and Churches one by one, they recalled a cause here and there where the Presence of God was vitally manifested, and people knew how to pray. But of the vast majority they could only confess that the very atmosphere seemed dead and cold, and all sense of reality in religion and urgency in prayer was lacking. People might (some doubtless did) pray in their own homes, but how many of them knew anything of the power of corporate Prayer? Save in a few isolated

Prayer should be the expression of the servant's loyal desire for the extension and prosperity of the Master's Kingdom, and of his loyal expectation that his Lord will work mightily for the accomplishment of His purpose. But when he loses his sense of the reality of God, desire and expectation will alike flag, he will no longer be sure that God has any purpose, nor careful as to whether He accomplishes it or not. Especially is this true regarding Foreign Missions. William Carey gave us a great watchword—"Expect great things from God; attempt great things for God." Both expectation and effort are blighted when the soul loses its sense of God.

* * * *

New Zealand Methodism is facing the difficulties following a new beginning in her Missionary relationships. The purse-strings are not yet sufficiently loosened to meet even the urgent needs of the work in the Solomons. The Church has not fully risen to the opportunity which it embraced with such fervour in the early days of 1922. WHY? Is it possible that we have begun at the wrong end, and with a false sense of values? After all, money is *not* the great, the primary thing in Missionary work.

the fact that Prayer—especially corporate Prayer—is a force to be reckoned with. But where will the greatest outcome of Mr. Hickson's visit be found—in the cures effected? In the individual lives that have been brought into saving touch with the Unseen? Nay, they each count for much, but will not the most permanent results be found in the re-discovery of that Prayer-force which so many had neglected and forgotten? For at the heart of all our unbeliefs there is a dimmed and blunted sense of the reality of God. It is inconceivable that any man should have a vivid sense of God's living reality and nearness to his own life, and continue in the stolid, apathetic indifference that is so widespread to-day.

our treasuries of money; organisation by itself doesn't really matter very much, but prayer about it does matter a great deal.

* * * *

We may work hard, but to what end? Work without Prayer simply means using ourselves, instead of letting God use us. Dr. Mott has truly said that Prayer and effort are faith and works—one cannot exist without the other. And there is such a close relationship between desire and will, faith and effect, that when a man begins to pray for Missions one of two things must happen. Either he will stop praying, or he will begin to work.

* * * *

Prayer is a force; corporate Prayer is a resistless force. "The fervent, effectual prayer of a righteous man availeth much," but "if two of you shall agree as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father." The chief thing to note about this really extraordinary statement is that everything else seems to depend upon *agreement*. Now Corporate Prayer, to be effective, must take its rise in individual aspiration, but its power is by no means measured by the sum of the units thus joined together. New forces are generated. Just as substances may change from liquid to solid by merely adding one to the other, so entirely new powers are

brought into being through amalgamation. So let us pray with assurance. It is a working fact, not a pious sentiment, that with God all things are possible. He will give what His Son has told us to ask.

* * * *

Can we not see, therefore, that unless our Church can regain the spirit of corporate Prayer our Missionary organisation must remain as *a body without a soul*? It is only in Prayer that we can ever grip our Missionary problem. Not in vague, banal petitions that the Missions may be blessed, and the wandering sheep brought into the fold; not in prayer that simply reveals the petitioner's blank ignorance of any Missionary work in particular; but in Prayer that grips because it is based upon a definite, realised need and a revealed Saviour. If we turn to the earliest presentation of that problem in the closing verses of Matthew ix., we find that Jesus first lays bare the dire need; next, manifests his own glowing compassion for the fainting and untended sheep; and finally, when His followers' eyes are full of the "white fields," and their hearts have caught the contagion of the Master's yearning, He bids them "Pray the Lord to send labourers."

* * * *

In a word, we are bound, first, to *look the facts in the face*; then, to *look the Son of Man in the face*; and finally, TO PRAY.

WHO ARE THE GREATEST CHINESE?

"There has recently been an interesting voting competition in a Chinese paper to ascertain who were regarded as the twelve greatest living Chinese. Altogether forty-seven names were suggested by those who competed, and it is encouraging to know that of these forty-seven twelve are members of the Protestant Church. The sixth on the list was the well-known General Feng. As there are not yet half a million communicants in the Protestant Church, that is to say, one in 800 of the population, it is a significant fact that one in four of those who are regarded as China's greatest men should be recognized as followers of Christ. This fact is a tribute to the influence of the Christian Church."



THE MISSION HOUSE, SENGA, CHOISEUL, SOLOMON ISLANDS.

Built with the Sago Palm Leaf.

The Home of the Rev. and Mrs. le C. BINET.

Progress in Papua.

By the Rev. A. H. SCRIVIN.

There is a good deal of irony sometimes in the expression "reporting progress," but seldom is this so in connection with the foreign mission field. Certainly at the Papua District Synod, held in October, the progress reported was very real and inspiring. The Synod was held at Salamo, the new District Training Institution. This statement in itself implies splendid progress. The site was finally fixed upon by the Synod about four years ago, and a year later the Rev. and Mrs. Gilmour established themselves upon it in a small native house. To-day there are streets of fine native houses for students and tutors, a large native church, nearing completion, and a semi-native and two commodious European houses for the white staff. At the wharf a mangrove swamp has been transformed into a hive of industry. There are two slips—the larger of which is capable of accommodating our largest boats—a temporary saw-pit, and a fine technical institution built of fibro-cement. In the latter a technical instructor with first-class qualifications has been established for eighteen months, and he speaks very hopefully of the boys under his instruction. Two fine launches, designed by the Rev. M. K. Gilmour, have been turned out of this institution, and another one started during the

past year, besides a good deal of other work. Our fleet of six sailing vessels and five launches is also regularly overhauled and refitted here.

For the planning and carrying out of the whole of this work we have to thank our chairman (Rev. M. K. Gilmour) and the Synod placed on record its high appreciation of a really fine achievement.

For many years the need of a resident missionary at Cape Pearson has been recognised, but the chronic shortage of men has been responsible for the legend "One Wanted" until this year. But, one of the members of the Synod was a man newly appointed to this station, and much development should soon be evident at this end of the Dobu circuit. The Cape Pearson man will also have oversight of the work at Murua, difficult by reason of the scattered and shifting population.

The opening of the model school at Dobu, during Synod, and the arrival of a qualified teacher to take charge of it, marked still further progress. Most of our native agents are good evangelists, but of only a few can it be said that they are good teachers. To improve the standard of teaching will be one of the objects of the model school. It is hoped that our teachers will be able,

from time to time, to attend this school to learn the best method of teaching.

We rejoice greatly over such signs of progress as the establishment of a more suitable district institution, the pleasing growth of a technical school, the launching of more boats, and the opening of a model school, because all these are leading us the more rapidly to our goal, to wit, the evangelisation and Christianisation of the people of Papua. "Papua for Christ" is the slogan of the man building the boats, and the tutor training the students, just as it is of the evangelist who moves and preaches in the villages. The one is making it possible for the evangelist to travel from island to island, the other is training his successor, and thus all work together for the salvation of the people. And when one from an out station reports spiritual growth among his people, and a growing membership, he and those who have built his boat and trained his teachers rejoice together.

Attendance at the class meeting is still, to all intents and purposes, the test of membership in Papua, and class membership there implies a great deal. There are three stages of membership—catechumen,

A Gentleman in Prison.

The Student Volunteer Movement has just published the story of the life of Tokichi Ishii, a Japanese murderer. While he was awaiting death on the scaffold he wrote this story of his life, and it has now been translated into English by Miss Macdonald, a lady who visited him in prison.

As Dr. Kelman truly says in his foreword, this is one of the world's great stories: "the most realistic vision I have ever seen of Jesus Christ finding one of the lost. You see, as you read, the matchless tenderness of His eyes and the almighty power of the gentlest hands that ever drew a lost soul out of misery into peace."

Tokichi Ishii here confesses to a life of crime. In all, and on various charges, he spent twenty years in prison. At last, while undergoing imprisonment for another crime he learnt that an innocent man had been condemned for a murder he himself had

committed. He confessed, and ultimately was sentenced to death. Two lady missionaries, Miss West and Miss Macdonald, visited him in prison, but, while he behaved with decorum, he did not at first pay much attention to what they said, and he put on a shelf the New Testament they gave him. "One day," he writes, "I got tired of sitting by myself with nothing to do, and just for the sake of putting in the time, I took the New Testament down from the shelf, and, with no intention of seriously looking into it, I glanced at the beginning and then at the middle." He read some passages and then put the book away. Another time he read of the Crucifixion and came to the verse: "And Jesus said, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." These words, by the grace of God, reached his soul. "I stopped: I was stabbed to the heart, as if pierced by a five-inch nail.

trial and full. An enquirer may be a member of the catechumen class, but he must be more than a mere enquirer. He must establish the earnestness of his enquiry by giving up all essentially evil and vicious practices. In fact, a catechumen is in reality a converted man. If a man "makes good" in the catechumen class for a year he may be proposed for trial membership, but, in the case of a married man, only after his native marriage has been confirmed by the Christian ceremony. After a year on trial the man may request baptism, but permission is only granted by the Leaders' Meeting after the applicant's teacher has reported favourably on his faith and conduct. After baptism the man is eligible for full membership.

In order to reach New Zealand before Christmas, the writer left Synod before all the circuit reports had been presented, but he had the joy of reporting that in the Kiriwina circuit during the past year ninety-six had been received into full membership, eighty-four on trial, and more than one hundred and sixty into the catechumen classes. For these results in a part of Papua where the power of the sorcerer is still very potent we praise God.

One of the World's Great Stories.

committed. He confessed, and ultimately was sentenced to death. Two lady missionaries, Miss West and Miss Macdonald, visited him in prison, but, while he behaved with decorum, he did not at first pay much attention to what they said, and he put on a shelf the New Testament they gave him. "One day," he writes, "I got tired of sitting by myself with nothing to do, and just for the sake of putting in the time, I took the New Testament down from the shelf, and, with no intention of seriously looking into it, I glanced at the beginning and then at the middle." He read some passages and then put the book away. Another time he read of the Crucifixion and came to the verse: "And Jesus said, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." These words, by the grace of God, reached his soul. "I stopped: I was stabbed to the heart, as if pierced by a five-inch nail.

What did the verse reveal to me? Shall I call it the love of the heart of Christ? Shall I call it His compassion? I do not know what to call it. I only know that with an unspeakably grateful heart I believed. Through this simple sentence I was led into the whole of Christianity."

Thereafter the study of the Scriptures was his passion and delight. This man, who never knew from one hour to another when he would be summoned to the scaffold, read as if he would make up for thirty mis-spent years. While others under such circumstances would dread every footfall and pass day and night in an agony of apprehension, Ishii, as he told the kind Buddhist chaplain who visited him, knew not the slightest distress of mind. "When morning breaks I welcome the day with gladness," he said. The chaplain was puzzled. "Tell me," he said; "how you came to have such faith." Ishii reached out for his Testament and replied: "In this book the words of Christ are written, and through them I

know that He is here in this very cell. Although I cannot see Him with my outward eye, I talk with Him every day." The chaplain, a very noble man, encouraged him to rest in Christian faith. "It is good to have such faith," he said; "I want you to enter in more and more deeply."

The story of the last moments has been told with great sympathy by the Buddhist chaplain. Among the officials present there was none who did not pay Ishii respect and honour for his calm courage. "On the very scaffold, when in a moment his life was to disappear like a dew-drop, he uttered those last words of his: 'My soul, purified, returns to the City of God.'"

It is all a very moving tale. It reveals afresh how everywhere the human heart is one—one in sinning, one in capacity for repentance, one in susceptibility to the Grace of God. Translated into Japanese as into English, the words of Christ speak with ever-living power. The heart-strings of all men vibrate to the touch of their Creator.

Missionary Table Talk.

The Rev. A. H. Scrivin, of Papua, is now on furlough in New Zealand. Mr. Scrivin hopes to attend the Conference in Christchurch next year. He is due to leave for Sydney about the end of March to undertake deputation work in Australia.

The Rev. and Mrs. J. R. Metcalfe left Sydney by the "Marsina" on October 24th for the Solomons. Mr. Metcalfe writes: "We are both feeling quite fit, and are looking forward to a further period of usefulness among our dark-skinned people."

The General Secretary's visit to the Blenheim Circuit resulted in the promise by two members of the Church—one at Blenheim and one at Tua Marina—to support native teachers in the Solomons.

The Annual Meeting of the Board of Missions will be held in Auckland on January 23 and 24. Members of the Board resident in other parts of the Dominion will attend. The whole of the business of the Missionary Society will come under review.

Paul Kanamori, the great Japanese preacher, has consented to visit Australia and New Zealand early in 1924. He ex-

pects to arrive in Sydney about the middle of February, and will probably proceed direct to New Zealand, returning to Sydney in the month of April, but the definite itinerary has not yet been fixed. He has been delivering a three-hours' sermon in many places in Japan with wonderful results.

It is probable that the Rev. J. F. Goldie will be able to attend the Annual Meeting of the Board of Missions in January. He is taking his furlough during the early part of the year, and Mr. Bensley during the latter. Mr. Goldie will therefore be the Missionary deputation in the North Island and Mr. Bensley in the South.

The Rev. and Mrs. M. K. Gilmour are expected to arrive in Auckland on furlough about the beginning of the New Year. They will receive a warm welcome from their many friends.

The Rev. A. J. Small, chairman of the Fiji Mission District, is spending two or three months in Auckland. He is at present visiting his daughter, Mrs. Gosnell.

Pioneering in the Solomons.

Bougainville and Adjacent Islands.

The Rev. A. H. Cropp, our pioneer missionary in Bougainville, is having many varied experiences. He writes to the Rev. W. A. Sinclair, the General Secretary, as follows:

We have 143 scholars in the school now. The youngest is 6 years old; the eldest about 35 years. The kiddies are rather smart, the older folk not so. We have a beautiful view from where we are, but learn, unfortunately, that we may be moved off, as this turns out to be Crown land and may be needed for a Government site. No one knew when we applied for it. After all our work it is heart-breaking. There is no other place nearby where we can settle, and it may mean starting all over again. I am half inclined to risk another trip into Rabaul and plead our cause there. We don't like the 100-mile ocean trip, as the boat is only about 28ft. on the water-line. Still, we did it before, and I believe God will o'ershadow us again with His wings. We have not long returned from Nisan and the Carterets, two groups of islands about 45 miles north of Bougainville. The Carterets are in the shape of an atoll. There are only six islets, and each is on the reef, which forms a complete circle, with a diameter of about 20 miles. The islands were very hard to pick up, as they are only about 5ft. above sea-level. We first saw the head of a tree from the mast-head, and then, when about 10 miles off, we could see the tops of the coconut trees from the deck. We went in through a passage into a basin of beautiful calm water, and as we approached the nearest island a crowd of canoes drew out to meet us. There is no white man on the islands, but a Chinese trader is holding one of the stations for the Expropriation Board. We had a hospitable welcome from the inhabitants, who number about 200. The villages were very clean. The people live on fish and coconuts. Very little taro can be grown, and nothing else will flourish, as the islands are so small and full of coral. It blew hard the next day, and we were thankful to be inside the reef and not outside. We told the people our mission, and made friends with them. At present a teacher cannot be settled on these islands, as the six of them belong to the Expropriation Board. They were bought during the German oc-

cupation by a woman who went under the name of Queen Emma. They were seemingly bought under these conditions: that she was to own the islands, but not to take possession nor plant coconuts on them until a sufficient number of natives had died off to warrant them being placed on a lesser number of islands in the group. If the natives increased or remained the same, Queen Emma could not occupy the islands. If an epidemic carried a lot of them off she was the winner in this huge game of chance. The whole affair, however, shows one of the many disgraceful transactions which were allowed under the German occupation. The people of Nisan, the other group which we visited, are in exactly the same plight. It is held by our own officials that they too parted with the whole of their islands to Queen Emma on the same conditions. Happily our administration is going to excise enough land in each place for permanent native reserves.

We left the next night and sailed all night across the 60 miles to Nisan. This group is also in the formation of an atoll, though the ground is much higher and makes a complete circle, except for three small entrances, forming a very acceptable land-locked haven. Our reception here was not at all like the Carterets, but we left after making friends with a good number of them. I have since heard that their estimated population runs over 1,000.

We have had three months of intermittent southerly gales. Whilst off the west coast of Bougainville, at a place just where we land, and you had your experience in the surf, the "Limau," a trading schooner of Buin, with an experienced captain in charge, was lost last week with all hands. Exactly what happened we can't find out, but the fatality has cast a gloom over the shipping folk around the island. We had intended going down to Siwai this week, but the news of the loss, and the gales not having ceased, caused us to be a little bit afraid of starting. The "Limau" was a good deal bigger than our little boat. Still we will have to go soon, even if it means the 40-mile walk again from Buin. The benzine shortage and the weather have been responsible for us not being able to visit our places there for nearly five months.

The Religious Situation in Russia.

By Rev. G. T. MARSHALL.

An article in the "Missionary Review of the World" for August on the above subject gives a more favourable view of the Soviet Government than is generally found in our papers and magazines. The article is written by L. O. Hartman, Boston, Editor of "Zion's Herald," and is an account of the All-Russia Territorial Council of the Orthodox Church, held on April 29th, at which Mr. Hartman was present. Every section of Russia was represented at the Council, including Siberia, The Ural, the Black Sea district, and Ukraine. The Metropolitan of Siberia was elected Chairman.

The article states that the Soviet leaders are atheists, but religious freedom was proclaimed by a decree which became a part of the Soviet Constitution, and later provision was made by which congregations could hold property in their collective capacity. The Soviet leaders have repeatedly reiterated the declaration that men are free to worship God as they please, provided religion is not used as a mask to cover counter-revolutionary activities. The "persecutions" of which we have read have taken place when this condition was believed to have been violated. The Council so far agreed with the charges upon which the Patriarch Tikhon was arrested that it took away his ecclesiastical status and reduced him to the rank of a layman.

The Council approved the social ideals of the Soviet Government, although it repudiated the Marxian philosophy which constitutes the working theory of the Bolsheviks. Vedensky, the orator of the Council, asserted that Marxism is materialistic, atheistic, and wrong in its philosophy of life, but he maintained that the Soviet Government, dominated by the thinking of Karl Marx, is striving actually to enthrone the principles of Christ.

The article sums up thus:—"It is to be hoped that the actions taken by the Orthodox Church Council will mark the beginning of a great reformation in the religious life of Russia. It succeeded largely in purging the organisation of counter-revolutionary elements within its ranks, and espoused the principles of separation of

Church and State. It repudiated the old time-serving autocratic ideas of religion. It reorganised its priesthood in such a way as to emphasize, as it has never done before, the sanctity of marriage. It struck a blow against superstitions in its action against the veneration of relics. It changed its calendar to conform with the Western way of measuring time. Last, but not least, it stretched forth its hands in fellowship to Western Churches. These accomplishments may have far-reaching influence, and may forecast the coming of a world-wide Christian unity."

Some will see in these things the subservience of religion to the time-spirit, and will say that the Church is a creature of the age without any "mark of everlasting light above the howling senses' ebb and flow." Others will say that religion is independent of political and economic systems, and will be confirmed in the belief that it flourishes equally under monarchic, republican, or communistic governments. Apparently the Russian Church wishes to be let alone to do its own work, and is glad not to be the tool of the Government, as it was largely under the Czarist regime. To secure this liberty it is willing to leave the Government alone. The action of the Council goes farther, however, than this, and indicates approval of the Soviet programme. It expects no help or patronage from those in power. It is not the first time that the Church has found itself under the control, in mundane things, of a Government that looks with no friendly eye upon its work. Christianity does not wait for the approval of "the powers that be." It began with the Jewish hierarchy in deadly hostility and the Roman Governors indifferent, and when the first-named had ceased to be, the latter had become persecutors. It has ever progressed by the urge of its own inward life, and by this it will still prosper.

Russia is not accessible for missionary work, nor was it accessible under the autocracy, but our good wishes may go out for these "other sheep" which are, like ourselves, under the care of the great Shepherd.

Missionary Tributes.

A BUSINESS MAN'S TRIBUTE.

An American Commission of Business Men has recently visited China. Mr. F. W. Stevens, a member of the Commission, after seeing much of China, writes as follows:—

"I have come to believe that America's greatest contribution to China, greater even than America's political friendship, is the work of the American Christian missionaries in China. This statement indicates the importance I attach to the need of moral regeneration which must precede any great political and industrial improvement. In all China there is not a single organisation on a scale of importance that aims at moral improvement, or that is calculated to bring it about, that is not traceable in its origin to the Christian Missions. I have inquired among all kinds of people from all parts of China for such an activity of non-Christian origin, without finding one. One who engages in an effort to learn what is the matter with China, and what is the remedy, whatever may have been his former attitude to religion, cannot fail to become interested in religion as a factor in China. . . . Neither Buddhism, nor Confucianism, nor any other of the Oriental religions is any longer a motive force in China. I regard the Christian Universities, colleges, academies, middle schools and primaries, with their quarter of a million Chinese students, as most potent factors in fitting China for taking her proper place in the world drama. They are doing a work of far-reaching and vital importance, and with an unselfish devotion far above praise."

A SCHOLAR'S TESTIMONY.

Sir Michael Sadler, of Sheffield University, in an address which he delivered lately, said:—

"When I was in India I was privileged to see for myself many of the great Missionary institutions of the country, and I received evidences of the social and educational, as well as the religious, value of the work they are doing. Among the leaders of Missionary enterprise are some of the most far-sighted statesmen. Christian Missions have at their command scholarly learning, medical skill and single-minded statesmanship, and are served by personal devotion beyond praise,

by untiring purpose, and by alert minds. Christian missions are a Christian obligation. They are the gift of a treasure which we ourselves have freely received."

HOW CHRIST INFLUENCES MODERN CHINA.

The following quotation from a letter written by a Chinese student to his friend in Paris will illustrate the influence of Jesus:—

"I am not a believer in religion, yet I would urge you to remember that we can not settle the question of religion as easily as we settle questions pertaining to our daily food and clothing. Religion is like a lamp which a man uses on a dark night to guide his footsteps. You who live in Paris with its well-lighted and well-paved streets perhaps have no need of such a lamp. But can we get along without this guiding light in far away Cathay?"

"I have in my study pictures of Millet, Goethe, Tolstoy, Beethoven, and Jesus Christ in the garden of Gethsemane. After seeing a beautiful picture, reading some wonderful poetry, or hearing some exquisite music my spirit goes out not to Jesus but to the pictures of the other famous men. But when my heart is in trouble, these can no longer charm. Only my contemplation of Jesus in His agony in the garden seems able to bring me peace."

"I have often read that passage in the New Testament regarding the woman from Nain. Jesus was eating in the home of a Pharisee. The sinful woman came, stood behind Him, and wept, and her tears fell on Jesus' feet. She wiped them with her own hair and anointed them with oil. What a picture! How simple and yet how life-like and holy! As I meditate on this episode. I begin to have a dim understanding of the reasons why Jesus was fit to be founder of such a great religion."

What an unconscious testimony to the deathless personality of our Lord!

—The Missionary Review of the World.
The very soul of our religion is missionary, progressive, world-embracing; it would cease to exist if it disregarded the parting words of its Founder.—Max Muller.

WOMEN'S PAGE

M.W.M.U.

Methodist Women's
Missionary Union of
New Zealand.

Dear Fellow-Workers:

Our New Year opens with advancement! News has already reached us that Mrs. Avery has arranged two drawing-room afternoons with the members of the Waitara and Lepperton Auxiliaries, and as the result of these "afternoons" seven new members have linked up with the Waitara Auxiliary. Mrs. Avery has also visited New Plymouth, Hawera, and Stratford, and

dents, Leaders, Secretaries, Treasurers, and Representatives of Local Auxiliaries, our hearts are bound together with the cable cords of love and devotion to our "Women's Work for Women."

Each year we get a clearer grip of the importance of our work, and a firmer trust in the fulfilment for all our needs in each department of our Auxiliary work by our Great Leader.



THE NEW EXECUTIVE OF THE WOMEN'S MISSIONARY UNION.

Standing—Miss Mather (Treasurer). Mrs. M. Smethurst (Box Organiser).

Sitting—Miss Carr (Joint Secretary). Mrs. T. H. Stevens (President). Miss J. Buttle (Joint Secretary).

given to each Auxiliary respectively an account of our Conference. Mrs. Pacey has visited the Branches near Palmerston North, and reports that she was delighted with the atmosphere of the meetings held. We expect to receive similar reports of increased interest from all over the Dominion.

This is the natural sequence of each Conference. Meeting together as Presi-

We rejoice in the work our Sisters are doing in the Solomons, and we wish every Methodist woman to feel that she is a fellow-worker with them; each Methodist woman may be by joining our Prayer Cycle and our Auxiliary.

Dear Look-out member, is there someone longing to join your Auxiliary, and you have never asked her to become a member? You never thought it worth while!

The one you know could never come to the meetings; she has two or three little children, and no help, and home is her place. Yes, she feels that it is, too! But she misses the old home, and old Church Christmas and Easter offering, and joining with us all in our noontide prayer hour. Remember to pass on the Sisters' letters to these members. Many a lonely hour will be cheered for someone by reading



MRS. G. BOWRON.

Ex-President of the Women's Missionary Union.
President of the Canterbury Women's Auxiliary.

associations, and feels that now she is out of everything. And, although she loves her home and her children, yet she longs for an outside interest. Just ask her to join your Auxiliary, and, though she cannot come to your meetings, I think you will find she will gladly share in your work by paying her affiliation fee, donating her

these letters, and our workers in the Fields Afar will be strengthened, because a tired mother prays.

Our Union Executive join with me in most cordial greetings to you all.

Believe me,
Yours sincerely,

A. C. STEVENS.

WOMEN'S MISSIONARY CONFERENCE, TIMARU, OCTOBER, 1923.

The ninth Annual Conference of M.W.M.U. was opened at Timaru on the morning of October 16th. Mrs. T. H. Stevens, the President-Elect, conducted the devotional exercises, lifting all at once on to a high level of spirituality. The business began by calling the roll, 40 delegates responding. Mrs. G. Bowron occupied the chair. Keen attention to business was manifested by every member, and all discussions were free and general. Good reports were received from the Auxiliaries, progress being made in nearly every place. Auckland heading the list. Four new Auxiliaries have commenced during the year, and several Branches of the older Auxiliaries have been formed. Business was confined to the morning sessions, and in the afternoons greetings were received from other Women's Societies in Timaru; a welcome extended to the Conference by Rev. A. C. Lawry and Mr. T. E. Holdgate; papers from Rev. A. J. Seamer, Mrs. Metcalfe, and Mrs. Bens'ey were read; and the claims of the Deaconess' House Training Institute laid before the members by Mrs. Bowron and Mrs. H. E. Lamb.

On the evening of Wednesday, 17th, Rev. W. A. Sinclair delivered a very fine lecture on "Our Work in the Solomons," illustrated by attractive views well shown. The Timaru friends treated us to some excellent music. Miss L. Jones and Miss Trott, who hope soon to go out to the Solomons, each spoke briefly of her desire to be a Missionary Sister, and Mrs. Pacey summed up all in a few earnest words, emphasizing the fact that each and all had a responsibility in this matter of sending the Gospel to other lands.

On Thursday morning a very beautiful and impressive Communion Service was conducted by Rev. A. C. Lawry, assisted by Revs. H. Odell and J. Blakemore. The business was finished in good time on Friday morning, Mrs. Pinfold and Mrs. Avery expressing the thanks and appreciation of the visitors to their hostesses and all who had worked so unselfishly to make the conference the great success it was. Miss Holdgate, the Timaru President, gracefully responded. The retiring Executive were

thanked for their services during the past three years, and the new Executive took over the books and the responsibility. The new officers are as follows:—Mrs. T. H. Stevens, President; Misses Carr and J. Buttle, Secretaries; and Miss Mather, Treasurer.

On Friday afternoon the delegates, with their hostesses and friends, were taken out to Mrs. Withell's by motor car and enjoyed an hour of fresh air and relaxation amidst lovely scenery and beautiful trees.

Conference Criticisms.

The "Snowball Conference!" What a queer name for a Methodist Women's Missionary Union! Well, we were not really known to the general public by it, but those who knew realised that some at least of the properties of a Snowball belonged to the company of Methodist women travelling to Timaru about last October 15th. The very beginning of it was somewhere north of Auckland, and by the time it reached Christchurch it had assumed quite large proportions. Indeed, there was more resemblance to a meteor as the two Executives met. Such fire of zeal glowed in each heart!

Well, the Snowball rolled on Southward, gathering still in size. Up from the South came others, the most southerly of all feeling the bad weather so much that she declared she fully expected to encounter snow. But on leaving the train at Timaru we were soon conscious of a thawing element and the "genial climate" of Timaru. As one remarked: "If the weather is bad at Timaru you may be sure it is fifty times worse anywhere else." We thanked the Fates that we were not "anywhere else." Oh! the cheeriness of the welcome and the sense of being cared for, as the genial President of the Timaru Auxiliary and the capable Secretary, with their choice band of helpers, met us, all out to make the M.W.M.U. Conference the unqualified success it has undoubtedly been! Owing to the good organisation and the generosity of motor car owners every delegate was soon in her allotted place, revelling in more brightness and warmth.

We renew old friendships or make new ones, and our hearts are stirred as we realize the blessedness of the tie that binds His members together. Our devotional

half-hours proved good keynotes for our strenuous days of work. As we listened to words, stirring holy aspirations to purity and praise, from the lips of our President-Elect, the thought came to our mind: "A gracious President to take her place in each heart, beside the dear one already enthroned there!"

Each day brought its full quota of work. Each evening saw it done, as we hope, for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Reports showed progress all along the line. Some were truly marvellous. One informed us that their Auxiliary had received "some scraps of little brown children." Perhaps they thought the Conference would snap at 'Picanniny Pie! Another report caused a smile as the statement was made: "Whenever we have Afternoon Tea we pass a saucer round for pennies to procure oats for Sister Eleanor's horse." Many and varied are the needs of our mission field at home and abroad, and many and varied are the methods of raising funds to help; but a perfect unity and oneness exists in the hearts of all our members that the extension of Christ's Kingdom is our aim.

Newsy Notes.

The Dunedin Auxiliary attained its majority in September last. A freewill thanksgiving offering of £66/10/- marked the gratitude of the members.

The Cashmere Branch has forwarded £6 towards Sister Marion's salary.

The Rangiora Ladies' Guild has sent in a substantial sum towards finding medicines for the use of the Sisters.

The Auckland Auxiliary had a most successful Annual Meeting. The Annual Report showed an increase of 57 members, the total being 625. Mrs. T. L. Caley is the new President. Seven new Branches formed during the year bring the number up to ten.

Financial.

Miss Mather, the new M.W.M.U. Treasurer, reports amounts received since September: Stratford, 7/6; Wanganui, £51; Dunedin, £107/10/-; Oamaru, £4/12/6; Nelson, £36/5/-; Gisborne, £1; Napier, £5; Thames, 10/-; Fielding, £5/10/-; Roxburgh, £5/13/-; Rongotea, 5/-; Timaru, £1/10/-; Palmerston North, £15.

Twenty-first Anniversary of the Dunedin Auxiliary.

The members of the Dunedin Women's Auxiliary of Home and Foreign Missions have celebrated their 21st Birthday with great rejoicings. Dawn of September 18th ushered in a big day for this Auxiliary. No official meetings were held till afternoon, but all the morning there were many busy women doing the unseen work which ensures success for the public function.

The Dunedin President, Mrs. W. H. Duke, combines in happy fashion the characteristics of both Martha and Mary, and her members are very loyal to her. At the thanksgiving service in the afternoon almost every member must have been present, and there were not a few interested friends also. It was a service to be long remembered for its atmosphere of quiet devotion and thankfulness. The women presented their special gifts, which amounted to £66/10/.

Rev. H. E. Bellhouse delivered a very inspiring address, which helped all present to "thank God and take courage."

At night the Auxiliary held its "Birthday Party," which took the form of a banquet. Over 300 people were present. The Sunday schoolroom of Trinity Church had been transformed into a delightful-looking banquet hall. Mrs. Duke welcomed the visitors; then she herself was presented with a beautiful bouquet by the members of the Young Women's Missionary Movement. A comprehensive report of the twenty-one years' work was then read by Mrs. West, the Secretary, after which followed the toast list. Mrs. Rosevear proving a most efficient Toast Mistress. The toast of the evening, "The Dunedin Auxiliary," was proposed in a telling speech by Mr. Rosevear. Before Mrs. Duke's reply an interesting interruption occurred, when both Mrs. Duke and Mrs. Rosevear were presented with gifts from the members. During the evening solos were beautifully sung by Mrs. Richards and Miss West. A short speech of congratulation and appreciation of the pioneer Auxiliary work done by the Dunedin ladies was given by Mrs. Bowron. The President of the M.W.M.U., who had come down from Christchurch for the purpose, and at a somewhat later hour than usual the Benediction brought a very happy and unique function to a close.

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Treasurers: REV. G. T. MARSHALL and MR. J. W. COURT.

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Rev. G. T. Marshall,

Mt. Albert, Auckland.

Methodist Women's Missionary Union of New Zealand.

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Joint Secretaries: MISS CARR, 33 Grange Road, Mt. Eden, Auckland.

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