

Bath Street Mission

1877

In 1877 or 78 a single room was secured in the old Brush factory in Bath Street by a few of our members each of whom contributed a stated sum weekly to cover rent etc, wherein they themselves might tell to the people of that district the story of salvation. A Sunday School was also held there. This was a purely unofficial venture, and continued to be so, until the work being well established, it was taken over by the church, and it was decided to make it a branch of the church's work, affording an opportunity for its members to engage in definite spiritual work. The accommodation was most unsatisfactory and unhealthy, yet the work was carried on for several years, a "plan" being drawn up and regular speakers appointed for Sundays and weekdays, until the pressure of Sunday School work compelled thought of removal, the outcome of which was the renting of commodious cottage property in close proximity which did duty for twenty four years.

Again pressure of Sunday School scholars made further extension necessary, and on 22nd December 1912 the foundation stone of the Hall and Classrooms was laid by the then Lord Mayor, Councillor S. Osborn, to whom Miss Minnie Gill presented a silver trowel on behalf of the Sunday School scholars. The new accommodation provided for over 200 scholars, besides facilities for other gatherings. This effort was made possible mainly through the generosity of Mrs. Joseph Levers, then one of our elders, and Mrs. Lewers, who ever had the work at Bath Street deeply at heart, and the work was carried on with varying results until the close of 1922 when after negotiations, the premises were leased to the Salvation Army for a short term of years with the distinct understanding that the premises be used for evangelistic work.

Need it be wondered then, that the break in "our" work there caused bitter disappointment among the teachers, yet it was confidently believed that in the hands of the Salvation Army the work would be carried on much more vigorously, and with a corresponding amount of good, and we pray that such may be the case.

If Bath Street failed in visible results it certainly cannot be charged to want of loyalty on the part of the staff, who gave unstintingly of their best to each and every one of who in the church is deeply indebted, and we trust for then a greater reward in store than any mention we could possibly give here.

Amongst other efforts put forth in Bath Street was the work among newsboys, known as the "Newsboys' Breakfast" which originated in 1885 by Mr. Andrew Stavert, our choirmaster, in conjunction with Mr. A. Watson and was continued for fourteen years after Mr. Stavert's removal from Sheffield. Much good resulted from this effort both to the workers (of whom there was a plentiful supply) and also to the boys. It not only provided work but for several who had never previously spoken in public it proved an excellent training ground.

Session Report

1922

"Taking into consideration the difficulty of efficiently carrying on the work at Bath Street, the Session propose that the work be relinquished in favour of the Salvation Army, unless adequate active assistance is immediately forthcoming from the Congregation."

1923

At a Congregational Meeting held in September, sanction was given to the suggested arrangement with the Salvation Army for the carrying on of the Bath Street Mission.

Since then considerable discussion has taken place, many details having to be considered and adjusted. Of these it will not be necessary to speak here, but it will be enough to state that the Presbytery of Yorkshire sent a deputation to Sheffield to enquire and report on the proposed transfer. We were able to satisfy them that the proposed transfer had every prospect of being an advantage to both parties and in due course we received the necessary permission of the Presbytery to proceed with the transfer.

The Salvation Army has undertaken to make the premises a centre of Missionary and Sunday School work.

The Bath Street teachers and the Army made actual arrangements for the carrying on of the Sunday School until the end of the year. Most cordial relations have been established with the Army officers, who will heartily welcome visitors from St. Andrew's at any of the meetings. The agreement now concluded is for a term of four years subject to extension if agreeable to both parties.

The Evangelistic Society Mission Room, Bath St.

1883

The Committee of the above Society desire first of all, to tender their sincere thanks to the members and adherents of the Church who responded so liberally to a circular issued a few weeks ago, asking for subscriptions to place the funds in a more satisfactory state. It says something for the liberality of the Church, considering other collections, when it is stated that no less a sum than £18, 2s 6d was collected in a very short time for the purpose mentioned.

During the past year the work at the Mission Room has gone on without interruption. The Sunday Evening Service has been well and regularly attended, so much so that it has become quite an institution in itself. The Thursday evening Service has not been so well attended.

Mr. Burnby's Tuesday Evening Bible Class for youths and young men has improved greatly, and there may now be seen a well conducted class of young men; and we trust that the word of our Lord may sink deep into their hearts and bring forth fruit unto Salvation •

The Mothers' Meeting has proved a success. Besides being for sewing reading and devotional exercises, a Savings' Bank, with other attractions, is at work and is succeeding, much to the satisfaction of its promoters.

The Sabbath School from want of accommodation cannot expand as it otherwise would; and notwithstanding many disadvantages, the Scholars have made satisfactory progress in Scriptural knowledge, and show wonderful ability in retaining what they are taught.

Tracts are distributed in the neighbourhood of the Mission Room by several ladies from the Church, who at the same time evince great personal interest in the people with whom they are brought into contact thereby drawing them under the influence of the active agencies in their midst. More Tract distributors are wanted to help in this good work.

Revd: James Breakey. President

John Milne Secretary