

SSM 21

HELP THE CHILDREN.

CHRISTMAS APPEAL FOR A DESERVING CAUSE.

Dec 17/1930

**A PRESTON MISSION THAT NEEDS YOUR
SUPPORT.**

SHEPHERD-STREET'S EVER-INCREASING FAMILY.

Father Christmas is coming over the glistening snow-capped peaks of fairy-land; 1,500 toys are packed on his silver sleigh, 1,500 breakfasts of good cheer for a wistful army of Preston's little ones in his need. Yes, Father Christmas is on his way to Shepherd-street again.

The road is long, his burden grows heavier every year. Will you help to speed his coming, to ease the load, and bring joy to those who so eagerly await the clock chime eight, and the mission doors swing open on Christmas morning? Every year those loyal workers for Shepherd-street Mission see to it that Father Christmas safely reaches this haven.

Theirs is a great responsibility, for with such a love of children comes the realisation of the desolation that would enter the hearts of those little ones if Father Christmas passed them by. But he has never failed them yet, and never will, so long as there are generous hearts in Preston.

AN URGENT APPEAL.

Last year breakfasts were provided for 1,200 young folks, drawn from Preston's poorest families. But with the trade depression still levying its inevitable toll an urgent message was despatched to Father Christmas appealing to him to provide an additional 300 breakfasts.

Of course he would not let Shepherd-street down: he would do his best on one condition—that Preston people rallied to his help in such an emergency. Preston will surely respond to his appeal. Remember, for so many of these children this breakfast with the glittering toy-bedecked tree in the background will be their only share of the Christmas festivities

But it is not merely because of the Christmas treat that the Shepherd-street Mission should be remembered at this time of the year. The Mission Home carries on a great work the year round, sheltering children from the terrible legacy of an unhealthy environment, building their little bodies so that they will be physically equipped for the battle of life.

When I walked into the building the other morning, writes a "Lancashire Daily Post" representative, there was that cheery, healthy atmosphere of one big happy homestead. In a kitchen spotlessly clean was the cook preparing the mid-day meal. In adjoining rooms could be heard the happy chatter of little children, whilst the older ones worked contentedly at their lessons.

EVER-GROWING FAMILY.

Like the Christmas treat, the work of the home grows apace, and here again the industrial distress has brought fresh responsibility to those at the helm.

This happy family is ever growing, and 56 children are now in the home. Yet no additional subscriptions have been received, and at the end of November there was a deficit of £558 compared with £469 last year.

Here, surely, is a cause worthy of the support of the townspeople. Quietly the good work goes on, with a record on behalf of the poor children of Preston that should touch the pockets as well as the hearts of the people of the town.

Here is a typical example of what this crusade is achieving. Six children were admitted to the home during the year. They were all of one family; their father was dead, and their mother had to go into the Infirmary for an operation. She had no relatives, no friends, to look after

SHEPHERD-ST. MISSION.

RECORD OF EXCELLENT WORK MAINTAINED.

FIFTY CHILDREN IN RESIDENCE.

Among those present at the 54th annual meeting of the Shepherd-street Mission at the Town Hall, Preston, on Thursday, were four of the youngest children from the Oxford-street Home, all looking chubby and comfortable. The two girls, for whose clothing and general welfare the Rangers of Ashton St. Andrew's Girl Guides have undertaken the responsibility, looked particularly neat.

The Mayor (Councillor W. Lucas), who was accompanied by the Mayoress, presided, and spoke of the special interest he had always taken in the splendid work of the mission. It was always, he said, a privilege and a pleasure to do something for the children.

Mr. W. A. Margerison, chairman, presented the annual report of the committee, and expressed thanks for the continued financial support and help from many friends that enabled the ever-increasing work of the home and mission to be carried on with a minimum of anxiety. By the death of their superintendent and secretary (Mr. F. E. Chadwick) they had lost a capable leader and a good father. Mrs. Chadwick had been appointed matron of the home, and Mr. T. A. Slater, assistant secretary, had been appointed secretary and missioner. The committee had been strengthened by the inclusion of Mr. C. H. Plant. Health in the home had been good, and Dr. Stanwell, their hon. physician, had rendered valuable service.

During the year nine children had been admitted, six consigned to the care of relatives, two girls put in domestic service, and three boys on farms. The home, with 50 children in residence, was full to capacity.

INTEREST OF PRESTON G.S. BOYS.

The boys and masters of Preston Grammar School had taken a very active interest in the home, and had done much to brighten the lives of the children. They provided the Christmas dinner, together with toys and gifts, decorated the home, and entertained the children and staff to tea and a concert at the Grammar School, and also provided spending money for the whole family whilst on holiday at the seaside. Over 1,200 children were present at the Christmas breakfast, the Mayor providing 1,000 toys.

After referring to the various activities of the mission and home, and expressing thanks to many willing helpers, the report, referred to the opening of a Lads' Club to take youths in the mission area off the streets and provide them with healthy interest and training. Two club nights had been arranged, young members of "Toc H" helping with service and equipment.

Much of the work among the children was helped by the N.S.P.C.C., and by the police. Many retired police officers gave valuable help, and continued their active interest in the work. In a recent instance the police reported to the Mission that a widow, supporting six children, had had to go to hospital for an operation. Arrangements were made for all the children to be cared for during their mother's illness.

LETTERS FROM BOYS AND GIRLS.

Extracts were read from grateful letters from old boys and girls. Much amusement was caused by the naive and natural blunder of "Charlie," a boy on a farm, who wrote: "I hope you will be pleased to hear that I like my place and also my work. I will now tell you my work. The first thing I do when I get up I have to bring the cows up, and then I have to wash their 'rudders,' and after that I have to get ready to go with the milk."

Another wrote from Canada: "I received my cheque all safe and sound, and it will be in a safer place to-morrow." Mr. Margerison explained that "my cheque" meant that the savings he had accumulated whilst in the Home had been sent out to him. All the children had a savings bank account, and the money they saved was handed over to them when they became old enough to use it properly.

Mr. H. Southworth, hon. treasurer, said there was a deficit of £56 on the year's working, the income totalling £1,866 and the expenditure £1,922. Subscriptions and donations were £822, an increase of £50, house-to-house collection, £231; "Lancashire Daily Post" Christmas appeal, £258 11s. 1d. In expenditure the principal item was £731 for provisions and clothing, £50 more than last year. The direct maintenance and supervision charges worked out at 10s. per week for each child, compared with 11s. per week in the previous year. The deficit had increased their bank overdraft to £530.

Moving the adoption of the report, Mr. James Dixon, Blackburn, a regular attender of these annual meetings for 30 years past, related an incident that occurred on a seaside

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