

THE NURSES' MISSIONARY LEAGUE.

THE GLORY OF THE IMPOSSIBLE.

MORNING SESSION.

The fourteenth Annual Conference and meeting of the Nurses' Missionary League was held at University Hall, Gordon Square, N.W., on Tuesday, May 16th. The proceedings opened at 10.15 a.m. with a hymn and prayers.

Mrs. Lenwood, the Chairman, gave the opening devotional address on "What is the Impossible?" The answer to this she said all depends on whether we speak humanly or whether we try to speak divinely. It seemed that the impossible thing was just love. When we thought we were a little nearer brotherhood the world became plunged in war. She brought her remarks to a conclusion with the reminder that "I can do all things through Christ."

Miss Richardson reminded her hearers that the League did not stand for numbers but that their members should always stand for the highest. She urged that members should make every effort to join the annual camp, if only for a day or two out of the fortnight. Many had said that the time so spent had been the inspiration of their lives.

Miss J. Macfee, in the review of the year's work, said that in spite of the many other absorbing calls the meetings had been maintained throughout the year. This year three quiet days had been held which had proved most helpful, and in the future she much hoped that the number would be increased. Four hundred of their members were engaged in war work and they were distributed all over the war zone. Three of their number were taken prisoners in Serbia. Sixteen new members had sailed this year in spite of the many additional difficulties.

A very interesting feature of the morning session was the Demonstration Study Circle, which was conducted by Miss C. H. Mayers. The subject was, "How are Medical Missions attempting the Impossible?"

Miss Magee suggested three points for discussion: (1) Prejudice and Ignorance, (2) The Position of Woman in Heathen Lands, (3) The Insanitary Conditions.

With regard to the first difficulty, a worker from China said she thought ignorance was a great difficulty. Among the Chinese there was a great deal of superstition and fear about death. A death occurring in a ward would often result in the whole of the other occupants going home.

A missionary from South India said that a very real difficulty in her work was certain customs. One was that milk was supposed to feed a fever, and to keep suppuration up in wounds, so that it was a question on what diet to place these patients.

With regard to the position of women, it was well illustrated by a missionary from China, who said that on one occasion it became necessary to amputate the hand of a girl. Her friends however

refused to allow this, on the ground of "What is the use of a woman without a hand; she can't cook?" It was also stated that it was very difficult for the women at a distance to attend a hospital on account of their bound feet.

In India a nurse related how she had visited a small company of silk weavers, all of whom were lepers and whose work was offered in the general market.

Miss Hope Bell then gave an address on "Achieving the Impossible in China." One of the greatest she said was the language. She gave an amusing description of how, having decided to have two nurses to her office for a scolding, she discovered that she did not know the Chinese for their offence.

The concluding intercessions were led by the Rev. H. N. P. Napier Clavering.

In the interval tea and coffee were distributed and the members had opportunity for social intercourse.

AFTERNOON CONVERSAZIONE.

In the afternoon Mrs. Wigram and Miss C. H. Mayers were the hostesses at a very pleasant *Conversazione*, and Miss Richardson and Miss J. Macfee were indefatigable in making everyone feel at home, though indeed the majority of those clustered round the little tea tables were evidently well known to one another, and gladly availed themselves of the opportunity to discuss questions of common interest. Mrs. Gill sang in a voice of unusual compass and sweetness "Cleansing Fires" and "Land of Sunset Glow," and Miss M. Macfee as usual sang charmingly, "Angels ever bright and fair" being the song selected.

Miss Liliast Blackett, M.D., B.S., who was to have spoken on "Work in a Military Hospital and in the Punjab," was unfortunately detained by urgent military duties. Miss Hope Bell (Hankow) spoke a few words on the "Power of the N.M.L.," and said that its greatest value was in helping the members to be witnesses for the Lord Jesus. Only a certain number could be trained advocates, but all were called to be witnesses.

The Rev. J. W. Woodhouse, Chaplain to King George Hospital, taking for his subject "The Greatest of these is Charity," said that as a hospital chaplain he saw the enormous influence that the nursing world had on men at the present time. When he read the chapter from which these words were taken he always thought of St. Paul as intensely disappointed with the converts in the churches he had gone to visit. One man who had the gift of eloquence got up to preach and St. Paul was bored, tired; the words of the preacher seemed as clanging brass and a tinkling cymbal. Those who knew that noise in an Eastern street knew how it jarred. Others had divers gifts but they lacked love, so St. Paul spoke to them of the greatest of gifts, the Charity which never faileth and taketh no regard of evil—the spirit which should be a reflection of that of Jesus Christ who saw in Peter not the deliberate sinner but the man who went out and wept bitterly.

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