

Historical source: excerpts from 1913 report

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REPORT
OF THE
Princess Louise Institute
(HALES STREET), AND
Deptford Ragged & Industrial
School
GIFFIN STREET,
FOR 1913.

ESTABLISHED DECEMBER 1st, 1844.

"Bid them out of the hands of the wicked."

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1914.

The late EARL OF SHAFTESBURY, K.G., speaking at the Annual Meeting of our School, in 1880, said:—

“What would Deptford have been if efforts similar to these had not been made? Some few years ago, when I first took up the Ragged School movement, Deptford was one of those places pointed to as impossible to work. We have since had experience of the progress made, and see by that experience what progress can be made if we persevere well in Deptford. This progress has been due in a great measure to the Ragged Schools, which are particularly adapted to the character of the work. The system of Ragged Schools is essentially parental, being prompted by the natural love of the child. It supplies to many of these children that which they never have at home, viz., parental kindness and domestic care.”

ON SUNDAYS there are three **Sunday Schools** in graded classes, ranging from infants, from 5 to 8 years, up to young men and women. Gospel teaching and Christian influence and friendly counsel by about 60 Teachers are quietly but effectively shaping the lives of some thousand children who attend. This is the basis of our work, and the attachment of scholar to teacher is no mean factor in the battle of life which our young people are called upon to wage. The Christian Band and Scripture Union afford opportunities for personal help and encouragement in the Christian life. Total attendances average 1,000 every Sunday.

The Sewing Classes on Monday evening are much enjoyed and appreciated by nearly 300 girls. Habits of cleanliness, tidiness and punctuality are inculcated, and instruction in sewing and cutting-out are given with encouraging success. Many homes and children to-day are happier through this training.

THE VALUE OF AN INSTITUTE is proved just here. Their Sunday School Teacher is there to instruct on the gymnasium or in wood carving, or play a game of draughts, or arrange for band and football match, or the girls meet their instructor for drill, or some of the ladies who can help them in their needlework, or discuss their joys and sorrows with them. There is a home life about it, and an attraction. Every effort made is linked by real friendship.

A Slate Club for Men provides payment in sickness, and is a source of comfort to many families in bereavement.

Remembrances—

Those who move away cherish happy memories of our School.

A woman of the Bible Class writes from Tasmania :—

“Although I shall be so many miles away, my heart will ever be in Deptford and all those I love there.

It is my greatest comfort to feel that the same loving Father will be watching over us all, although we are so many miles apart.”

A senior girl went to Canada in the spring, and writes :—

“I must first of all thank you all for the most beautiful present that you sent to me.

I must also thank you for all the love and kindness which you have shown towards me since I have been to the School. I have received nothing but kindness from everyone at the Deptford Ragged School since I first joined it, which is now about 16 years ago. It is so nice of you all to say all the nice things you have about me, I feel I do not deserve one-half of what you have said, if I have helped anyone, I thank God that he has used me for a good work.

The Deptford Ragged School has been my centre of happiness, because it was there I first learnt to love the Saviour, and it was there also that I found some of my dearest friends. I shall never, as long as God spares me, ever forget the School and all the kind friends there, more especially the Bible Class.”

The Crippled Children have been visited and cared for in their homes, and those able to attend on alternate Fridays have a joyful "Cripples' Parlour," with toys, games, &c., provided. Their deformity seems compensated for by loving dispositions, which call forth our warmest sympathy.

The Mothers, too, have their special meeting. They value the help afforded in sickness, the clubs for coals, blankets, boots, as well as the quiet hour for devotion and gospel addresses. It is impossible to attach too much importance to the home influence of a Christian mother.

Poor parents love their children, but they are frequently too harrassed and occupied to shew it. They have children like our own, but little time between cleaning cooking mending, &c., to enjoy them. They need our encouragement, and they rejoice to be able to send their little ones to our bright Schools, where they know they are cared for.

"We were all very pleased with your nice letter, and I am sure we shall never be able to thank you enough for sending us to such a lovely place, we have splendid food, five meals a day, and as much as we can eat; it is simply beautiful, we shall never forget our holiday.

We have a lovely sitting room, arm chairs and couches to lie upon if we want to, and the dining room is very nice, and our bedrooms all spotless and clean, and all facing the sea, and the weather is lovely, and we all look well, so we are told, and please, Miss Omash, don't forget to see what you can do for Katie for a little holiday, poor little girl, she deserves a holiday after being mother for a fortnight."