

mented the local branch on its successful year's work.

Mrs A. J. Brown, President Havelock, delivered a happy little speech suitable to the occasion.

Mrs Bailey, Canvastown, also spoke brightly and fluently anent the pleasurable event.

Mrs Flower, Canvastown, concluded the address, in the course of which she thanked Mrs Grigg for undertaking so long a journey on their behalf, and for her splendid address.

Mrs Leov was also thanked, not only for her presence and speech on this occasion, but for the inestimable assistance she so readily gave throughout the year, her promptness and cheerfulness being praiseworthy.

The Havelock ladies were likewise thanked for their presence. Many votes of thanks were carried by acclamation for each in turn.

The meeting concluded with the Doxology.

A dainty afternoon tea was served, when nine flower-decked quartette tables graced the occasion, the head table honoured by a quartette of Presidents.

The success of this part of the function was largely due, as usual, to the untiring efforts of the bevy of ladies, viz., Misses Dalton and Brown, Mesdames N. J. Ward, Mrs Pike, Mrs Bailey and Miss Flower.

The Rev. Mr and Mrs Milgrew (Havelock) were among the visitors.

The sum of thirty-five shillings was collected towards the Union's Travelling Fund.

TREASURER'S REPORT.

The following payments, exclusive of capitation fees, have been received since the date of last report:—

New Zealand Fund.

Carterton, £1.

Organising Fund.

Wyndham, £1 17s 6d.

World's Missionary Fund.

North New Brighton, 8s.

Maori Fund.

Inglewood, £1 10s.

N.Z. Memorial Headquarters Fund.

Carterton, £6 11s 2d.

M. B. LOVELL-SMITH.

N. Z. Treasurer.

Christchurch 9th May, 1927.



THE SPIRITUAL LIFE IS ONE OF PRAYER.

(By Blanche Reed Johnston.)

The excuse is often made by the Christian, "We have so little time for prayer." I know this busy electric age is crowded with work and duty, and there seems very little opportunity for the old-fashioned, quiet meditation, which made the saints of old so strong and confident. But perhaps herein is to be found our mistake, and the cause of spiritual "inertia" and failure. We find that the busier our Saviour's life was, the more time He took to pray, often stealing away from the pressing crowd which thronged His steps, into the mountain-top alone to pray. Even when He did not have time for food, He found time to pray. "He prayeth best who loveth best." Prayer is necessary; it is oil to the lamp, the food to the spiritual palate, the electric current which keeps open the communication with the unseen.

Prayer does many things for us. God gives light in prayer, and reveals His will in times of perplexity.

God gives assurance in prayer; clears away the fogs and fears, the doubts and misgivings.

He gives peace in prayer; calms the tempestuous billows which sweep over our souls in times of sorrow and darkness. The Lord gives confidence and courage through prayer.

The Lord gives His Holy Spirit in prayer, with its inspiration, joy and comfort. He does not always give the answer we seek but He gives submission through prayer.

Perhaps you will say, "Why does He not answer my prayer and remove the pain I suffer?" He may be moulding you in the same furnace as He passed through, for "He learned obedience in the things which He suffered." He

will answer your prayer as the mother answers the pleadings of her little child, not always granting what is asked, but always giving what the mother-heart sees is best for its future good.

"Papa," said a tiny little girl, "I wish you would ask God to answer my prayer. I have such a little voice, and I am afraid God will not hear me for the singing of the angels. He would hear your big voice." "Why, my dear, God would stop all the music to hear and answer a little girl's prayer." I cannot say that God will stop the heavenly choir to hear our petitions, but, however humble our request, He will heed and answer in His own time for the fulfilling of His best purposes.

It is profitable to pray. All the spiritually great of all ages have been men and women of persistent prayer. It was when Ruth turned aside to rest in the heat of the noon-day that the master, Boaz, gave orders that she was to have a better opportunity to glean, and it will be so with us, when we take time to wait upon the Lord, our efforts will be crowned with blessing.

Work should be the expression of the prayer life. To prayer Jesus and the early Christian Church gave first place. Our service will not reach its maximum of effectiveness unless we give prayer first place. A glimpse at the prayer-life of Jesus reveals it as the secret place of power for Him. When a great problem lay before His disciples He told them to pray. He taught His disciples to pray. He, now ascended to the right hand of God, ever liveth to make intercession. Shall we put last or in a subordinate place in life, that which Jesus put first, and which is now His eternal service? The early disciples did not do so. When work became too exacting, a division of labour was agreed upon, and the twelve gave themselves continually to prayer and the ministry of the Word.