

speaker. His pronounced executive ability found scope in many ways: for over twenty years he served as secretary to the Baptist Union, and he was also both secretary and treasurer to the Missionary Society. His death at the age of 59 in 1923 elicited a remarkable chorus of testimonies to the truth and tenderness, sweetness and strength, of his rich personality. He was, said one, "a sort of bird of Paradise among his dull fellows." "His denunciation of the drink traffic," wrote another, "was unsparring, but victims of it arrested on the charge of drunkenness would ask for bail, and confidently name Gray as their surety." Mr. Dallaston remarked of him that his voice had healing tones in it. People went to Church to hear him and to see him. Why? Because in the words of his friend Mr. Justice Adams: "It had been his joy and good fortune to see Jesus, as Paul had done on the road to Damascus, and that vision had arrested his whole life." Deeply though he was regretted when his call came to go hence, there was no Dead March played at his obsequies, but a "Hallelujah Chorus" that all felt in truest keeping with his buoyant and radiant life.

Such was the pastor who directed the work of the Church during the ten years from 1902 till 1912. They were eventful years. Christchurch was expanding eastward, and the Canterbury auxiliary appealed to the Oxford Terrace Church for assistance in a work of Church extension. It was felt that the Hornby chapel would prove more useful if it could be transported to Linwood. A site was purchased, and at a cost of £79 (which also covered some renovations) the building was shifted to the rear of the Linwood section. On December 9th, 1903, it was formally opened with a public meeting. We may imagine with what joy the band of workers hailed that date as marking the accomplishment of a scheme long meditated, a definite forward move on the part of the denomination and the parent Church. The auspicious date was destined, however, to become more memorable for a serious loss. The old Hereford St. Church, which had for upwards of thirty years stood on the Oxford Terrace site alongside the present church, and been used as a Sunday School hall, was in need of renova-

tion, and a contract for the work had been let and operations begun. An hour after midnight on December 9th, fire (due probably to a chimney defect) broke out, and reduced the whole building to ashes, even menacing the church.

At half past eleven the same morning the office-bearers held an emergency meeting. The Rev. R. S. Gray presided, with Messrs. Toneycliffe, P. Hercus, Fraser, Mander, Fife, Eaton and Ingold present. The loss of the schoolroom had been acknowledged as total by the South British Insurance Coy., which was prepared to pay all claims in full—£500 on the building and £150 on the contents. Arrangements were made to dispose of the debris and replace with ground glass windows all the panes of glass broken in the church building by the heat of the fire. Five days later, at a further meeting it was resolved by ten votes to four that plans be prepared for a new up-to-date schoolroom in brick. "Brother Chidgey was asked to prepare same"—it is impressive to notice how frequently and confidently during forty years and more his fellow-deacons turned to Mr. Chidgey not only in matters financial but whenever structural alterations were required. Eventually the tender of Mr. Cox was accepted, to rebuild the Sunday School for £2,121. On April 27th, 1904, Mr. A. F. Carey, superintendent, and Mr. Cornelius Chidgey, who in 1863 first started the Sunday School in Lichfield St., laid the foundation stones of the present building, and five months later it was completed.

One result of the disastrous fire was the extinction of the mortgage on the church. Originally amounting to £3,000 at 7 per cent., it had been renewed in London in 1887 for £2,000 at 5 per cent., and in 1903 had by much effort and self-denial on the part of ministers and members been reduced to £700. This the deacons paid off on receipt of the insurance on the Sunday School, but to finance the new building they had once more to borrow, taking an advance of £1,850 in September, 1904, which was finally paid off fifteen years later. "Money talks," and to those who reflect on these figures and on the devotion they represent the very walls of our sanctuary speak eloquently of sacrifice. During one year of Mr. Dallaston's ministry it



MR. A. R. JORDAN,  
Sunday School Superintendent.



MISS E. M. GAINSFORD,  
Deaconess.

was, we are told, a rare thing to see a new dress in church, the money being diverted to meet promises and subscriptions.

The progress of the branch Church and Sunday School at Linwood taxed the powers of the Oxford Terrace Church: three deacons were specially designated to act with three locally-appointed members in supervising the services. For a time an arrangement was made by which Mr. A. W. Pitt preached alternately at Linwood and at the sister Church in Riccarton (since unhappily abandoned). Later the Rev. D. S. Mason became pastor of the Linwood cause, and in 1910 the building was enlarged. Two years later Linwood cause was formed into a separate Church.

A week before the old church was destroyed, the Rev. Stanley Jenkin was dedicated to the ministry: both he and the Rev. H. E. Edridge heard the call of Christ through Mr. Gray. A week after the new building (erected by Mr. C. H. Cox) was opened, Miss Nellie Gainsford was set apart for Missionary service. Her connection with the Church was already very close. "I do not ask for success," she said. "My work shall be to do the will of Him that sendeth me." In the same spirit of devotion she has this year returned to her old Church as Deaconess, enriched by sixteen years' experience in Bengal—an appointment popular with old and young alike.

Other members of the Church who may here most fittingly be recalled are Miss M. Ingoldsby, who served in the Bengal mission for the first five years of this century; Miss Gladys Peters, who went out some twenty years later, but was invalided home; Nurse Savage, who still serves as a worker of the Poonah and Indian Village Mission, which she joined in 1913; Mrs. Alex. Reese (nee Constance King) who with her husband laboured many years in a Presbyterian Mission in Brazil, and who now lives in Auckland; Mr. Alfred Peters, who after gallant service for Christ in New Zealand found it possible at sixty to go to the Solomon Islands and serve there for ten years. As we go to press we learn that he has finished his course with joy. To another old member of our Church, Miss Clara Waterston, now connected with Grange Road Church, Auckland, fell the great honour of translating the New Testament into the Malu language, spoken by a tribe in the Solomon Islands: not ten New Zealanders in all our country's history have such an achievement to their credit. There may be others, for a brief note published in July, 1906, tells of the departure to the Rev. Lockhart Morton's training home in Adelaide of Mr. W. Rule, "the fourth teacher to leave the Chinese Mission Class for the foreign field."

In the winter of 1905 Mr. Gray took the bold step of circularising men who