

Mission at Hastings - Rev. L.J. Boulton Smith's Services - 1937

July 1 to 8 (inclusive) were important dates for the Hastings Church, when a "Victorious Life Crusade" was conducted by the Rev. L.J. Boulton Smith, of Vivian Street. The special effort has meant a great deal in the renewal and quickening of the spiritual life of the church, and the members are deeply grateful for the inspiration which the missionary, with the help of God, was enabled to bring.

The series of meetings commenced on the Thursday evening, when Mr Smith, spoke on "The Baptism of Fire." The weather, cold and wet during the first part of the week, was not conducive to large attendances, but the services were all marked by heartiness and zeal. Sunday proved a day of great enrichment, and large congregations were present. "The Church at Prayer" was the timely theme for the morning message. In the evening a powerful evangelistic appeal was made in a sermon entitled "Good-bye to All That." The young people's rally of the afternoon was a memorable gathering, and after the vital and straightforward address had been given a young man came forward to make a public reconsecration, and his word of testimony was impressive.

Tuesday must be considered one of the peak days of the mission, when Mr Smith met different groups of the church folk and was able to speak intimately to them. A ladies' meeting in the afternoon was very well attended, and there were those present who responded to the call to step out into a deeper Christian experience. The men of the church met for tea at 5.45, and around the tea table a stirring talk on "Stewardship" was given. The tune "Cranbrook" was revived, and the men entered into it with great delight, singing "Grace, 'Tis a Charming Sound" with such fine effect that they were instituted a choir for the mission service that followed, and sat together in a body for the rendering of the hymn.

While outward results were not seen to any great extent, the helpfulness and value of the mission has been apparent in numerous ways. The preaching of the Rev. L.J. Boulton Smith was throughout forceful and effective. He conducted the meetings with a brightness and directness that won the friendship of people. At the close of the final address a brief period was allowed for testimony, and there were those eager to speak of the definite help received.