

GRANTHAM WESLEYAN MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

THE ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS.

The anniversary of the Grantham Wesleyan Missionary Society was celebrated on Sunday and Monday last, the deputation being the Rev. W. C. Wilks (South Africa). Special sermons were preached on Sunday, morning and evening, to goodly congregations, and in the afternoon the young people were addressed.

On Monday evening, the annual meeting was held in the Church. Mr. S. L. WILLIAMSON presided, and supporting him on the rostrum were the Revs. W. Cowdell, C. A. Booth, W. C. Wilks, W. J. Gardner, and T. Dixon.—The annual report, presented by the Rev. C. A. BOOTH (secretary), showed that during the year the Grantham circuit raised £279 17s. 2d., in addition to £274 9s. 2d. contributed in connection with the Centenary Fund, and £14 12s. 9d. for the Women's Auxiliary Society.—The CHAIRMAN, in introducing the speaker, said in all their operations they must do their best to carry out the glorious work of the Missionary Society. He was very thankful that interest in the Society was not ceasing. They were not encouraged by a large congregation that night, but it was a time of great stress and strain, and if they did their best, God would help them.—The Rev. C. W. WILKS then gave an interesting account of his missionary labours in South Africa. He observed he would like to refer to one aspect of the report especially, and that was the financial. Perhaps when their missionaries came home on furlough, and addressed meetings in various parts of the country, they forgot to mention and express their deep appreciation of the great efforts they at home were constantly making for them in the mission field. Nevertheless, they recognised it. He assured them, also, they were very grateful for the efforts which the friends at Wesley were making. After vividly describing his experiences as a missionary in South Africa, the speaker paid a warm tribute to the work of the Helpers' Union, and concluded with an appeal for prayer that God's blessing might rest upon the work of their missionaries in foreign lands.—Subsequently, a hearty vote of thanks was enthusiastically accorded the Rev. C. W. Wilks, on the proposition of the Rev. W. JASPER GARDNER.—The total collections for Sunday and Monday amounted to £13 17s. 6d., which is an advance upon the collections of the last anniversary.

WESLEYAN CHAPLAIN FOR THE FRONT.

The Rev. A. G. Kick, Wesleyan chaplain to the Forces at Belton Park, has been ordered to the front, and his position at the camp has been filled by the Rev. W. C. Wilks, formerly of the Swaziland Mission.

THE YORKSHIRE POST. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13, 1917.

THE ROLL OF HONOUR.

MAJOR the Rev. WALTER C. WILKS, M.C., Army chaplain, is reported, in a message received by his sisters at Bridlington, to have died in France. Mr. Wilks was in Africa on mission work in connection with the Wesleyan Church when the war broke out. He offered his services as chaplain the day after war was declared, and was attached to the Staffordshire Regiment. He was wounded in Gallipoli, and was present at the evacuation. Then he went to Egypt, and afterwards to France. He was wounded in the Somme battle, when, for his cool bravery under fire, he was awarded the Military Cross. He was shortly afterwards promoted major, with permission to reside at the base, but he chose to go with his unit. He was the youngest son of the late Mr. and Mrs. S. H. Wilks, Beulah Hill, Bridlington.

MAJOR THE REV. W. C. WILKS, M.C., KILLED IN ACTION.

FORMER GRANTHAM WESLEYAN CHAPLAIN.

It is our sad duty this week to record the death in action of Major the Rev. Walter C. Wilks, M.C., who was particularly well known in Grantham amongst the Wesleyan community. One of the noblest of our heroic military Chaplains, the deceased gentleman feared nothing, and any hardship suffered by those under his charge he participated in to the full, winning in the fullest and sincerest degree the love and affection of all who knew him. Major Wilks was Wesleyan Chaplain with the 11th Division at Belton, and accompanied it to Gallipoli and Egypt, since when he had served in another theatre of war. The news of his death has come as a great shock to his many friends here. For nine years, he had served as a missionary in Swaziland, and in 1914, he came to England for a year's furlough. During that period he acted as a Missionary Deputation and in that capacity had occupied the pulpit at the Wesleyan Church. He was appointed Wesleyan Chaplain to the 11th Division on the outbreak of war. Testimony to his high personal qualities is given in the following letter, which his brother, the Rev. Arthur H. Wilks, of Burton has received from the Rev. Colin A. Roberts, C. F. :—"Last Thursday, with his habitual courage, your brother was acting as a stretcher-bearer, behind Poelcappelle, and, leaving an aid post with the intention of bringing in a wounded officer, was struck by a shell and killed instantly. On Saturday evening, he was buried at Bard Cottage Cemetery. The Revs. R. A. Wheel (senior Wesleyan Chaplain), of a neighbouring Division, and D. Strong (United Methodist), his colleague for 14 months in this Division, conducted the service. In addition, the Revs. J. King (senior Church of England Chaplain), Padres Vale and Brown (Church of England), L. Winter (Wesleyan), and Father Cohen (Roman Catholic) were present, and every Battalion in his Brigade was represented. I do not find it an easy matter to adequately express my sympathy for you in this sad hour. I have lost my only brother in this war, and realise that words sometimes hurt, when they are meant to heal. Your brother was a great man. I have only enjoyed his friendship for five months, but during that time I saw much of him and learned to admire and love him. No Padre in the Division was more widely known or universally respected. Many times officers and men have told me he earned his Military Cross on a score of occasions, and throughout the Division there is genuine sorrow and regret at his loss. Yet, it was a glorious end to a gallant career, for he was ever a great adventurer, in his Lord's service. He was my senior, but unassuming in manner, fearless in spirit, kindly in judgment, and, above all, absolute in his consecration. He was my teacher in Christian graces again and again. Such men do not die. Like Clifford Reed, he has revealed to men a Christ to be desired. I can only pray that those who mourn his loss may realise in full measure the comforting grace of his Lord." Courageous to a degree, Major Wilks gallantly faced the foe in the most literal sense. Thus, when the fighting units of whom he had the spiritual oversight went "over the top," Major Wilks always went with them feeling that they needed him most at a time like that. Then as indicated in the foregoing letter, he also acted as stretcher-bearer, giving first aid to the men who became casualties; indeed, there was no battle-field hardship which he was unwilling to expose himself to. Both at home and abroad the loss of Major Wilks will be keenly felt, and the memory of his sterling worth will live for many a day.