

A pleasure to see buoyancy of spirit

## THE HAPPY FAMILY OF SHEPHERD-STREET MISSION

"SO far as our Home is concerned, we endeavour as far as possible to compensate for the loss and wrong our young charges have suffered by promoting a happy and settled

atmosphere, and the development of that sense of security of which each child stands in need." This aim of Preston's Shepherd-street Mission was stressed by Mr. F. C. Messham, chairman, at the 76th annual meeting, yesterday.

Referring to a Government recommendation for more substitute foster homes, Mr. Messham said this ideal, however desirable, could not be fully met and there still remained the necessity for the family type of children's home.

A feature of the family atmosphere at Shepherd-street, he said, was the facility given for outside contacts. Boys and girls were members of church youth organisations and they had their own friends, both inside and outside the Home.

### AN INNOVATION

In addition, and thanks to the kindness of friends, frequent entertainment was provided, and an innovation was woodwork for the boys.

"Our family of 29 happy and well cared for children is worth seeing and it is a delight to note their natural buoyancy of spirit, ringing laughter and obvious friendliness," added Mr. Messham.

Expressing the committee's thanks to all who had contributed to their support, Mr. Messham mentioned particularly the £1,707 raised by the last "Lancashire Evening Post" Christmas appeal.

By this public appeal, made annually since the beginning of the century, the "Post" had been the mission's greatest benefactor, he said. The committee, with a sense of great indebtedness, acknowledged the efforts to assist in furthering a work which, in addition to providing a Home for children in need, had always endeavoured to train them to become not only useful citizens, but also God fearing men and women.

Mr. Messham paid tribute to the late chairman, Mr. W. A. Margerison for his devotion to the care of the unfortunate and unwanted child and Mr. F. G. Garratt, a committee member since 1939.

### INCREASED EXPENSE

The treasurer, Mr. H. W. Southworth, said excess payments over receipts for the year totalled £212. Income was £6,645 compared with £6,080 the previous year, and expenditure £6,857 compared with £6,256. Although income by public subscription showed a slight increase over the previous year, he said, this was due to a flag day granted to the Mission. But for this the total would have been down by £251.

Increased expenditure had been caused by the rising cost of living, interior decorations, the purchase of a new central heating boiler, and the theft of lead as a result of which more than £200 had to be spent on roof repairs.

The Mayor (Mr. John J. Ward), who was accompanied by the Mayoress (Mrs. Ward) said the Mission was worthy of every effort made on its behalf. He could not adequately stress the help the Home had given to children throughout the years. He paid a tribute to the work of the Superintendent, Mr. T. A. Slater, and Mrs. Slater, the matron and the staff.

### THE SECRET

Speaking favourably of a visit to the Home, the Rev. N. C. Oatridge, Vicar of Broughton, thought Mr. and Mrs. Slater had discovered how to prepare them for adult life. Religion was the heart of their work and they had the secret of imparting it to the children.

The Rev. D. H. Dale, of

Penwortham Congregational Church, referring to the outbreak of criminal violence among young people, wondered if there was some living connection between the children neglected during the war years and immediately afterwards, and the present wave of youthful crime and thug banditry.

He believed the chief cause sprang from selfishness, which was rooted in sin—in a great number of homes where children were unwanted and neglected, the main cause of the trouble lay in the parents' pursuit of drink and sexual licence, a loosening of the marriage ties.

### CITIZENS' DUTY

One of the things that could be done to guard against this state of affairs, he said, was to make sure that our own homes were living testimony to the power of Christ to comfort and help the young and to give them a secure background.

As citizens it was our duty to make sure that the unwanted children of to-day were not so neglected that they became the cosh bandits of to-morrow.

"This town owes a tremendous debt of gratitude to Shepherd-street for caring for unwanted children," he concluded.

Mr. Messham was elected chairman of the committee, Mr. S. D. Maxwell, vice-chairman, and Mr. Southworth, treasurer.