

## "BLOOD AND FIRE"

### General Booth

When I was a boy—many, many years ago—I remember polishing the femur of a fowl, stitching it to a black velvet belt with the words "Skeleton Army" cut out of white linen and sewn on either side of it. I was quite a hero among my schoolfellows when, opening my coat, I displayed the adornment in the playground, and I was besieged by anxious recruits. This meant that our brave little band vowed hostility to the drum-beating, tambourine-thumping squadrons who used to parade the streets shrieking sacredly-designed, it somewhat hysterical, songs, set to tunes which were then being sung in the gutters. "Oh, Fred, tell them to stop," "Over the Garden Wall," and songs of equal banality were very popular, and I, and my Skeleton Army, armed with pea-shooters, used to make it our business to give the gutter evangelists a bad time. We even carried our war into the enemy's temple and made targets of the loudly-protesting penitents and of those who in the dim religious light of the turned-down gasoliers, "crept for Jesus." Frequently I was discovered and placed on the pave by red-gerseyed stalwarts. A great gap divides these early methods of the Salvation Army from those employed to-day.

This reminiscence is the natural result of reading Mr. Harold Begbie's careful life of William Booth, the founder of the Salvation Army, which is published in two volumes by Messrs. Macmillan at 42s. net. The volumes, which extend to just upon 1,000 pages, may be regarded as fairly exhaustive. One feels that, perhaps, Mr. Begbie has made too much use of the late General's spasmodic notes and of his diaries, and has paid too little attention to some of the incidents on his tours, when the bona fides of his mission had been proved and receptions by Royalty had indicated him as respectable enough for entertainment by Lord Mayors and Bishops.

But there is one portion of the book, which, lengthy as it is, one would not willingly forego. This is the part devoted to the young and impecunious William Booth's wooing of Catherine Mumford and to their voluminous correspondence. To those who know the General only as a militant Christian of the most aggressive type, these beautiful and sincere missives will come as a genuine surprise. They show the human side of the man more than anything that Mr. Begbie could have included in his book. And the curious thing is that the correspondence becomes more pronouncedly a love correspondence many years after William and Catherine had been married. In the days of betrothal one detects a priggishness about the epistles which is eminently typical of the period of "Sandford and Merton"—a desire to preach to each other and to labour there deistic beliefs. When the couple knew each other better and realised each other's many values, the religiously pedantic was abandoned, and it is easy to see that the writers had become mates, deeply attached to each other. Catherine Booth became her husband's guardian angel and his wisest mentor.

William Booth was born in Nottingham in 1829. Mr. Begbie, seeking after dramatic effect, rather labours the condition of things in and about Nottingham at this particular time. His idea

fiery General as a pawnbroker's assistant? And then came a religious uprush, a conscious desire to live right.

He desired in his distracted boyhood "a happy conscious sense" that he was pleasing God.

"I saw," he avers, "that all this ought to be, and I decided that it should be. It is wonderful that I should have reached this decision in view of all the influences then around me." His employer, a Unitarian, "never uttered a word to indicate that he believed in anything he could not see, and many of my companions were worldly and sensual, some of them even vicious."

He speaks of his instinctive belief in God, and goes on to say, "I had no disposition to deny my instincts, which told me that if there was a God His laws ought to have my obedience and His interests my service."

Then follows a characteristic sentence: "I felt that it was better to live right than to live wrong; and as to caring for the interests of others instead of my own, the condition of the suffering people around me, people with whom I had been so long familiar, and whose agony seemed to reach its climax about this time, undoubtedly affected me very deeply."

In 1844 the conversion of William Booth is recorded. He determined, to use his own words, to "go in for God." He and William Sansom began a friendship in religion. Says Mr. Begbie:—

Some time after William Booth's conversion, these two youths were attracted by the friendless condition of a poor old withered beggar-woman who shuffled about the streets in horrid rags, endured the mockery of street boys, suffered the persecution of Nottingham "lambes," and slept in doorways or under hedges—a grotesque parody of womanhood. William Booth must have seen her a dozen hundred times before his conversion, for she was a character of the streets; but it was not until after his conversion that her deplorable destitution, the infinite pity of her forlorn and friendless state, appealed to his compassion. He determined to rescue her from this state, and consulted Will Sansom as to the best way of ensuring her welfare. Then they went about among their friends, collected money, took a little cabin, furnished it, and installed the old woman within, making provision for her support. The most wretched creature, the most ridiculed and neglected of all Nottingham's miserables had moved the heart of William Booth to compassion, and upon such an one as this he made his first experiment in social work.

Soon after taking up religion seriously, although still a pawnbroker's assistant, William Booth began to preach in the Nottingham slums. For several years the young man laboured, doing much good among the poor and moulding his character in readiness for the great things of the future. He then went to London where, although he had a long battle with unemployment, his faith never deserted him. Curiously enough he could obtain work nowhere but with a pawnbroker with whom he began to earn his living in Walworth.

Soon afterwards William Booth was speaking in the London streets and his work brought him into communication with a Wesleyan named Rabbits, a boot-maker—shops bearing his name are still scattered about London. Rabbits had so

might have made money and lived in comparative affluence, but then he would have to play the traitor to his God. And all the while children—ever-welcome children—kept coming and making the problem more acute.

In the early 'sixties he broke away from the Methodist movement and for a decade carried along revivalist work on his own lines.

In 1878 he started the Salvation Army, although it was originally called The Mission. Associated with him was the late George Scott Railton, who afterwards became Commissioner in the Army, and the General's son, young Bramwell—the present General.

The adoption of the name "Salvation" might be ascribed to inspiration. Railton had written an article on the new organisation and was reading it to William Booth and Bramwell. "We are a volunteer army," he read. Young Bramwell interrupted. "Volunteer!" he cried. "Here, I'm not a volunteer. I'm a regular or nothing!" William Booth, who had been walking up and down the room, stopped at this interruption, studied his son for a moment, and then, coming to the table, leaned over the shoulder of the future Commissioner, and, taking the pen, scratched out the word "Volunteer," substituting for it the word "Salvation."

The new Army attracted many converts and excited much hostility. Organised attacks, promoted by the liquor interest, were frequent, and many a "soldier"—male and female—found themselves in hospital as a result of these undesirable attentions. Sometimes his followers went too far for the General and he had to protest against the hysterical tomfoolery and against such ceremonies as "creeping for Jesus"—ceremonies which caused a charge of immorality to be levelled against the Army.

There were some formidable critics of the methods of the Army, from Professor Huxley, who for once in a way found himself lined up with high dignitaries of the Church, to magisterial benches all over the country. But the Army, with its early Christian methods, continued to make progress and to interest itself in schemes for the betterment of the poor. One reads with feeling of the sufferings of the General at the thought of outraged childhood. He often flung his food from him and refused to eat when the thought of starving children came into his mind. Shelters and hostels began to spring up and the work of the Army to extend as far afield as America, Africa, India and Australia. It was then that the General's power as an organiser made itself felt. Farm colonies, industries, the "War Cry," and other activities grew up to show how vital a force had taken world-root. Yet the General was





priggishness about the epistles which is eminently typical of the period of "Sandford and Merton"—a desire to preach to each other and to labour there deistic beliefs. When the couple knew each other better and realised each other's many values, the religiously pedantic was abandoned, and it is easy to see that the writers had become mates, deeply attached to each other. Catherine Booth became her husband's guardian angel and his wisest mentor.

William Booth was born in Nottingham in 1829. Mr. Begbie, seeking after dramatic effect, rather labours the condition of things in and about Nottingham at this particular time. His idea is to show what influences climatic, labour and religious troubles may have had on the childhood of the future evangelist, but one feels that the author in straining at this camel has only swallowed a gnat. William Booth's father was a hard, taciturn, unemotional churchman, with a contempt for Methodists and Nonconformists. His mother was apparently of Jewish origin, a hypothesis supported by her name, Mary Moss.

As a boy William Booth was headstrong and passionate. I don't know whether an old lady, interviewed by Mr. Begbie, is drawing on her imagination, when she tells us that his favourite game was "soldiers," and that he was always known as the "Captain." If not, the coincidence is curious, just as curious as the fact—imparted by another of Mr. Begbie's informants—that the future organiser of the Salvation Army was always known as the "General."

His first introduction to religion was in his school days. Once, while playing in the street, he arrested the attention of a lady and gentleman, who turned to look at him. He frequently saw them after this and invariably noticed that they regarded him with some show of affection. One day they stopped and spoke to him and told him that he greatly resembled their dead son. They asked him to their house, and with his parents' permission, they took him to chapel. They were Wesleyans. Mr. Begbie records the General's reminiscence of those days. "My religious training was nil," but he maintained that attendance at this chapel made some slight impressions on him.

"My religious training," he says, "was nil"; and he adds that attendance at this chapel made some slight impressions upon him, but nothing more.

Then came an event that did away with every thought about religion. The calling in a mortgage precipitated his father's ruin. The family was plunged into poverty. "The purpose of making me a gentleman," says William Booth, "was defeated." He was taken away from school and sent into business. He was thirteen years of age.

To the end of his days William Booth could seldom bring himself to speak freely of his first acquaintance with business life. There is no doubt that the memory was a sad one. He shunned it. In all his writings I can find no direct reference to the nature of his employment. He speaks always of "a business," or of "a trade," never once can he force himself to say outright that the business to which his father apprenticed him was a pawnbroker's. And yet there cannot be any doubt at all that it was the associations of this business which had a determining effect upon his after life. He became deeply acquainted with the misery of other people. There had been misery enough in his own childhood, but it was a form of misery which isolated him from the world. He felt his position, and knew that his parents endeavoured to hide their poverty from their neighbours, as though all the neighbours were respectable and prosperous, they alone poor and struggling. But now he learned that many other people were fighting against poverty, and grew to know that suffering and sorrow, deprivation and shame, positive penury and positive want, drag their net in a wide sea of human misery.

In William Booth's fourteenth year acquaintance with the Chartists made him a hot reformer. This time he was living in comparative poverty—a position engendered by the death of his father—and helping his mother, who had opened a smallware shop, by working in a pawnbroker's. Can one imagine the



### GENERAL BOOTH

An unconventional portrait of the great evangelist, from "The Life of William Booth," which is published by Messrs. Macmillan.

much confidence in Booth that he subsidised him for thirteen years at a pound a week! so that he might preach the gospel to all and sundry.

The General recorded that the first day of his freedom, April 10, 1851, was his birthday, was Good Friday, and was the day on which he "fell over head and ears in love with the precious woman who afterwards became my wife."

At first the couple, each equally attached to the other, debated as to whether their friendship should be platonic or whether they should become actually engaged. Their correspondence at this period is interesting. The young man, entirely without means, had become betrothed to a girl more fortunately placed than himself and of superior education. Marriage seemed far distant. William Booth has left a record of this time of doubt and difficulty, from which I extract the following:—

In my emergency a remarkable way opened for me to enter college and become a Congregational minister. But after long waiting, several examinations, trial sermons, and the like, I was informed that on the completion of my training I should be expected to believe and preach what is known as Calvinism. After reading a book which fully explained the doctrine, I threw it at the wall opposite me, and said I would sooner starve than preach such doctrine, one special feature of which was that only a select few could be saved.

My little stock of money was exhausted. I remember that I gave the last sixpence I had in the world to a poor woman whose daughter lay dying; but within a week I received a letter inviting me to the charge of a Methodist Circuit in Lincolnshire, and from that time my difficulties of that kind became much less serious.

William Booth's early married life was a continuous battle against poverty, which was directly due to the sincerity of his convictions. Had he chosen he

always the evangelist, as the following extract indicates:

Early in the following year William Booth took Cecil Rhodes and Lord Loch to see the Farm Colony at Hadleigh. This was in May, 1895. It seems that William Booth was deeply perturbed by the political situation in South Africa, and regarded Cecil Rhodes as a man who might either plunge the country into war or make an end of a very dangerous tension by reasonable and conciliatory diplomacy. On the way to the Farm Colony they talked of social redemption and land reclamation, and during inspection of the Army's work Cecil Rhodes was absorbed in practical agricultural affairs.

The secretary says of these notable visitors: "Both were deeply interested, immensely impressed, and no little surprised by what they saw, Mr. Rhodes especially." But General Booth was thinking of other things, and on his way back to London in the railway carriage he put his hand upon the arm of Cecil Rhodes, and said to him: "I want to speak to you about yourself. You're a man with much depending on you just now. Tell me, how is it with your soul?" Lord Loch looked surprised, but Cecil Rhodes immediately made answer: "Well, General, it's not quite so well with my soul as I could wish." "Do you pray," inquired the old man. "Sometimes; not quite so often as I should." "Will you let me pray with you—now?" "Yes," Lord Loch turned his face away, and looked out of the window. William Booth and Cecil Rhodes knelt down together in the railway carriage, and the Salvationist prayed that God would guide, direct and save the soul of the South African Colossus. When they rose from their knees, Rhodes took the hand of William Booth, and said to him: "I hope you will continue to pray for me."

The death of Mrs. Booth was a terrible blow to the General, but it only caused him to plunge more deeply in his work. He answered those who accused him of living in luxury at the expense of the Army by throwing open the accounts of the Army to an appointed commission of investigation, and it was proved that the General and

his large family lived on less than £500 a year and that this was derived from the sale of his books, etc.

In 1906 General Booth turned his eyes on South Africa. Says Mr. Begbie:

Few dreams that entered the mind of the General in old age were dearer to his affection or became more abred into his ambition than the dream of a vast Salvation Army colony in Rhodesia. It was a dream which foreshadowed the fulfilment of that other and far greater dream, the conversion of the world. Our patriarch believed that by an immense plantation of humanity in Rhodesia, a plantation scientifically conceived, scientifically directed, and scientifically developed, he could arrest and capture the attention of the whole world. It was his belief that mankind wanted mothering and shepherding, and he was convinced that he knew how this process should be ordered. His faith in discipline plus spiritual affection was unbounded. He thought that he could make masses of people blissfully happy, and richly prosperous in a State of this kind.

The year 1906 witnessed a sustained effort on the General's part to bring this dream out of the shadows of aspiration and to give it the substance of accomplished fact. His journal and letters are full of this idea. He gave months in London to interviewing South African magnates and British statesmen. We shall see that to the last days of his life he nourished this brave dream and never wholly desisted of its realisation. One must suppose that he often grieved over it in those final days of his blindness and pain. Certainly he passed into the spirit-world stubbornly believing that some day a triumphant Salvation Army flag would fly in Rhodesia over the happiest community under heaven.

Two years later General Booth visited this country, and he made the following entry in his diary:

Mr. Abe Bailey took me in his motor to his magnificent mansion.

After lunch I had a long talk with him respecting Rhodesian affairs. I found him deeply interested and under the supposition that everything was settled, and that I was to visit Rhodesia and inaugurate the scheme. He was very vexed to find that the thing was still in the air, and immediately cabled Dr. Jameson, saying, in substance, that my being in the country made it imperative that this matter should now be brought to an issue.

Kitching (the General's devoted secretary) had had more talk with Mr. Bailey, who came in after I had retired, and he expresses himself most emphatically as to his going to help the Army in the future.

In those days the much-slandered General had become the welcome guest of the mighty. On his world tours and his motor tours—he was one of the first to use the motor for travelling purposes—"lion-hunters" of distinction fought to secure him as their honoured guest. Even the Bishops, who at one time were reckoned among his most virulent enemies, were honoured to house him. A member of his staff has recorded a visit to Dr. Percival, Bishop of Hereford:

I left him eating his frugal meal of milk, roast apple and dry toast, and discussing in the antique dining-hall with the Bishop matters which were very dear to his heart.

Having prepared his room, and feeling that he should be reminded of the late hour and the fact that he had a heavy day before him

on the morrow, I re-entered the room, and as I did so I found these two old veterans praying.

I shall never forget the earnestness depicted on both their faces as they pleaded with God for the salvation of the people and for His blessing on their respective labours.

I stood with bowed head, fearing lest I should disturb them by leaving the apartment.

Presently the General lifted his head, and looking into the Bishop's face with an intensity of purpose said: "My lord, give me your benediction." Immediately the Bishop placed his hand upon the head of our beloved General and gave him the blessing. "And now," said his lordship, "give me your blessing, General," and in response the General placed his hand upon the Bishop's head and called down upon him the blessings of Almighty God.

I do not think I shall ever forget the sacred solemnity of that moment.

William Booth's reception by King Edward set the world's cables busily working and caused the newspapers to drop the inverted commas which invariably appeared at either side of the word General. King Edward was sympathetic and appreciative.

"Tell me, General," asked the Sovereign, "how do you get on now with the Churches? What is their attitude towards you?"

The old man looked shrewdly at the King, his eyes twinkled, and he made answer: "Sir, they imitate me." At which the King laughed with a good understanding.

For some years towards the end the General began to suffer from cataract, but frequent operations failed to save his eyes. The story of the failure of the last operation is pathetically told by Mr. Begbie.

Bramwell Booth returned to the darkened chamber, and, as carefully as he found it possible, broke the melancholy intelligence to the old man. The words employed were not perhaps at first as definite as the unhappy truth justified, and the General exclaimed in his own direct fashion: "You mean that I am blind?"

"Well, General, I fear that we must contemplate that."

After a pause the old man said: "I shall never see your face again?"

"No, probably not in this world."

During the next few moments the veteran's hand crept along the counterpane to take hold of his son's, and holding it he said very calmly: "God must know best!" and after another pause: "Bramwell, I have done what I could for God and the people with my eyes. Now I shall do what I can for God and the people without my eyes."

General Booth died on August 20, 1912, leaving behind him one of the vastest organisations of modern times, an organisation which will ever remain as a monument to a man who sincerely loved the poorest of his fellow men and women.

Mr. Begbie is to be congratulated on his work, which contains a number of really interesting illustrations, and which is a worthy tribute to a worthy subject.

J. L. L.



## The Commercial and Financial Chronicle (New York)

Nr. *2880* vom ..... 191.....

### WILLIAM BOOTH.

"It is perhaps out of place—and yet, why should it be?—to refer in a purely class paper such as this, to the religious and social work of General Booth and the immense organization that he, almost alone, has been the means of creating."—*The Mining World*, London, Dec. 1906.

The above statement was written six years before the death of the founder and General of the Salvation Army in 1912, when he was still directing and extending its largest operations. We have now in the authoritative story of his life the means of formulating a real estimate of the work and character of the man who was the most worthily distinguished of the men of the XIX century.\*

It has long been remembered that when William of Orange died "the little children cried in the streets." When William Booth was buried "the densest multitude ever seen in the streets of London gathered, the whole traffic of the city ceased for hours, and there was mourning by thousands of men, women and children in nearly every country in the world."

Sixty-three years before, a youth of 20, without friends and penniless, he had come to London driven by the necessity of earning bread enough to keep body and soul together. Though his father had tried to maintain the home of a gentleman, the family had sunk steadily and the lad had long struggled with penury and had lived among the outcast and the poor. He had come to differ from the people about him only in that he had an unconquerable faith in the power of the Spirit of God to save the lowest and worst of men, and that he had a love for men that knew no limits and was inexhaustible. The more it was drawn upon the richer and fuller its flow.

The work of the Army he organized and led extended around the world, creating everywhere its own staff and file, and in time embracing every form of philanthropic agency—hospitals, shelters, farm colonies, emigration offices. He looked upon these as so many agencies and channels by which the saving grace of God could reach and change the hearts of men, and by which the love for the worst and neediest which filled his heart and animated the men and women he led, might reach the world.

The condition of the early Victorian world is difficult to picture. A great war had waged through the opening years of the century and another was threatening. The gulf between the rich and the poor was deepened, and the rush for wealth was intense. Suffering and want were kept out of sight, and when recognized, sentimentalized about with little or nothing done to relieve them. Foundations were slowly and painfully laying for better things, but "the general condition of the English people was one of frank materialism and aggressive complacency, a condition in which the 'obese platitudes' of respectability were accepted as the highest wisdom and the unspeakable miseries of the poor were regarded as the judgments of God or the inevitable fruits of political economy."

A new scientific philosophy was launched upon the world which made both progress and existence to turn upon "the survival of the fittest," which made inevitable the pessimism of Nietzsche and the reasoned despair of Henry Adams, and culminated in the war which has threatened civilization and still holds the world in boundless confusion.

William Booth was not a philosopher. He had re-

\* *The Life of William Booth*, by Harold Begbie. Macmillan. 2 vols. 1920.

Wenden!



ceived salvation as the gift of God through Jesus Christ; he accepted and believed his Gospel with all his heart; he quickly grasped as its central truths God's power to save, and God's love for men, and he was convinced that it was his duty to make known to other men the love that had saved him. He tried in every way to persuade the churches that this was their most important message and their chief task. He was conservative in his spirit; he would not antagonize the churches or create another denomination; only step by step was he led to organize and develop the Salvation Army as a body of Christians having the same faith and animated with the same purpose.

He suffered bitter and prolonged persecution. He and his followers were mobbed, and stoned and even arrested, throughout the cities and towns of England. He was persistently accused of every variety of wrongdoing by men in high position. The church in the person of some bishops, and the scientific world, with the lead of Professor Huxley, made bitter and specific charges, not one of which was sustained, but which were endlessly repeated.

He was always in need of funds, the work continually enlarging far beyond his resources, and he, his family and his followers living on the scantiest supplies. But confidence in him and the Salvation Army steadily grew. No new task, in time, seemed too great to be undertaken, until his heart and his efforts reached out for the world and he discovered that every form of humanitarian helpfulness was a way to his ultimate goal of the world's redemption.

He suffered all his life from ill-health which at times threatened him with complete disability and against which he continually had to fight in order to go on with his work. His wife, whom he loved with a consuming devotion, who was intellectually his superior, and who became the "Mother of the Army," and upon whom he continually leaned, was taken from him at the end of a long and distressing illness, through which he devotedly nursed her while carrying forward his work. He had to take autocratic control of the Army as the only possible means of securing its unity and fidelity to the truths in which and for which it existed, and then to bear the obloquy that this personal control involved. While his children were utterly loyal three of them eventually withdrew from him on this issue. It was one of his heaviest blows, but not a word of reproach escaped from him and he was able to continue his successful policy to the end.

He traveled necessarily from one country to another with the extension of the Army. He lived to be the honored guest of kings and queens and leaders of men everywhere, while his welcome by the people was everywhere unparalleled.

The wonder is that from first to last no success or failure seems to have affected the simplicity of his character or qualified his absolute devotion to his Lord and his complete consecration to his task. On his death-bed the one promise that he exacted from his successor was that he would get together a suitable group of officers and unfurl the flag of the Army in China. Almost his last words were, "The homeless children. Oh, the homeless children!" As he had seen them in every land they had come to be the great burden on his heart.

With the years his mind had enlarged until "by the phrase 'save the whole world,' he meant the salvation of men and women and little children, par-

ticularly little children, from the earthly punishments of wrong living, from unrest as well as from poverty, from torpor and lethargy and disquiet, as well as from squalor and pain. He yearned after an erring humanity. He longed for a heaven on earth."

Gradually his sight failed until he became entirely blind. He tried to keep on with his work. He seemed to have always the vision of the world in its need in his mind. "I can't rest. I can't rest," he would say. "They won't let us even go into the prisons." Nothing could alter his conviction that "if the means ordinarily employed for the conviction of sinners were brought to bear upon the hearts of men there is hope for every one of them."

So he lived and died. He was denied burial in Westminster Abbey, where Charles Darwin is buried. He established no new sect or doctrine or order. He proved by actual and visible evidence among every people in every land that the Gospel of Jesus Christ as setting forth the redeeming grace of God can save the souls and renew the life of any man, however sinful or however sunken and degraded. And he left an immense number of men and women raised up in every land pledged to bear testimony to that truth and to make it their chief business to bring it home to men's hearts.

In the struggle to end war and to deliver the world from its distress William Booth has brought to the front the great truth of the Christian centuries, and in the hour of our need has established anew and around the world the Gospel of a Divine Love so great that it is hard to grasp and of an invincible Hope for every man.

The missionary impulse of the Christian churches to reach the world that was kindled anew in the nineteenth century, has been made urgently available, both at home and abroad, and in both directions brought home to the hearts of men of goodwill as the power of God which will save the world.

## Bayerische Staatszeitung (München)

Nr. 80

## Zum 100. Geburtstag von William Booth

am 10. April 1929.

Von Karl Gög.

Im Jahre 1865 stand im Osten Londons, in dem gefährlichsten Stadtteil der Erde, in Whitechapel, ein großer, hagerer Mann mitten zwischen Verbrechern, Dirnen, Schaubuden, Karussells und Schnapszelten und sprach zu einer gottentfremdeten, spottenden, johlenden Menge von Erlösung, Ewigkeit, Sünde und von den tiefsten Dingen des Lebens. Es war der junge Prediger William Booth von der „neuen methodistischen Vereinigung“. Ihm war es die herbste Enttäuschung gewesen, daß man ihn, den jung Vermählten, in der Bescheidenheit des Dienstes in einer ländlichen Gemeinde hatte belassen wollen, in einer anheimelnden Häuslichkeit, wo ihn die anhängliche Liebe seiner Gemeindemitglieder vor Enttäuschungen bewahrte. Aber er wollte nicht diese beschauliche Ruhe. Es beunruhigte ihn bis zur herben Gewissensqual, daß es in England Stätten in Fülle gab, wo seine Arbeit nötiger gewesen wäre. Und so ging er mit seiner jungen Frau den dornenvollen Weg in den Sumpf Londons, in wirtschaftliche Unsicherheit, in Lebensgefahr, in härteste Arbeit und Entsagung. Aus dem dunkelsten England wollte er die Verworfensten und Ärmsten zu edlen Menschen- und Christentum zurückführen. Und es gelang ihm und seiner Frau tatsächlich, Pfade in den Morast Londons zu bauen, ja, Brechen in den Sumpf der Welt zu brechen.

Das Leben dieses vielumkämpften Mannes, der verspottet und verhaßt, geliebt und verehrt war wie selten eine andere religiöse Persönlichkeit, bedarf des religiösen und sozialgeschichtlichen Hintergrundes. Booths Jugend fiel in jene Zeit, von der John Ruskin sagte, daß die Massen, obgleich geschwärzt von Rauch, Feuer und Kohlen, auf der Straße vor Kälte starben, und obwohl sie taub wurden von dem Lärm der Spinnräder und dem Geräusch der Webstühle, keine Kleider besaßen, und daß sie verhungerten, weil sie kein Brot hatten, obwohl in den Ländern englischer Junge Millionen von Morgen in reifem, goldenen Getreide mochten. Es war jene Zeit, von der Chamberlain berichtet, daß das Leben nie luxuriöser aber auch das Elend nie größer und Lafter und Verbrechen nie ausgebreiteter waren. Als besonders trostlos werden die Verhältnisse in Nottingham, der Geburtsstadt Booths, geschildert, das als Stätte der ersten blutigen Arbeiterstreiks bekannt ist. Dort unter den Ärmsten, in einem der elendesten, moderigsten Winkelhäuser wuchs Booth auf, nachdem sein Vater, ein Bauunternehmer, seinen ganzen Wohlstand in den unglücklichen Zeitverhältnissen verloren hatte. Mit 13 Jahren war William Booth in die Lehre zu einem Luchthändler gekommen. Als Fünfzehnjähriger kam er durch Zufall in einen Gottesdienst der „Weslehaner“. Schon lange hatte er die Kälte und Leere und Laternen der damaligen anglikanischen Staatskirche empfunden, deren Veräußerlichung sprichwörtlich wurde. Die inneren und äußeren Rote, welche die moderne Entwicklung mit sich brachte, und der kalte Formendienst, den die anglikanische Kirche ihnen entgegenstellte, ließen die vielen Sekten entstehen, vor allem das Quäkertum und den Methodismus John Wesleys. Booth wurde ergriffen von der Wärme, Herzhaftigkeit und Lebensnähe der methodistischen Gottesdienste und schloß sich der methodistischen Gemeinde an. Bald stand er an der Spitze einer jugendlichen Gruppe, die in methodistischem Sinne missionierte. Nach über 12stündigem Tagewerk ging der Kaufmannslehrling mit seiner Bibel in die düstersten Höfe der Armenviertel, wo er unter Spott und Hohn und mitunter berben Rippenstößen seine Botschaft verkündigte. Mit 19 Jahren wurde er 12 Monate arbeitslos. Schließlich fand er in London wieder Arbeit. 1851 wurde er von der methodistischen Gemeinde ausgeschlossen.

Nachdem sich Booth zunächst den schon 1848 von den Methodisten abgewiesenen Reformern angeschlossen hatte, wurde er schließlich Prediger des „Neuen Methodistischen Bundes“ in verschiedenen Landgemeinden. Als nach fünf Jahren das ihm immer wieder gegebene Versprechen, ihm im Befehrsdienst an den Verworfensten zu verwenden, auch dann nicht eingelöst wurde, als sich der Millionär Love erbot, alle Kosten zu tragen, als man ihn nochmals auf ein Jahr vertrösten wollte, rief seine Frau ihr historisches „Niemals!“ in die Versammlung. Damit lösten sie alle Bande zu einer gesicherten Stellung und einem äußerlich sorglosen Leben. Sie gingen, innerlich Drange folgend, den dornenvollen Weg in das dunkelste England.

Als man ihnen für ihre Versammlungen die Kirchen verbot, mietete Booth einen Zirkus. Demals hatte London ein Zirkus-

hat — niemals in eine Kirche. Als der Sturm Booths Zeit, in dem er predigte, einwarf, wurden Tanzsäle, alte Wollspeicher, Pferdeställe und Zehnspennigstneipen zu Versammlungsräumen. Booth wartete nicht, bis die an Leib und Seele Bedürftigen zu ihm kamen. Er zog zu ihnen, in die finstersten Spelunken, in die düstersten Gendswinkel. Er wußte, daß er zu Säufern und Dirnen nicht mit feingesehter Rede, mit weihewoller Andacht kommen konnte. Er mußte den Lärm seiner Umgebung übertönen, wenn er durchdringen wollte mit seiner Botschaft. Er mußte Gottesdienstformen wählen, bei denen es dem vornehmen Kritiker den



William Booth, der Gründer der Heilsarmee.

Atem vorzuschlag. Anfangs war Booth weit entfernt davon, eine neue Religionsgemeinschaft zu gründen. Er verwies die zu edleren Leben Zurückgewonnenen an die bestehenden Gemeinschaften. Aber die Kirche wollte diese Befehrten des Reverend Booth nicht. Sie waren ja auch zu verschieden von dem Typ des hochachtbaren englischen Kirchenchristen. So mußten Gemeinden gebildet werden. Aus den geretteten Kindern des Dunkels wurden Tausende von eifrigen Helfern. In der Tatsache, daß die Geretteten zu der Arbeit an ihren Brüdern, ihren Schwestern verpflichtet sind, liegt das Geheimnis des Erfolges der Heilsarmee.

Bis 1875 trug dieses sozialethische, grundsätzlich über den Konfessionen stehende Werk den Namen einer christlichen Londoner Mission und vermochte in den genannten Jahren bereits von 20 Stationen aus zu wirken. Als es sich nötig erwies, die Arbeit straffer zu organisieren, kam Booth durch einen Zufall darauf, sein Werk nach dem Vorbild der weltlichen Heere aufzubauen. Waren der Methodismus und das Quäkertum ganz demokratisch organisiert, so legte die Heilsarmee alle Machtbefugnisse in die Hände des Generals. Booth wurde der erste General dieser Armee der Nächstenliebe. 1881 arbeiteten in drei Ländern schon 192 Korps mit 285 Offizieren. 1890 hießen die Zahlen: 32, 3996, 9927. 1902: 49, 7558, 13 585 und 1912: 58, 9130, 20 840. Heute arbeiten von 15 146 Missionsstationen aus in 82 Ländern 31 840 Offiziere, Kadetten und Angestellte mit über 100 000 Soldatoffizieren (die keinerlei Vergütung erhalten) und einem Heer opferbereiter Soldaten. In 1547 sozialen Anstalten finden an Leib und Seele Hilfsbedürftige aller Konfessionen Aufnahme.

Booth wurde wegen seiner, gewiß besonders deutschem Empfinden nicht immer verständlichen, Methoden zum Gespött der Welt. Aber unbekümmert um Spott und Hohn ging er seinen Weg weiter. Unbeirrt vom dem Widerspruch der Lehrmeinungen. Ihm galt die Tatsache, daß er Millionen von Menschen zu neuen Menschen



# Zum 100. Geburtstag von William Booth

am 10. April 1929.

Von Karl Götz.

Im Jahre 1865 stand im Osten Londons, in dem gefährlichsten Stadtteil der Erde, in Whitechapel, ein großer, hagerer Mann mitten zwischen Verbrechern, Dirnen, Schaubuden, Karussells und Schnapszelten und sprach zu einer gottentfremdeten, spottenden, johlenden Menge von Erlösung, Ewigkeit, Sünde und von den tiefsten Dingen des Lebens. Es war der junge Prediger William Booth von der „neuen methodistischen Vereinigung“. Ihm war es die herbste Enttäuschung gewesen, daß man ihn, den jung Vermählten, in der Bescheidenheit des Dienstes in einer ländlichen Gemeinde hatte belassen wollen, in einer anheimelnden Häuslichkeit, wo ihn die anhängliche Liebe seiner Gemeindemitglieder vor Enttäuschungen bewahrte. Aber er wollte nicht diese beschauliche Ruhe. Es beunruhigte ihn bis zur herben Gewissensqual, daß es in England Stätten in Fülle gab, wo seine Arbeit nötiger gewesen wäre. Und so ging er mit seiner jungen Frau den dornenvollen Weg in den Sumpf Londons, in wirtschaftliche Unsicherheit, in Lebensgefahr, in härteste Arbeit und Entsagung. Aus dem dunkelsten England wollte er die Verworfensten und Vermissten zu edlem Menschen- und Christentum zurückführen. Und es gelang ihm und seiner Frau tatsächlich, Pfade in den Morast Londons zu bauen, ja, Brechen in den Sumpf der Welt zu brechen.

Das Leben dieses vielumkämpften Mannes, der verspottet und verhaßt, geliebt und verehrt war wie selten eine andere religiöse Persönlichkeit, bedarf des religiösen und sozialgeschichtlichen Hintergrundes. Booths Jugend fiel in jene Zeit, von der John Ruskin sagte, daß die Massen, obschon geschwärzt von Rauch, Feuer und Kohlen, auf der Straße vor Kälte starben, und obwohl sie taub wurden von dem Lärmen der Spinnräder und dem Geräusch der Webstühle, keine Kleider besaßen, und daß sie verhungerten, weil sie kein Brot hatten, obwohl in den Ländern englischer Junge Millionen von Morgen in reifem, goldenen Getreide wogten. Es war jene Zeit, von der Chamberlain berichtet, daß das Leben nie luxuriöser aber auch das Elend nie größer und Lafter und Verbrechen nie ausgedehnter waren. Als besonders trostlos werden die Verhältnisse in Nottingham, der Geburtsstadt Booths, geschildert, das als Stätte der ersten blutigen Arbeiterstreiks bekannt ist. Dort unter den Vermissten, in einem der elendesten, moderigsten Winkelhäuser wuchs Booth auf, nachdem sein Vater, ein Bauunternehmer, seinen ganzen Wohlstand in den unglücklichen Zeitverhältnissen verloren hatte. Mit 13 Jahren war William Booth in die Lehre zu einem Tuchhändler gekommen. Als Fünfzehnjähriger kam er durch Zufall in einen Gottesdienst der „Wesleyaner“. Schon lange hatte er die Kälte und Beere und Taiferne der damaligen anglikanischen Staatskirche empfunden, deren Veräußerlichung sprichwörtlich wurde. Die inneren und äußeren Rote, welche die moderne Entwicklung mit sich brachte, und der kalte Formendienst, den die anglikanische Kirche ihnen entgegenstellte, ließen die vielen Sekten entstehen, vor allem das Quäkertum und den Methodismus John Wesleys. Booth wurde ergriffen von der Wärme, Herzhaftigkeit und Lebensnähe der methodistischen Gottesdienste und schloß sich der methodistischen Gemeinde an. Bald stand er an der Spitze einer jugendlichen Gruppe, die in methodistischem Sinne missionierte. Nach über 12stündigem Tagewerk ging der Kaufmannslehrling mit seiner Bibel in die düstersten Höfe der Armenviertel, wo er unter Spott und Hohn und mitunter berben Rippenstößen seine Botschaft verkündigte. Mit 19 Jahren wurde er 12 Monate arbeitslos. Schließlich fand er in London wieder Arbeit. 1851 wurde er von der methodistischen Gemeinde ausgeschlossen.

Nachdem sich Booth zunächst den schon 1848 von den Methodisten abgezwungen Reformern angeschlossen hatte, wurde er schließlich Prediger des „Neuen Methodistischen Bundes“ in verschiedenen Landgemeinden. Als nach fünf Jahren das ihm immer wieder gegebene Versprechen, ihn im Befehrsdienst an den Verworfensten zu verwenden, auch dann nicht eingelöst wurde, als sich der Millionär Love erbot, alle Kosten zu tragen, als man ihn nochmals auf ein Jahr vertrösten wollte, rief seine Frau ihr historisches „Niemals!“ in die Versammlung. Damit lösten sie alle Bande zu einer gesicherten Stellung und einem äußerlich sorglosen Leben. Sie gingen, innerstem Drange folgend, den dornenvollen Weg in das dunkelste England.

Als man ihnen für ihre Versammlungen die Kirchen verbot, mietete Booth einen Zirkus. Damals hatte London ein Sechstel der Einwohner des ganzen Landes auf einem Raume von kaum 30 Kilometer Durchmesser versammelt. Der Teil Londons, dem Booths Arbeit galt, jene Stätten der Armut, des Lafters, des Verbrechens, umfaßte 1881 über eine Million Menschen. 90 Prozent davon wohnten damals in Ostlondon. Wieder 90 Prozent dieser Ostlondoner gingen — in London, das die religiöse Stadt der Welt genannt wird und verhältnismäßig die meisten Kirchen

hat — niemals in eine Kirche. Als der Sturm Booths Zeit, in dem er predigte, einwarf, wurden Tanzsäle, alte Wollspeicher, Pferdeställe und Zehnpfennigstneipen zu Versammlungsräumen. Booth wartete nicht, bis die an Leib und Seele Bedürftigen zu ihm kamen. Er zog zu ihnen, in die finsternen Spelunken, in die düstersten Gassenwinkel. Er wußte, daß er zu Säufern und Dirnen nicht mit feingeklebter Rede, mit weihewoller Andacht kommen konnte. Er mußte den Lärm seiner Umgebung übertönen, wenn er durchdringen wollte mit seiner Botschaft. Er mußte Gottesdienstformen wählen, bei denen es dem vornehmen Kritiker den



William Booth, der Gründer der Heilsarmee.

Attem vorschlug. Anfangs war Booth weit entfernt davon, eine neue Religionsgemeinschaft zu gründen. Er verwies die zu edlerem Leben Zurückgewonnenen an die bestehenden Gemeinschaften. Aber die Kirche wollte diese Befehlten des Reverend Booth nicht. Sie waren ja auch zu verschieden von dem Typ des hochachtbaren englischen Kirchenchristen. So mußten Gemeinden gebildet werden. Aus den geretteten Kindern des Dunkels wurden Tausende von eifrigen Helfern. In der Tatsache, daß die Geretteten zu der Arbeit an ihren Brüdern, ihren Schwestern verpflichtet sind, liegt das Geheimnis des Erfolges der Heilsarmee.

Bis 1875 trug dieses sozialethische, grundsätzlich über den Konfessionen stehende Werk den Namen einer christlichen Londoner Mission und vermochte in den genannten Jahren bereits von 20 Stationen aus zu wirken. Als es sich nötig erwies, die Arbeit straffer zu organisieren, kam Booth durch einen Zufall darauf, sein Werk nach dem Vorbild der weltlichen Heere aufzubauen. Waren der Methodismus und das Quäkertum ganz demokratisch organisiert, so legte die Heilsarmee alle Machtbefugnisse in die Hände des Generals. Booth wurde der erste General dieser Armee der Nächstenliebe. 1881 arbeiteten in drei Ländern schon 192 Korps mit 285 Offizieren. 1890 hießen die Zahlen: 32, 3996, 9927. 1902: 49, 7558, 13 585 und 1912: 58, 9130, 20 840. Heute arbeiten von 15 146 Missionsstationen aus in 82 Ländern 31 840 Offiziere, Kadetten und Angestellte mit über 100 000 Totaloffizieren (die keinerlei Vergütung erhalten) und einem Heer opferbereiter Soldaten. In 1547 sozialen Anstalten finden an Leib und Seele Hilfsbedürftige aller Konfessionen Aufnahme.

Booth wurde wegen seiner, gewiß besonders deutschem Empfinden nicht immer verständlichen, Methoden zum Gespött der Welt. Aber unbekümmert um Spott und Hohn ging er seinen Weg weiter. Unbeirrt von dem Widerstreit der Lehrmeinungen. Ihm galt die Tat am Nächsten mehr als die Lehre. Der Mann, von dem die Wighblätter mehr als von anderen Menschen des öffentlichen Lebens Notiz zu nehmen pflegten, starb im Jahre 1912, 82jährig als Ehrenbürger der Städte London, Nottingham und Philadelphia, als Ehren doktor der Universität Oxford. Gegen das Ende seines Lebens war er erblindet. Im Oktober 1890 war ihm seine Frau im Tode vorausgegangen. Als man ihren schlichten Sarg damals durch die Straßen Londons trug,

Wenden!

folgten ihm Hunderttausende aus allen Bevölkerungsschichten und Konfessionen. Die Geschäfte, selbst die Bank von England, hatten geschlossen. Nicht anders war es bei Booths Tod. An seinem Sarge lagen Kränze von Kaisern und Königen.

William Booths Nachfolger wurde sein Sohn Bramwell, der nach monatelanger Krankheit im Januar dieses Jahres vom obersten Rat der Heilsarmee zur Niederlegung seines Amtes aufgefordert wurde, unter dessen Last er zusammengebrochen war. Die damaligen inneren Vorgänge in der Armee wurden viel besprochen und kritisiert. Der Ertrag aus Booths Büchern, die die Welt aufhorchen ließen und aus seinen Vorträgen, die ihn über die ganze Welt führten, floß ungefürt seiner Armee zu. Er hatte Schnelldampfer und Expresszug, Telegraph und Schreibmaschine in den Dienst seines nicht immer zu Unrecht viel umstrittenen Werkes gestellt. Mit Reklame, Kalkulation, Wirklichkeitsinn und fabelhafter Tatkraft hatte er das Christentum den modernen Verhältnissen anzupassen versucht. „Länderdürstiger als Alexander jagte er durch die Welt, mit der bis zum Wahnsinn gesteigerten Sehnsucht, Seelen für Gott und für ein frohes, friedliches, reines Leben zu gewinnen.“



Weser-Zeitung (Bremen)

Nr. 213

Der Vater der Heilsarmee

100. Geburtstag von William Booth am 10. April

Von  
Karl Göt

Im Jahre 1865 stand im Osten Londons, in dem gefährlichsten Stadtteil der Erde, in Whitechapel, ein großer, hagerer Mann mitten zwischen Verbrechern, Dürren, Schaubuden, Karussells und Schnapszelten und sprach zu einer gottentfremdeten, spottenden, johlenden Menge von Erlösung, Ewigkeit, Sünde und von den tiefsten Dingen des Lebens. Es war der junge Prediger William Booth von der „neuen methodistischen Vereinigung“. Ihm war es die herbste Enttäuschung gewesen, daß man ihn, den jung Vernünftigen, in der Beschaulichkeit des Dienstes in einer ländlichen Gemeinde hatte belassen wollen, in einer anheimelnden Häuslichkeit, wo ihn die anhängliche Liebe seiner Gemeindemitglieder vor Enttäuschungen bewahrte. Aber er wollte nicht diese beschauliche Ruhe. Es beunruhigte ihn bis zur herben Gewissensqual, daß es in England Stätten in Fülle gab, wo seine Arbeit nötiger gewesen wäre. Und so ging er mit seiner jungen Frau den dornenvollen Weg in den Sumpf Londons, in wirtschaftliche Unsicherheit, in Lebensgefahr, in härteste Arbeit und Enttäuung. Aus dem dunkelsten England wollte er die Verworfensten und Ärmsten zu edlem Menschen- und Christentum zurückführen. Und es gelang ihm und seiner Frau tatsächlich, Pfade in dem Morast Londons zu bauen, ja, Breschen in den Sumpf der Welt zu brechen.

Das Leben dieses vielumkämpften Mannes, der verspottet und verhaßt, geliebt und verehrt war wie selten eine andere religiöse Persönlichkeit, bedarf des religiösen und sozialgeschichtlichen Hintergrundes. Booths Jugend fiel in jene Zeit, von der John Ruskin sagte, daß die Massen, obgleich geschwärzt von Rauch, Feuer und Kohlen, auf der Straße vor Kälte starben, und obwohl sie taub wurden von dem Tausen der Spinnräder und dem Geräusch der Webstühle, keine Kleider besaßen, und daß sie verhungerten, weil sie kein Brot hatten, obwohl in den Ländern englischer Junge Millionen von Morgen in reifem, goldenen Getreide wogten. Es war jene Zeit, von der Chamberlain berichtet, daß das Leben nie luxuriöser, aber auch das Elend nie größer und Laster und Ver-

brechen nie ausgebreiteter waren. Als besonders trostlos werden die Verhältnisse in Nottingham, der Geburtsstadt Booths, geschildert, das als Stätte der ersten blutigen Arbeiterstreiks bekannt ist.

Dort, unter den Ärmsten, in einem der elendsten, moderigsten Winkelhäuser wuchs Booth auf, nachdem sein Vater, ein Bauunternehmer, seinen ganzen Wohlstand in den unglücklichen Zeitverhältnissen verloren hatte. Mit 13 Jahren war William Booth in die Lehre zu einem Tuchhändler gekommen. Als Fünfzehnjähriger kam er durch Zufall in einen Gottesdienst der „Wesleyaner“. Schon lange hatte er die Kälte und Leere und Laternen der damaligen anglikanischen Staatskirche empfunden, deren Veräußerlichung sprichwörtlich wurde. Die inneren und äußeren Nöte, welche die moderne Entwicklung mit sich brachte, und der kalte Formendienst, den die anglikanische Kirche ihnen entgegenstellte, ließen die vielen Sekten entstehen, vor allem das Quäkertum und den Methodismus John Wesleys. Booth wurde ergriffen von der Wärme, Herzhaftigkeit und Lebensnähe der methodistischen Gottesdienste und schloß sich der methodistischen Gemeinde an. Bald stand er an der Spitze einer jugendlichen Gruppe, die in methodistischem Sinne missionierte. Nach über 12stündigem Lagerverf ging der Kaufmannslehrling mit seiner Bibel in die düstersten Höfe der Armenviertel, wo er unter Spott und Hohn und mitunter verberben Fippenstößen seine Botschaft verkündigte. Mit 19 Jahren wurde er 12 Monate arbeitslos. Schließlich fand er in London wieder Arbeit. 1851 wurde er von der methodistischen Gemeinde ausgeschlossen. Schon in Nottingham hatte man, um die hochansehnlichen Gemeindemitglieder nicht Anstoß nehmen zu lassen, die Leute, die Booth gebracht hatte, durch eine Hintertür auf die letzten Bänke der Kirche gedrängt. Ähnliche Erlebnisse führten auch fernerhin zu Spannungen.

Nachdem sich Booth zunächst den schon 1848 von den Methodisten abgezweigten Reformern angeschlossen hatte, wurde er schließlich Prediger des „Neuen Methodistischen Bundes“ in verschiedenen Landgemeinden. Als nach 5 Jahren das ihm immer wieder gegebene Versprechen, ihn im Velehrungsdienst an den Verworfenen zu verwenden, auch dann nicht eingelöst wurde, als sich der Millionär Love erbot, alle Kosten zu tragen, als man ihn nochmals auf ein Jahr vertrösten wollte, rief seine Frau ihr historisches „Niemals!“ in die Versammlung. Damit lösten sie alle Bande zu einer gesicherten Stellung

Weiden

und einem äußerlich sorglosen Leben. Sie gingen, innerstem Drange folgend, den dornenvollen Weg in das dunkelste England.

Als man ihnen für ihre Versammlungen die Kirchen verbot, mietete Booth einen Zirkus. Damals hatte London ein Sechstel der Einwohner des ganzen Landes auf einem Raum von kaum 30 km Durchmesser versammelt. Der Teil Londons, dem Booths Arbeit galt, jene Stätten der Armut, des Lasters, des Verbrechens, umfaßte 1881 über eine Million Menschen. 90 Pzt. davon wohnten damals in Ostlondon. Wieder 90 Pzt. dieser Ostlondoner gingen — in London, das die religiöseste Stadt der Welt genannt wird und verhältnismäßig die meisten Kirchen hat — niemals in eine Kirche. Als der Sturm Booths Welt, in dem er predigte, einwarf, wurden Tanzsäle, alte Wollspeicher, Pferdeställe und Zehnspennigskneipen zu Versammlungsräumen. Booth wartete nicht, bis die an Leib und Seele Bedürftigen zu ihm kamen. Er zog zu ihnen, in die finsternen Spelunken, in die düstersten Elendswinkel. Er wußte, daß er zu Säufern und Dinnern nicht mit feingesehter Rede, mit weisevoller Andacht kommen konnte. Er mußte den Lärm seiner Umgebung überhören, wenn er durchdringen wollte mit seiner Botschaft. Er mußte Gottesdienstformen wählen, bei denen es dem vornehmen Kritiker den Atem verschlug.

Anfangs war Booth weit entfernt davon, eine neue Religionsgemeinschaft zu gründen. Er verwies die zu edlerem Leben Zurückgewonnenen an die bestehenden Gemeinschaften. Aber die Kirche wollte diese Befehrten des Reverend Booth nicht. Sie waren ja auch zu verschieden von dem Typ des hochachtbaren Kirchenchristen. So mußten Gemeinden gebildet werden. Aus den geretteten Kindern des Dunkels wurden Tausende von eifrigen Helfern. In der Tatsache, daß die Geretteten bei der Arbeit an ihren Brüdern, ihren Schwestern verpflichtet sind, liegt das Geheimnis des Erfolges der Heilsarmee.

Bis 1875 trug dieses sozialethische, grundsätzlich über den Konfessionen stehende Werk den Namen einer christlichen Londoner Mission und vermochte in den genannten Jahren von 20 Stationen aus zu wirken. Als es sich nötig erwies, die Arbeit straffer zu organisieren, kam Booth durch einen Zufall darauf, sein Werk nach dem Vorbild der weltlichen Heere aufzubauen. Waren der Methodismus und das Quäkertum ganz demokratisch organisiert, so legte die Heilsarmee alle Machtbefugnisse in die Hände des Generals. Booth wurde der erste General dieser Armee

der Nächstenliebe. 1881 arbeiteten in drei Ländern schon 192 Korps mit 285 Offizieren. 1890 hießen die Zahlen: 32, 3996, 9927. 1902: 49, 7558, 13 585 und 1912: 58, 9130, 20 840. Heute arbeiten von 15 146 Missionsstationen aus in 82 Ländern 31 840 Offiziere, Kadetten und Angestellte mit über 100 000 Lokalsoffizieren (die keinerlei Vergütung erhalten) und einem Heer opferbereiter Soldaten. In 1547 sozialen Anstalten finden an Leib und Seele Hilfsbedürftige aller Konfessionen Aufnahme.

Booth wurde wegen seiner, gewiß besonders deutschem Empfinden nicht immer verständlichen Methoden, zum Gespött der Welt. Aber unbekümmert um Spott und Hohn ging er seinen Weg weiter. Unbeirrt von dem Widerstreit der Lehrmeinungen. Ihm galt die Tat am Nächsten mehr als die Lehre. Der Mann, von dem die Witzblätter mehr als von anderen Menschen des öffentlichen Lebens Notiz zu nehmen pflegten, starb im Jahre 1912, 82jährig als Ehrenbürger der Städte London, Nottingham und Philadelphia, als Ehrendoktor der Universität Oxford. Gegen das Ende seines Lebens war er erblindet. Im Oktober 1890 war ihm seine Frau im Tode vorausgegangen. Als man ihren schlichten Sarg damals durch die Straßen Londons trug, folgten ihm Hunderttausende aus allen Bevölkerungsschichten und Konfessionen. Die Geschäfte, selbst die Bank von England, hatten geschlossen. Nicht anders war es bei Booths Tod. An seinem Sarge lagen Kränze von Kaisern und Königen.

William Booths Nachfolger wurde bekanntlich sein Sohn Bramwell, der nach monatelanger Krankheit im Januar d. J. vom Obersten Rat der Heilsarmee zur Niederlegung seines Amtes aufgefordert wurde, unter dessen Last er zusammengebrochen war. Die damaligen Vorgänge in der Armee wurden viel besprochen und kritisiert. Der Ertrag aus Booths Büchern, die die Welt aufhorchen ließen und aus seinen Vorträgen, die ihn über die ganze Welt führten, floss ungekürzt seine Armee zu. Er hatte Schnelldampfer und Expreszug, Telegraph und Schreibmaschine in den Dienst seines nicht immer zu Unrecht viel umstrittenen Wertes gestellt. Mit Reklame, Kalkulation, Wirklichkeitsinn und fabelhafter Latkraft hatte er das Christentum den modernen Verhältnissen anzupassen versucht. „Länderdurstiger als Alexander jagte er durch die Welt, mit der bis zum Wahnsinn gesteigerten Sehnsucht, Seelen für Gott und für ein frohes, friedliches, reines Leben zu gewinnen.“ — Wahrhaftig ein Mann um Christi willen!



The Times (London) № 45173

## WILLIAM BOOTH.

### THE MAN AND HIS ARMY.

#### A WIFE'S HELP.

*A hundred years ago to-day—on April 10, 1829—William Booth, the founder and first General of the Salvation Army, was born at Nottingham. Catherine Mumford, who became his wife in 1855, was born on January 17 of the same year. The Prime Minister is presiding over a commemorative meeting at the Albert Hall to-night.*

There is a fitness beyond that of chronology in uniting the memories of William and Catherine Booth. They met in youth; they married at 26; and in life they were not divided. She brought to him a mind broader and better cultivated than his own, and no less spiritually fervent. First she supplied, then she helped him to develop, the qualities he lacked. To her he gave in return his strong, stubborn nature to serve, like a rock, for the compacting of a personality which otherwise might have wasted itself in shifting sands. Together they faced poverty and hardship. In perfect sympathy they confronted the worse prospect of being cut adrift from work in which they believed. To her wise counsel, to her tumultuous ability, energy, and faith, he owed much in the earlier years of the Salvation Army. He repaid the debt with a constant tenderness of affection such as a rugged character sometimes owns among its finer traits. Nor can he be fully understood without reference to the words he spoke at her graveside in 1890, and to the tribute to "her inflexible will, her sanctified intellect, her indomitable courage, her matchless eloquence," in his speech at Guildhall 15 years later when he received the Freedom of the City of London.

At that time he was 76. He had won his cause. In winning it he had become one of the most familiar figures in several continents. Rulers of the East and West, from King Edward to the Emperor of Japan, from President Roosevelt to the King of Denmark, had honoured in his person the forward march of his Army. The tall, gaunt frame, the massive head with the long white hair and beard, were recognized and acclaimed not only throughout England but on many tours in many lands. These, indeed, were known well enough. It was the face which, to cooler students of physiognomy, remained baffling. They traced in it the passion of a Hebrew prophet, but there were other elements in it which were less easily identifiable.

#### TRACES OF 50 YEARS.

Gleams of puzzling resemblance had been imprinted on William Booth's face by over half-a-century of fiery, unwearied endeavour against the Devil (as he himself would have said) and against beasts at Ephesus (as others might have added). In younger manhood, to judge from what records are available, his impressiveness was not so subtle. Equally

must be taken into account in considering his first triumphs as an evangelist. So far he was better equipped than his rivals in influence down the ages, so many of whom were meagre and unsightly.

As the simple preacher grew into the head of a vast organization heredity allowed its influence to be suspected—possibly in his features, but more plausibly in his behaviour. William Booth's father made and lost a good deal of money, his final ruin being ascribed to speculation. The lesson was not lost upon the son; and its effects were diverse. In the General of the Salvation Army they were seen in the contrast between his personal disregard of riches and his keen sense of their value for his life's purpose. Before then, money had been to him no more than a means of supplying the means of bare existence. He was scarcely more than a boy, just 22, when he left the shop where his assistance was valued to preach the Gospel in the by-ways of Nottingham, opportunity having come from a promise of 20s. a week for three months. Afterwards he and his wife, with a young family, took even more daring plunges into the unknown. But as the years went on, and the increasing work of the Army made larger demands, a shrewd appreciation of finance appeared in William Booth. Where his impersonal interests were concerned he learned to be both far-seeing and wily. He would "nurse" the wealthy as diligently as he ministered to the poor. But he accepted no gifts for his poor under condition. More than one willing benefactor, seeking to tie him down by some innocent provision, had his gift rejected. Long before he was General, William Booth sought the mastery both of his own destiny and that of his mission.

#### THE GIFT AND THE END.

This is as much as to say that he was a man who fostered and garnered the qualities that were in him, the latent as well as the obvious. Neither in youth nor maturity did he set store on literature, art, or science. He considered them the embroideries of life, and for embroideries he had no use. He burned always to save the souls of men, and appears seldom, if ever, to have been afflicted by any doubt that he was the man for the task. With his favourite saying, "God Almighty shall have all there is of William Booth," went a self-assurance, marvellous to men of less concentrated intention, that the gift was worth having for the end to which it was put.

Later discoveries were that "you cannot save a man with an empty stomach," and that "it is difficult to bless people when their feet are cold." Presumably there were empty stomachs and cold feet at Nottingham street corners, in Spalding and the numerous other places where he preached during the years of his direct connexion with Methodism. And doubtless he was sorry and sympathized. But with his mind's eye he saw the deprivations of the body less clearly than the maladies of the soul; and never reading, or never heeding, the poet's sceptical "Where a soul can be discerned" he got on with his main task. One suspects that the William Booth of those days was a stern and threatening apostle of righteousness, and that but for Catherine Mumford and all she meant to him his thunder might not have been succeeded by refreshing rain. If so, London joined her in converting, or at least in softening, the evangelist.

In the eighteen-sixties the East End flaunted its poverty and vice much more flagrantly than to-day, when the Mile End-road is a decent and rather agreeable thoroughfare. If it has less poverty and vice to flaunt, the

## WILLIAM BOOTH.

THE MAN AND HIS  
ARMY.

## A WIFE'S HELP.

*A hundred years ago to-day—on April 10, 1829—William Booth, the founder and first General of the Salvation Army, was born at Nottingham. Catherine Mumford, who became his wife in 1855, was born on January 17 of the same year. The Prime Minister is presiding over a commemorative meeting at the Albert Hall to-night.*

There is a fitness beyond that of chronology in uniting the memories of William and Catherine Booth. They met in youth; they married at 26; and in life they were not divided. She brought to him a mind broader and better cultivated than his own, and no less spiritually fervent. First she supplied, then she helped him to develop, the qualities he lacked. To her he gave in return his strong, stubborn nature to serve, like a rock, for the compacting of a personality which otherwise might have wasted itself in shifting sands. Together they faced poverty and hardship. In perfect sympathy they confronted the worse prospect of being cut adrift from work in which they believed. To her wise counsel, to her tumultuous ability, energy, and faith, he owed much in the earlier years of the Salvation Army. He repaid the debt with a constant tenderness of affection such as a rugged character sometimes owns among its finer traits. Nor can he be fully understood without reference to the words he spoke at her graveside in 1890, and to the tribute to "her inflexible will, her sanctified intellect, her indomitable courage, her matchless eloquence," in his speech at Guildhall 15 years later when he received the Freedom of the City of London.

At that time he was 76. He had won his cause. In winning it he had become one of the most familiar figures in several continents. Rulers of the East and West, from King Edward to the Emperor of Japan, from President Roosevelt to the King of Denmark, had honoured in his person the forward march of his Army. The tall, gaunt frame, the massive head with the long white hair and beard, were recognized and acclaimed not only throughout England but on many tours in many lands. These, indeed, were known well enough. It was the face which, to cooler students of physiognomy, remained baffling. They traced in it the passion of a Hebrew prophet, but there were other elements in it which were less easily identifiable.

## TRACES OF 50 YEARS.

Gleams of puzzling resemblance had been imprinted on William Booth's face by over half-a-century of fiery, unwearied endeavour against the Devil (as he himself would have said) and against beasts at Ephesus (as others might have added). In younger manhood, to judge from what records are available, his impressiveness was not so subtle. Equally tall and gaunt, he had then a pair of flashing eyes set in a white countenance which contrasted with masses of black hair and beard. A Hebrew prophet in the making, but hardly an enigma, certainly no Greek! His physical grandeur expressed only a great zeal, great seriousness and self-devotion. How much his mere looks helped him in his dealings with erring men and women may be guessed though not estimated. They were not, of course, the source of his power, which lay deeper; but they

must be taken into account in considering his first triumphs as an evangelist. So far he was better equipped than his rivals in influence down the ages, so many of whom were meagre and unsightly.

As the simple preacher grew into the head of a vast organization heredity allowed its influence to be suspected—possibly in his features, but more plausibly in his behaviour. William Booth's father made and lost a good deal of money, his final ruin being ascribed to speculation. The lesson was not lost upon the son; and its effects were diverse. In the General of the Salvation Army they were seen in the contrast between his personal disregard of riches and his keen sense of their value for his life's purpose. Before then, money had been to him no more than a means of supplying the means of bare existence. He was scarcely more than a boy, just 22, when he left the shop where his assistance was valued to preach the Gospel in the by-ways of Nottingham, opportunity having come from a promise of 20s. a week for three months. Afterwards he and his wife, with a young family, took even more daring plunges into the unknown. But as the years went on, and the increasing work of the Army made larger demands, a shrewd appreciation of finance appeared in William Booth. Where his impersonal interests were concerned he learned to be both far-seeing and wily. He would "nurse" the wealthy as diligently as he ministered to the poor. But he accepted no gifts for his poor under condition. More than one willing benefactor, seeking to tie him down by some innocent provision, had his gift rejected. Long before he was General, William Booth sought the mastery both of his own destiny and that of his mission.

## THE GIFT AND THE END.

This is as much as to say that he was a man who fostered and garnered the qualities that were in him, the latent as well as the obvious. Neither in youth nor maturity did he set store on literature, art, or science. He considered them the embroideries of life, and for embroideries he had no use. He burned always to save the souls of men, and appears seldom, if ever, to have been afflicted by any doubt that he was the man for the task. With his favourite saying, "God Almighty shall have all there is of William Booth," went a self-assurance, marvellous to men of less concentrated intention, that the gift was worth having for the end to which it was put.

Later discoveries were that "you cannot save a man with an empty stomach," and that "it is difficult to bless people when their feet are cold." Presumably there were empty stomachs and cold feet at Nottingham street corners, in Spalding and the numerous other places where he preached during the years of his direct connexion with Methodism. And doubtless he was sorry and sympathized. But with his mind's eye he saw the deprivations of the body less clearly than the maladies of the soul; and never reading, or never heeding, the poet's sceptical "Where a soul can be discerned" he got on with his main task. One suspects that the William Booth of those days was a stern and threatening apostle of righteousness, and that but for Catherine Mumford and all she meant to him his thunder might not have been succeeded by refreshing rain. If so, London joined her in converting, or at least in softening, the evangelist.

In the eighteen-sixties the East End flaunted its poverty and vice much more flagrantly than to-day, when the Mile End-road is a decent and rather agreeable thoroughfare. If it has less poverty and vice to flaunt, the change is due, along with a general improvement in social conditions, to the Salvation Army among other Christian agencies. William and Catherine Booth pitied and were shocked by what they saw there. The wrongdoing of all kinds, the drunkenness, the blasphemy, the cruelty, the deliberate and spasmodic violence hurt them at the very heart. With them to see evil was to fight it; and, penniless as they were, they declared

Booth!



war against the iniquities of Whitechapel. While William Booth still perceived the iniquities most clearly, he was terribly moved by the poverty and disease. The family rice pudding was given to the hungry; a few clothes were collected for the ill-clad. Judged by its relation to the demand, such help was ridiculous; but for a time it was all that could be offered.

In 1865 the Christian Mission was started. It had the good fortune to number among its early friends the philanthropist Samuel Morley. Soon, owing largely to the preaching of Catherine Booth, it began to spread through the country. As for William Booth, he devoted his evangelizing energy for the most part to East London. He had been too much of an evangelist for the Methodist body to which he had belonged, and had left it in consequence. The East End did not receive him with universal gladness, but jeered at his admonitions, and threw brickbats at his processions. Nevertheless, the Christian Mission pushed its conquests farther, took on gradually a definite organization, and in 1878 blossomed into the Salvation Army. The commemoration-stone in the Mile End-road records that there "William Booth commenced the work of the Salvation Army, July, 1865," and though the adoption of the military name was due to more northerly suggestion there can be no demur to the truth of the sentence cut in the stone.

### STORMY YEARS.

It is now rarely remembered that the Salvation Army underwent during some stormy years the fate of all those who insist on going new ways to an old goal. The methods it employed were at once a shock to people who approved its purpose and an invitation to other people who liked to throw stones. There were riots, and police proceedings, and loud controversy. All this, said the prudent, might have been prevented by a little tact. They forgot that tact is no virtue to reformers of William Booth's kind. He put his trust for results in bands, fulminations, parades, and a bench for penitents. What he believed in he employed, and encouraged his followers to employ. There are hints, however, in some of his words and actions that he was alive to the danger of provoking hysteria, leading to fanatical consequences, in mingled masses of men and women. He was never without common sense, or how could the Salvation Army have spread in half a century from Mile End Waste to 83 countries and colonies?

The stages of its progress, the gradual addition of many well-endowed enterprises for helping the poor materially as well as morally, the combination of blessing with warming the feet, are an old story. But one phase of the old story may be recalled for the light it throws on the working of William Booth's mind. General Bramwell Booth has related that one morning he found his father in a black, despondent mood.

"Bramwell," he cried, when he caught sight of me, "did you know that men slept out all night on the bridges?"

He had arrived in London very late the night before from some town in the South, and had to cross the City to reach his home. What he had seen on that midnight return accounted for this morning tornado.

"Well, yes," I replied, "a lot of poor fellows, I suppose, do that."

"Then you ought to be ashamed of yourself to have known it and to have done nothing for them," he went on vehemently.

I began to speak of the difficulties. . . . My father stopped me with a peremptory gesture.

"Go and do something," he said. "We must do something."

"What can we do?"

"Get them a shelter."

"That will cost money."

"Well, that is your affair. Something must be done. Get hold of a warehouse and warm it and find something to cover them."

### "IN DARKEST ENGLAND."

The method might be credited to many a leader of men. They are suddenly struck with the existence of an evil, and, summoning their assistants, they cry, "Do away with it." To the inquiry "How?" they reply, "That is your business; only see that it is done"; and, if the electric current conveying the words is sufficient, it is done. Whether such men can strictly be called great organizers is another question. It is clear, at any rate, that William Booth had now fully realized that men's bodies must be saved in company with their souls. Not long afterwards, in 1890, he published his book, "In Darkest England and the Way Out," which gave the how as well as the why of his scheme of social regeneration. From that time his personal fame ripened. Countless stories are current of his sardonic humour, of his passion for prayer in season and (as some thought) out of season. Lady Oxford has told of his praying with and for her in a railway carriage. It was in a railway carriage that he knelt down with Cecil Rhodes, as complete an idealist as himself, though their ideals were different. Humbler men and women, seeking him on business, were abashed at his promptitude in sinking to his knees on their behalf. To them it might seem incongruous, but not to him, who saw life as a whole, undivided by times and seasons.

William Booth was not, therefore, a simple man. It is true that in his nature there was the deep simplicity which accompanies great vision. But there was also, during his maturity and old age, the genius of strategy. If he gained the souls of the erring by direct assault, his operations on other souls were by flank attack. A dictator from beginning to end, he took infinite pains to get the best advice when a subject was big and his knowledge of it small. He could appear rash, but he was uncommonly prudent. He would seem, on occasion, to be ready to go all lengths, yet he was really drawing in, very quietly, very adequately. He was a mystic, and at the same time, in Lord Rosebery's phrase of Cromwell, a practical mystic. Abler than most leaders to delegate responsibility, for ever insisting on a competent, well-trained staff, he knew the value of detail like a Wellington or a John Moore.

### INTEGRITY.

The integrity of the Salvation Army was everything to him. In his letters, particularly in those written at certain crises, he confesses, sometimes openly, more often by implication, his fear of that integrity being impaired by external force or accident. Had he held to his point less strongly the scheme might not have been thwarted of an alliance between the Salvation Army and one or other of the Churches which held out hands of cautious welcome. Integrity of aim was also, in his eyes, of paramount importance. The spiritual side of his mission was to the life-long evangelist its chief side. One may hazard a guess that, if by any chance the social rescue work had ever struck him as involving a weakening of the emphasis on salvation, he would have been ready to sacrifice it to the snatching of souls from that wrath to come which was a basis of his religion.

### COMMEMORATION MEETING

#### GENERAL BRAMWELL BOOTH'S MESSAGE.

General Bramwell Booth, the founder's eldest son, who will not be present at the commemoration meeting at the Albert Hall to-night owing to ill-health, has sent the following statement to the Press:—

"For several years I have looked forward to the celebration of the centenary of my dear father. Many plans occupied my mind and

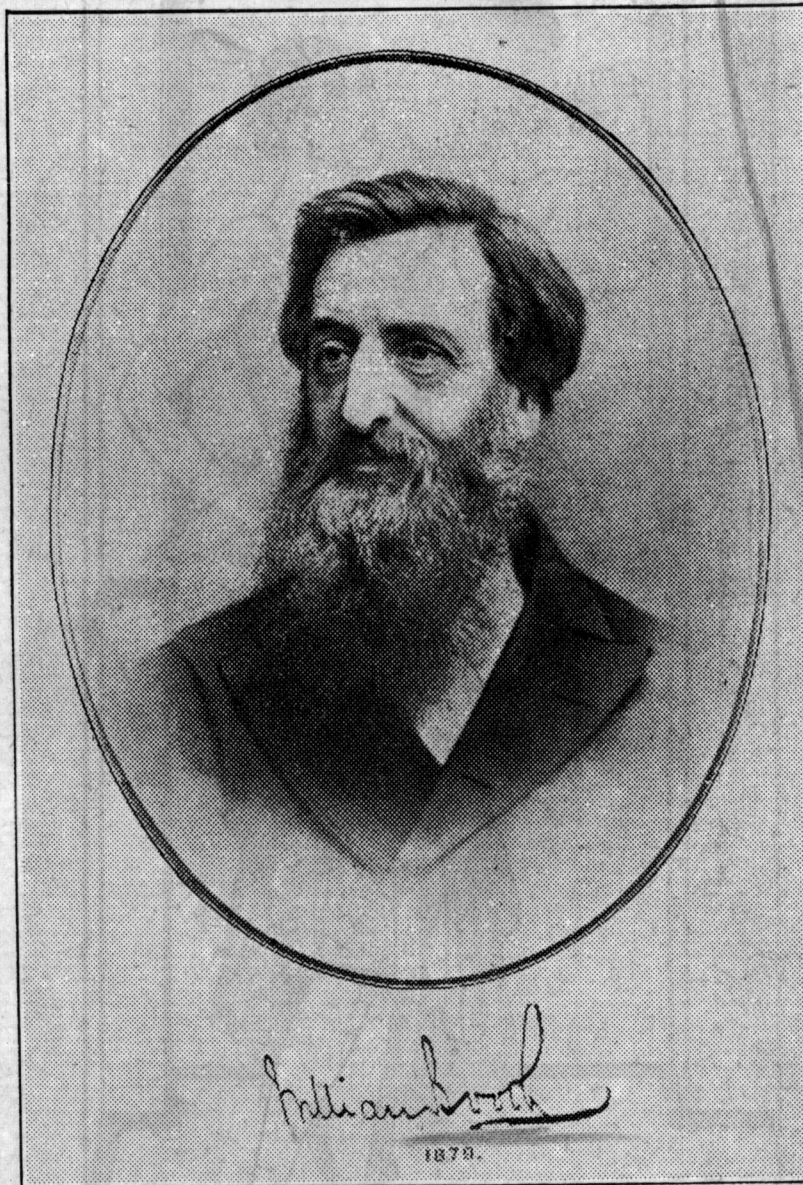
heart; especially did I watch with joy the progress of the buildings at Denmark Hill of the training garrison, which I believe will be a fitting memorial to his memory. I had looked forward to the reception within those walls of the first company of young men and women to be trained there for a life of soul-saving and to follow William Booth's example. But, following the stone-laying in 1928, God called me to a new experience, and for the first time in over 50 years I was compelled to rest completely. Last year I still hoped to take part in the rejoicings of the centenary, but return of strength has not yet been granted to me. The arrangements planned for the celebration will be carried out without me, but I am glad to send a message to friends, and express on this day anew my love and devotion to my wonderful father, who, a hundred years ago, was born in Nottingham.

"The Salvation Army is his life's record. He said of himself, 'God filled my heart with a passionate love for the souls of men and thus the Salvation Army was born in me.' Wherever Salvationists are filled with the same spirit the Salvation Army will grow and prosper. Two great ideas moved through the consecrated lives of my dear father and mother: their personal knowledge and love of God expressed in their lives for those for whom Christ died, and, secondly, the desire to sacrifice all to win souls. Love of God and man and willingness to sacrifice for others, these are the warp and woof of the Salvation Army spirit, the garment of its praise, the uniform of its workers, the royal clothing of its kings and priests.

"I believe history will prove that William Booth was divinely inspired, that he built on a firm foundation that needs no alteration. His work is to be seen not only within the Salvation Army organization, but in the new spirit of service and sacrifice everywhere manifested towards the unfortunate, the lost and needy, the poor and the outcast, among the peoples of the world.—BRAMWELL BOOTH."

The Manchester Guardian  
No. 25774

GENERAL BOOTH.



(Photopress.)

The founder of the Salvation Army, who was born a hundred years ago to-day. This photograph was taken in 1879.



The Times (London)

№ 45174

WILLIAM BOOTH.

PRIME MINISTER'S  
TRIBUTE.

RELIGIOUS LEADERS IN  
THE VICTORIAN AGE.

The Prime Minister presided at the Salvation Army celebration at the Albert Hall last night of the centenary of the births of William Booth, its founder and first General, and of Catherine Mumford, who became his wife. Mrs. Baldwin accompanied the Prime Minister, who was supported on the platform by the Bishop of Willesden, representatives of various religious denominations, and by General Edward Higgins, the new leader of the Salvation Army, and Mrs. Higgins; Commissioner Mapp, the Chief of the Staff; and British and International Commissioners.

General Bramwell Booth, from whose hands the leadership of the Salvation Army recently passed, is lying seriously ill at his residence at Hadley Wood, and was unable to be present. One of his daughters, Commissioner Catherine Booth, had a seat on the platform, and several other members of the family were present.

Before the speeches there was a procession through the hall, illustrating every branch of the Salvation Army's activities since its inception as the Christian Mission at Mile End Waste on July 5, 1865. The pageant was headed by Commissioner Ridsdel, the oldest surviving officer, whose service began in 1873, and by other veterans of the early days, who wore the quaint costume of the period, with brass buttons and pillbox hats. Flags were carried representing 83 countries, dominions, and colonies where the Salvation Army carries on operations. The pageant illustrated the wide and many-sided operations of the organization, from what was described as the "cellar, gutter, and garret brigade" to present-day slum and social work, the work of the land and industrial colony, the migration and settlement department, and the Army's missionary and oversea work. One of the groups represented the Service men who are members of the Naval and Military League.

Commissioner Mapp, Chief of the Staff, read messages from two daughters of the founder of the Army. Commissioner Mrs. Lucy Booth-Hellberg telegraphed from Stockholm:—"I am eternally grateful for such a father. My one ambition is to be true to his God and to my call."

Commander Evangeline Booth sent from the United States a telegram, in the course of which she said:—"We remember with gratitude what he [William Booth] was to America and his genuine appreciation of the vast opportunities this great country offered the Blood and Fire flag; for the place he gave the American wing of our world-movement in his heart, as evidenced in his works, in his writings, and, above all, in his gift of three of his children to the command of the Army in this land."

MR. BALDWIN'S SPEECH.

The PRIME MINISTER, who was received with cheers, said:—

If you think it right that someone outside your body should speak to-night about your founder for a few moments in this hall, then it is eminently fitting that those words should be spoken by the Prime Minister of this kingdom. (Cheers.) It is 100 years ago to-day that William Booth was born in Nottingham, and it is a curious thing to see how that fertile soil of the old Midlands and the West Midlands has produced evangelists. Epworth gave us John Wesley; from Leicestershire came George Fox; from Gloucestershire George Whitefield; and from Nottingham William Booth—(cheers)—and three of those were raised from the humblest homes. George Fox was a shoemaker, George Whitefield a bar tender, and Booth a pawnbroker's assistant.

One thing that strikes me here when I think of Booth is the nonsense that is talked to-day about the poverty of the Victorian age. Why the Victorian age is so unpopular to-day very largely arises from the fact that, in spite of all its faults, there was in it among its great men, who were numerous, a faith in goodness; there was a moral earnestness and there was a sense of duty and a performance of duty. And if you look at the extremes in the religious world—take Booth and Spurgeon on the one hand, and on the other Newman and Manning—there you get men absolutely different, all belonging to that great age, but all of them, above all things, were men who were in dead earnest about what they did. And the result is that the critics of the day will pass away with their generation and be forgotten, but the works of those men in human souls will last to eternity. (Cheers.)

When I said that outside this great body no one was more fitted to speak to-night than the Prime Minister I felt that it was the Prime Minister who should speak for the country on the debt the country owes to Booth. (Cheers.) Just as no history of the 18th century is complete without dwelling on the fact of Wesley's life, so no history of the 19th century will be complete if it has no reference in it to the influence of William Booth on England. If I understand aright his outlook in his earlier days, it was this—that to have churches was not necessarily the same thing as to have religion, and that you might have in human life respectability and sobriety, but that they really might be the cloak of a sham inside. That was the reason why he went out from the Church to preach, and chose for his church the theatre, the prison, the highway, and the market place. I will say this for the Victorian age, that that was all very unusual and it startled them very badly. (Laughter.) You may remember that Francis Galton, who made so many studies in the science of heredity, after studying various ecclesiastical biographies, declared his opinion that "the gentle, complaining, and fatigued spirit is that in which evangelical divines are very apt to pass their days." Now there was nothing complaining and nothing of fatigue in anything Booth did. Booth's home, as was said of him, was the railway station.

TRADITION AND NOVELTY.

He was himself—like many of the greatest men—both a Conservative and a reformer. (Laughter.) He believed in tradition and he believed in novelty. The tradition was the Gospel, the novelty was the presentation of it. He discovered, as many others have, that, important as political and economic questions are, the religious question is ultimately the most fundamental of the whole lot, and he worked deliberately for the salvation of souls and that the souls might justify themselves by their works in this world for others. He was not one of those—not uncommon in this generation—who believe that you can redeem mankind by a constitution. He faced right up to the fact of evil. Now we are a little afraid of that in these days, and we have banished the word "sin" from the dictionaries. You may expunge the word as much as you like, but the ugly fact remains, and will remain. Booth never discussed publicly, nor, I believe, privately, theological difficulties. He

## The Times (London)

No. 45174

## WILLIAM BOOTH.

PRIME MINISTER'S  
TRIBUTE.RELIGIOUS LEADERS IN  
THE VICTORIAN AGE.

The Prime Minister presided at the Salvation Army celebration at the Albert Hall last night of the centenary of the births of William Booth, its founder and first General, and of Catherine Mumford, who became his wife. Mrs. Baldwin accompanied the Prime Minister, who was supported on the platform by the Bishop of Willesden, representatives of various religious denominations, and by General Edward Higgins, the new leader of the Salvation Army, and Mrs. Higgins; Commissioner Mapp, the Chief of the Staff; and British and International Commissioners.

General Bramwell Booth, from whose hands the leadership of the Salvation Army recently passed, is lying seriously ill at his residence at Hadley Wood, and was unable to be present. One of his daughters, Commissioner Catherine Booth, had a seat on the platform, and several other members of the family were present.

Before the speeches there was a procession through the hall, illustrating every branch of the Salvation Army's activities since its inception as the Christian Mission at Mile End Waste on July 5, 1865. The pageant was headed by Commissioner Ridsdel, the oldest surviving officer, whose service began in 1873, and by other veterans of the early days, who wore the quaint costume of the period, with brass buttons and pillbox hats. Flags were carried representing 83 countries, dominions, and colonies where the Salvation Army carries on operations. The pageant illustrated the wide and many-sided operations of the organization, from what was described as the "cellar, gutter, and garret brigade" to present-day slum and social work, the work of the land and industrial colony, the migration and settlement department, and the Army's missionary and oversea work. One of the groups represented the Service men who are members of the Naval and Military League.

Commissioner Mapp, Chief of the Staff, read messages from two daughters of the founder of the Army. Commissioner Mrs. Lucy Booth-Hellberg telegraphed from Stockholm:—"I am eternally grateful for such a father. My one ambition is to be true to his God and to my call."

Commander Evangeline Booth sent from the United States a telegram, in the course of which she said:—"We remember with gratitude what he [William Booth] was to America and his genuine appreciation of the vast opportunities this great country offered the Blood and Fire flag; for the place he gave the American wing of our world-movement in his heart, as evidenced in his works, in his writings, and, above all, in his gift of three of his children to the command of the Army in this land."

## MR. BALDWIN'S SPEECH.

The PRIME MINISTER, who was received with cheers, said:—

If you think it right that someone outside your body should speak to-night about your founder for a few moments in this hall, then it is eminently fitting that those words should be spoken by the Prime Minister of this kingdom. (Cheers.) It is 100 years ago to-day that William Booth was born in Nottingham, and it is a curious thing to see how that fertile soil of the old Midlands and the West Midlands has produced evangelists. Epworth gave us John Wesley; from Leicestershire came George Fox; from Gloucestershire George Whitefield; and from Nottingham William Booth—(cheers)—and three of those were raised from the humblest homes. George Fox was a shoemaker, George Whitefield a bar tender, and Booth a pawnbroker's assistant.

One thing that strikes me here when I think of Booth is the nonsense that is talked to-day about the poverty of the Victorian age. Why the Victorian age is so unpopular to-day very largely arises from the fact that, in spite of all its faults, there was in it among its great men, who were numerous, a faith in goodness; there was a moral earnestness and there was a sense of duty and a performance of duty. And if you look at the extremes in the religious world—take Booth and Spurgeon on the one hand, and on the other Newman and Manning—there you get men absolutely different, all belonging to that great age, but all of them, above all things, were men who were in dead earnest about what they did. And the result is that the critics of the day will pass away with their generation and be forgotten, but the works of those men in human souls will last to eternity. (Cheers.)

When I said that outside this great body no one was more fitted to speak to-night than the Prime Minister I felt that it was the Prime Minister who should speak for the country on the debt the country owes to Booth. (Cheers.) Just as no history of the 18th century is complete without dwelling on the fact of Wesley's life, so no history of the 19th century will be complete if it has no reference in it to the influence of William Booth on England. If I understand aright his outlook in his earlier days, it was this—that to have churches was not necessarily the same thing as to have religion, and that you might have in human life respectability and sobriety, but that they really might be the cloak of a sham inside. That was the reason why he went out from the Church to preach, and chose for his church the theatre, the prison, the highway, and the market place. I will say this for the Victorian age, that that was all very unusual and it startled them very badly. (Laughter.) You may remember that Francis Galton, who made so many studies in the science of heredity, after studying various ecclesiastical biographies, declared his opinion that "the gentle, complaining, and fatigued spirit is that in which evangelical divines are very apt to pass their days." Now there was nothing complaining and nothing of fatigue in anything Booth did. Booth's home, as was said of him, was the railway station.

## TRADITION AND NOVELTY.

He was himself—like many of the greatest men—both a Conservative and a reformer. (Laughter.) He believed in tradition and he believed in novelty. The tradition was the Gospel, the novelty was the presentation of it. He discovered, as many others have, that, important as political and economic questions are, the religious question is ultimately the most fundamental of the whole lot, and he worked deliberately for the salvation of souls and that the souls might justify themselves by their works in this world for others. He was not one of those—not uncommon in this generation—who believe that you can redeem mankind by a constitution. He faced right up to the fact of evil. Now we are a little afraid of that in these days, and we have banished the word "sin" from the dictionaries. You may expunge the word as much as you like, but the ugly fact remains, and will remain. Booth never discussed publicly, nor, I believe, privately, theological difficulties. He



preached, and preached the Gospel, and the military organization which he founded suited his own character as it has historically before now suited the character of great religious reformers.

### STRUGGLE WITH POVERTY.

And yet no man felt more than he the hardships of the poverty in which he himself had been brought up. He remembered the children in the streets of Nottingham in his childhood crying for bread. His own childhood was blighted by poverty, and he was one of the men, like Lord Shaftesbury, who, once having seen and realized the human misery of that, could never forget and never lie down under it. And hence the social work of the Salvation Army. I was interested to see that one—I might say the great apostle of Socialism—wrote only the other day:—"The Salvation Army still spends in the struggle with poverty the zeal that was meant for the struggle with sin." William Booth was big enough, and had zeal enough in him, to maintain both those struggles. (Cheers.)

It is just about 17 years ago that he made his last speech in this room in which we are now meeting. He reviewed his own life's work. "I might," he said, "have chosen as my life's work the housing of the poor"—and he spoke of that, "I might have given myself up to the material benefit of the working classes"—and he said a few words about that. "I might have given myself up to temperance reform"—and he spoke some words about that. "I might have given up my life to the physical improvement of the people"—and he spoke words on that. Then he said that he might have devoted his life to politics. "I might," he said, "have turned a Con-

servative, or I might have been a Radical, or a Home Ruler, or a Socialist, or joined the Labour Party, but—(and this is a characteristic remark)—I might have formed another party." (Laughter.) I rejoice, for the sake of the world, to think that he chose another part. (Cheers.) In all these things which I have named—in housing, in drink, in crime, in disease—he and the Army have fought, and are fighting, their fight. But the object to which his whole life primarily was devoted was one of which he used these words:—"The object I chose all these years ago embraced every effort containing in its heart the remedy"—that is the point—"for every form of misery and sin and wrong to be found on the earth and every method of reclamation needed by human nature."

I would only say one word in conclusion. There are many forms of spiritual endeavour in the world. There are diversities of gifts. God fulfils Himself in many ways, and His love is far wider than our minds. To-night we thank God for William Booth, for a man whom all Christendom to-day recognizes as one of the world's great religious leaders. (Cheers.)

The BISHOP of WILLESDEN, in a brief address, said that to-day there was tremendous need for the work that the Salvation Army and similar organizations were doing.

COMMISSIONER HURREN, British Commissioner, described the founder of the Salvation Army as a realist. William Booth, he said, penetrated illusion, and the veneers of society did not delude him.

PRINCIPAL THOMAS PHILLIPS, the president of the National Free Church Council, said that William Booth started as a Free Churchman, but the Free Churches were not big enough for him and his great work.

### FATHER AND SON.

GENERAL HIGGINS, the new leader, said that there were hundreds of Salvation Army centenary celebration meetings going on that night in various parts of the world. The 16 years that had passed since William Booth made his last public utterance in that hall had given the world an opportunity of more correctly appraising the real character and worth of the man. The removal of William Booth's hand from the control of the movement did not in the least interfere with its continued development and advance. It was true the leadership of the Army passed into the hands of one whose share in the building of the edifice it was impossible for them to over-estimate—(cheers)—one whose knowledge of its intricacies at such a moment was valuable beyond estimation—one who had stood by the founder from its early days, and the transfer of the generalship from the hands of father to son was carried through without a shadow of mistrust from within and with sympathetic hopes from outside. While that night they were met to do honour to the memory of William Booth, the occasion could not be allowed to pass without also giving full measure of credit to Bramwell Booth—(cheers)—whose associations with, and whose loyalty to, his father would always form one of the most beautiful chapters of Salvation Army history, and whose skill and devotion in leadership in the eventful years which followed the death of the founder were largely responsible for the rapid extension and consolidation of their work. General Bramwell Booth won the affection of the whole Army, and his breakdown in health and his continued illness called from them all the deepest feelings of sympathy and prayer on his behalf.

On the motion of the REV. DR. ARCHIBALD FLEMING a vote of thanks was accorded the Prime Minister.

## The Times (London)

№ 45174

### WILLIAM BOOTH.

That the Prime Minister should speak, as MR. BALDWIN did last night, at the centenary celebrations of the birth of the founder of the Salvation Army is in accordance with the fitness of things and with the demands of the age. He admitted as much himself, though it is with difficulty that the presence of many of MR. BALDWIN's predecessors can be imagined at a similar gathering; but the keeping of centenaries is for the most part a modern custom, and few organizations have made such headway throughout the world in so short a time as the Salvation Army. Moreover in these days, when all political parties profess themselves more deliberately than ever as working for the regeneration of society, there seems to be something peculiarly fitting in the participation of the Prime Minister in office in the thanksgivings of the body which looks back to the genius of WILLIAM BOOTH as its founder. It is possible also that the PRIME MINISTER accepted the invitation with all the greater alacrity on account of the non-political nature of WILLIAM BOOTH's work and that of his successors. He rejoiced that WILLIAM BOOTH had chosen another part than politics. Indeed statesmanship cannot but admit that there are reforms which no amount of legislation can bring about. A political leader and his supporters in Parliament, however strong and earnest, are permitted to work only in a field which is limited by what is immediately practicable and well within the sanction of public conscience at the time. Their duties and achievements lie in a more material world, which, as they know well, is not the only world in which men live. That other, the spiritual, which gives meaning to everything else, is to be approached by methods different from theirs. If in the last resort the two worlds cannot be kept apart, but have to be ranged in direct relation to each other—as GENERAL BOOTH was not slow to discover, when he found that it was not enough to address men's souls when their bodies were starving—it still remains true that the motive power must come from within in the first place, and that the first thing to be sought is righteousness, to which the rest shall be added.

Anyone reading the life of WILLIAM BOOTH, which has been voluminously recorded, will see

at once that, with a directness rare even in a religious leader, he went down to the heart of things, and with a simple but uncompromising theology, and with no regard for institutional formalities, lived primarily for the purpose of changing men's hearts, for bringing them out of vice, misery, and despair, and for setting them on the way of becoming confident Christians living permanently in touch with spiritual realities. Such was his genius, and such the impulse on which he acted, that he brought his message of hope and forgiveness to wretches of all sorts and conditions who would otherwise never have responded to, and would probably have never been challenged by, the appeals of religion. This was his supreme achievement; and in order to succeed he had to use methods which were not those of the Church or the Chapels, and at the same time even to refrain, in the interests of those who could not reasonably be expected to comprehend them, from observances kept by himself in his earlier days and by other Christian bodies. It is hardly surprising that at first he was coldly regarded and on occasion rather closely questioned by representatives of organized religion—still less that he shocked that permanent type of mind which was represented a century earlier by HORACE WALPOLE when he heard WESLEY. But he was not a doctor of divinity; he would wage theological controversy with no one. After living down opposition, obloquy, and misunderstanding, he proceeded, as successful men in many walks of life often proceed in this country, to the friendship of princes, the freedom of the City, and an honorary doctorate of the University of Oxford. None of these and similar honours was of his own seeking, not all of them were really appropriate, and he knew their dangers well enough; nor did they begin to befall him until the London evangelist had become something more—a world-wide traveller and the patriarchal head of a vast organization in many lands, devoting itself to the material as well as to the spiritual needs of the poor and outcast. But they are historically worth remembering; for they were genuine expressions of the regard in which he had come to be held, and it may be said that nothing but true merit, tried and proved, would have brought them upon him.

There are now those who, as they look back on the nineteenth century, are prepared to place him among the first dozen or so of the greatest Englishmen of that century; and they are fortified in their conviction of his greatness not only

wenden.



The Times (London)

4754

## 64-17274-1

by what he did himself but by the strength of  
 the Salvation Army as it has continued ever  
 since. Curious as the highly autocratic constitu-  
 tion which he gave the Army may seem, it served  
 admirably for many years; and in remembering  
 the first General it is impossible not to remember  
 the remarkably able members of his family on  
 whom he could rely as he grew old, and in par-  
 ticular his son GENERAL BRAMWELL BOOTH, to  
 whom GENERAL HIGGINS paid a loyal tribute  
 yesterday. As everyone knows, the Salvation  
 Army this year has passed through a trying  
 time and a crisis which might well have wrecked  
 a less public-spirited institution. That diffi-  
 culty is now happily a thing of the  
 past, and there is no internal cause which  
 should tend to bring about a diminution of the  
 Army's beneficent activities. Of its distant  
 future there can be no saying, since so much  
 will depend on the counsels of those who will  
 be henceforth chiefly responsible for it. But  
 if it is true to the spirit of the founder it will  
 not fail to continue to deliver its essentially  
 religious message, however much it may find it  
 necessary to spend time and money on im-  
 proving the material lot of those it would assist.  
 There is nothing in the practical precepts of  
 WILLIAM BOOTH on the tactics of evangelism  
 to make for the rigidity of a closed system.  
 There is his own evidence on record to show  
 that methods of forming converts might change  
 according to circumstances and to the condi-  
 tions of those addressed. On the other hand  
 WILLIAM BOOTH decidedly desired and preferred  
 that his Army should not aim so much at preach-  
 ing to the fairly well-to-do as to the down  
 and out; with a surprising irony on one occa-  
 sion he wrote instructions to his officers to this  
 effect. He often said he was a soldier, and the  
 name of Salvation Army was intended to be  
 literally interpreted as a fighting force in dis-  
 tinction from more civilian forces behind it.  
 Though spiritual campaigning, as he learnt by  
 experience, had to be followed up and supple-  
 mented by secular arms, it was by that and not  
 by the others that he was able to force society  
 to a permanent recognition of many of its worst  
 evils, and to prove, not for the first time in  
 history, that there is a remedy, if the men and  
 women are forthcoming with the necessary in-  
 sight, sympathy, and knowledge, for the lowest  
 degradations into which human nature can fall.

Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung (Berlin)

168

Nr.

Der 100. Geburtstag  
des Heilsarmeegründers

Anlässlich des 100. Geburtstages des Gründers der Heilsarmee William Booth hatte die Heilsarmee in Berlin zu drei Versammlungen eingeladen, die von Kommandeurin Mary Booth, der Enkelin des Gründers, geleitet wurden. Der Lichtbildervortrag, der am Montag die Festversammlungen einleitete, gewährte ein erfreuliches Bild über die internationale Liebestätigkeit der Heilsarmee.

Besonders ergreifend war die Veranstaltung, die am Tage darauf bei Kroll stattfand, und der unter anderem auch Oberbürgermeister Böß beiwohnte. 500 bedürftige alte Frauen und Männer waren zu einem Festessen eingeladen. Die Kommandeurin erzählte, nachdem sie ihre Gäste begrüßt hatte, welche wunderbare Nacht ihr Großvater über die Menschenherzen hatte und welch unvergeßlichen Eindruck seine Persönlichkeit auch auf sie gemacht habe. Während Heilsarmeedadettinnen in weißen Schürzen die Gäste bedienten, trugen ein gemischter Chor und ein Männerchor Lieder vor, und die Stabskapelle spielte unermüdlich. Nach 4 Uhr schloß die Feier mit einem Dankgebet, und junge Heilspfadfinder brachten die alten, gebrechlichen Leute fürsorglich zur Straßenbahn. —

Der gestrige Festversammlung im großen Tempelsaal in der Dresdner Straße hinterließ einen besonders tiefen Eindruck durch die Wärme, die sich auch dem zahlreich erschienenen Zuhörerkreis mitteilte. Auf der Estrade saßen hinter dem Bilde des Gründers die Kommandeurin und der Stab des Berliner Hauptquartiers. Dahinter reichten sich, mit weißen Schärpen geschmückt, hundert neu ausgebildete Kadetten, die an diesem Ehrentag als „Jubiläumskadetten“ ihre Bestallung erhielten. Sie werden als gutgeschulte Sozialbeamte und Beamtinnen ausgesandt, um im Dienst der Menschheit zu wirken. Frohe Begeisterung erfüllte die jungen Menschen, die von nun an als „Offiziere“ in allen Teilen Deutschlands tätig sein werden.

Stabsmusik und Gesang, Festansprachen der Kommandeurin, des Feldsekretärs Oberst Stanfowett, des Pressechefs Oberstleutnant Buse, der ergreifende Szenen aus dem Leben des alten Generals erzählte, und stimmungsvolle, künstlerisch gestellte lebende Bilder aus der Aufbauarbeit der Heilsarmee füllten den Abend aus.

E. v. H.



0 2 1 6 7 0017 BEC

The Times (London)

Nr. 46934

## GENERAL BOOTH

### MR. ST. JOHN ERVINE'S BIOGRAPHY

GOD'S SOLDIER: GENERAL WILLIAM BOOTH. By ST. JOHN ERVINE. Two volumes. (Heinemann. 36s. net.)

This is destined to be the standard Life of William Booth, and deserves to become the standard history of the Salvation Army, at any rate up to the death of the founder. It ranks, therefore, high in the scale of importance. It has been written by one who is not carried off his foundation of sound judgment by the surge of enthusiasm, yet desires with inward passion that honour should be given where honour is so richly due. The tremendous task of sorting the material for more than 1,000 pages and presenting it with a constant eye on doing justice in all directions has been a labour of love, no more, no less.

William Booth was born in 1829, and from 1843 to 1851 he was a pawnbroker's assistant. Few occupations could afford a youth a better chance to learn the real weaknesses and troubles of the poor, but no other pawnbroker has so given himself into the hands of God as to live to be revered all through the world. After a period as a Methodist minister and marriage to a selfless, fearless, invalid woman who shared his inspiration, he left the Methodists at the age of 32, on their refusal to release him for the travelling evangelistic work in which he had already proved his peculiar powers. He was always intolerant of those who withstood him; he looked on them as thwarting God's purposes—as very frequently indeed

they were. In 1865, the year when his daughter, the newly elected General, was born, he began to preach on Mile End Waste, a lone figure in the midst of as sorry a population as has ever confronted a carrier of the Gospel message. When in these modern days people question the Army's clean line between sin and salvation, its dramatic appeal, and in particular its concentration against drink, affecting even its attitude to sacraments, they do it wrong if they ignore the circumstances in which its first battles were fought in the East End of London 70 years ago. It always had shortcomings in its equipment as a religious force, and maybe it has not travelled far enough towards making them good or keeping its strategy up to date with the changing times, but it triumphed over all the Christian Churches in its success in speaking Christ to the lowliest of the low. The work of a preacher, as Catherine Booth insisted, is not to deliver the truth, but to drive it home to the heart.

It was this which carried William Booth forward from a pitch in Mile End to the days when he was received with respect and honour by statesmen and by Royalty. More important, it was this which bore the pioneers of the Army out, in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, into all the principal countries of the world, and enabled them by amazing moral courage to plant their banner firmly in lands where they arrived as foreigners and suspects. Mr. St. John Ervine would be worth reading alone for his record of the missionary journeys and for the impression which his insistence on the international quality of the Army makes.

He has written a final chapter on the events after the old General's death; and while he is under no illusion as to the need for meeting the resentment which the autocratic system of government was bound to arouse, he looks to the future with not much confidence that the difficulties have been overcome in the right way. The Army will win through, surely, if it can cherish in each generation the real spirit of William Booth, who was never more God's soldier than when he said to his son: "Bramwell, fifty years hence it will matter very little indeed how these people treated us; it will matter a great deal how we dealt with the work of God."