

(November 3, 1913.)

The Salvation Army

BY GENERAL BRAMWELL BOOTH.*

AT the first regular meeting of the Canadian Club, held on the 3rd November, 1913, General W. Bramwell Booth said, after a long burst of applause:

Mr. President,—Among the many interesting functions which my dear father attended, and of which he subsequently spoke to me with more or less pleasure or pain, his presence at the Canadian Club six years ago was one to which he frequently referred as being one of the most pleasant and gratifying experiences of his whole life. Therefore it is doubly pleasant to me to hear you refer, Mr. President, to the pleasure from your side which that visit had given you.

The fact that I am here to-day is a melancholy circumstance to me. I would so much rather, if in God's providence his life had been spared, that he had been here, and he had strong hope of living to visit you again when that misfortune fell upon him in the loss of his sight, and the operation after for cataract, which proved unsuccessful.

I am glad, however, to be here, though I am well aware, that at present, at any rate, my only claim upon your attention, and the only ground upon which you can care about seeing or hearing anything from me, is the mere fact that I have been appointed his successor. You know, when a man comes into a position as successor to his father, it is not always an advantage. I quite understand, and am not angry, if anybody should find ground for misgiving about me. One of my most intelligent and faithful men said to me, when we were all feeling great grief in our loss, speaking about my appointment, "Well, you know, General, after all, looking at it from the best point of view, you are only a makeshift." (Laughter.) I quite understood and appreciated his feeling, and my reply was, "God helping us, we will shift something!" (Applause.)

My dear father was a remarkable man. He had that faculty of associating himself with the difficulties of others

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which lies at the root, I suppose, of great benevolences, that capacity of placing himself in the other man's position, and looking at wrong and crime and vice and the neglect of God and the disparity of righteousness from the point of view which those he was studying held. It was that that helped so much in the cultivation of that whole field of sympathies which his life has called forth. It gave him the creative touch which was so valuable and has inspired not only thoughtful men, men of intelligence and means such as yourselves, but has inspired the lowest and basest types with the ambition to do something for their fellows.

I asked Sir Rider Haggard, that eminent writer whom you know, to write a book about my father's work in the Salvation Army. He replied: "I will do so on two conditions: first, that I shall only write about what I shall see." "Right you are!" said I, "you shall see everything." "Second, that you don't pay me anything for it." "Right again!" I said. (Laughter.) He spent three months investigating the work, and wrote a very clever book. When it was finished, I asked him, "Haggard, tell me what impressed you most, what single incident?" He went night and day into all manner of places, at unexpected times, and he said: "Well, a prostitute brought off the streets of Glasgow by the police, who was put into the Home there, was ready to do work for another after being three months in the institution. She had received some sort of spiritual help and light, and had been sent out on an errand." That is one of the methods adopted of showing confidence: we have no locks or bars, no one need stay an hour anywhere. "She found another woman on the streets, a young woman, and came back to the warden of the institution and told: "I saw a young girl—she could not have been more than seventeen, on the street corner; I knew what it meant, and I want her brought into the Home." The warden said that the place was full. "Then let her sleep in my bed," she replied, "and I will sleep on the landing." The warden mentioned the expense of her clothing. But the girl replied: "If you will trust me to send me out I will work extra with my needle to earn enough to pay for her clothing." The day Rider Haggard was in the institution that girl had called with the extra money she had earned, four or five pounds, with her needle, in order to pay for the clothing of that other wastrel on the streets of Glasgow. Sir Rider Haggard said to me: "It is more to me as evidence of what you are doing, a greater tribute to the power of your father's spirit, that you are able to inspire that poor street

woman with the ambition to save her sister, than if you should have moved the principalities and powers of the world." I think you will agree with me that one of the great features of the Army is that it is able to place in the hearts and minds of the people a desire, not only to help themselves, but to be of some service to their fellows in misfortune. (Applause.)

I do not know that I should occupy your time in talking about my father, the founder of the Army. I have one advantage over the former General, that when, unlike yourself, Mr. President, I am at a loss what to talk about, I can always speak about my predecessor. (Laughter.) He had a great unity with all classes, so that one of the most prominent Buddhists said to him: "General Booth, you are the reincarnation of our noblest men." That great vision and inspiration so that a Jew, once in talking with him, who knew him rather intimately, said: "You are a prophet, one of our old prophets come back again." And a Roman Bishop once said to him: "General, if you were only in the Church we should make you a Pope." (Laughter.) It was this sense of unity with all which made true also what a French agnostic, a celebrated man, said to him: "Well, General Booth, you may be an Englishman,"—he felt it was a misfortune that he was not a Frenchman, I suppose (Laughter)—"but you belong to humanity!" (Applause.)

I should like to thank the gentlemen here, who, I know, took so deep and interested a part in gathering what was necessary for the Memorial scheme to the General here in Toronto. I believe there are many here in Toronto who participated in that effort. I wish to thank you for your kindness. I think we shall raise some Memorial in almost every country. In Java some \$50,000 has been gathered and the Government has contributed in addition \$25,000 more. On the other side of the world, in Buenos Ayres, they have voted a piece of land in one of their new thoroughfares, in a boulevard which they have called after him, and have also made a grant of £5,000 towards the erection of a suitable building. And we want to do something in England and something in the United States. I mention that, thinking that you would be interested and might like to know what other men are proposing to do. (Applause.)

I think you might well conceive of the Army under the idea of "the helping hand"; and that in every department of human life there is some place which we can take in that capacity, toward individuals and with the community, whether it be municipal or national or religious; there is some place

in all in which our agencies can be of service. (Applause.) And for myself, speaking as the responsible leader of the movement, I assure you that we who are at the centre of things have no higher ambition than to be considered the helpers, without respect to creed, nationality, or race, the helpers of all. (Applause.)

I think that help will, of course, in many cases, be material in its form. We shall take the down and out, the poor, the unfortunate, and raise them by those methods which are known to you as commercial, business methods: work, opportunity, provision in some form or other of capital, using the word "capital" in its largest sense. And I think the material help we can render is one of the valuable assets which you have in the Salvation Army in a community.

And I think the help also will be of a moral and spiritual character. We say—some here will not altogether follow me—but we say, nevertheless, that man is a composite being; you cannot do well for him on one side unless you do well for him on all sides; you cannot do well for him in his body, with his business and his family, unless you also do something for him intellectually and spiritually. Thus we say about criminals: your prison system is excellent; you have many contrivances for helping those poor fellows while you are punishing them; but wonderful as this is, you cannot have complete success unless you care for their souls. That is the philosophy of our religious propaganda. Not that we are out to proselytize, or merely to build up a big society: we don't care whether we are big or little; but to be of real service, not only to be of intellectual and physical help,—the spirit which comes from material things,—but of help to character. While you look at people who are down lowest—one section of our work is among the paupers, the vicious, the criminal, of which classes you have not in Canada a very large number,—you nearly always find that while the trouble is material it is also moral. The man in the lowest position has some crook, some crack, in his character. Therefore to be really able to repair him, there must be something at least done for him which may be of moral and spiritual benefit. I am not claiming any patent for that. I do not say the Salvation Army method is unique. There is no reason to say that. We know that, and we are glad to be imitated. When my father went to visit King Edward, one of the questions His Majesty asked him was, "How do the clergy of the Church of England treat you?" The General was rather in a quandary; he did not want to criticize the clergy of the Church

of England to the King; but he thought a moment and then said, "Well, Your Majesty, they imitate me." (Laughter.) "And I am quite happy to be imitated." The King enjoyed it very much, and the General extricated himself from a little difficulty. Well, I am proud to say that anything we do is the property of all.

With regard to Canada, I am a stranger among you. I am accustomed to ridicule people who visit a country for a month or so and then attempt to criticize it. But while here may I offer one or two suggestions to you in Canada, especially in Ontario? Go ahead and keep your lead with regard to all that encourages the home life of your people. (Applause.) Now, of course, it is easy to make a general observation like that, and you may reply, "Oh, very well, but how are we to do it?" I can only say that it is up to you! But I do say, the home life of a people has more to do, believe me, with the real prosperity, the permanent prosperity, which is what you want, than any other part of its life. (Applause.) The home is the little tributary, the little rill, which runs down the mountain side to feed the great stream of the national life and you, believe me, need to give attention to all that belongs to the happiness, the brightness, the seclusion, the calm, of the true home. (Hear, hear.)

Here in Toronto, and in Ontario in general, you have the opportunity of talking it up. Don't be afraid to set the fashion in these matters! (Hear, hear.) Many of you take part in public functions, many of you are engaged in church life and church work, and some are connected with the press, that most potent pulpit of all pulpits. May I say, you can lift this question to a higher plane by insisting upon the sacredness and privacy of the home, admonishing your people that something is really accomplished for themselves and the nation when they set up and keep a happy home life. (Applause.) You have got the liquor traffic well in hand. I think you lead the world in that matter. (Applause.) I would to God that we in England could follow your steps more rapidly than seems likely at present. That is one great step towards preserving the sacredness and purity of the home.

Secondly, you recognize—there is no man within the sound of my voice who does not recognize—that moral qualities—faith, courage, unselfishness, love—are the characteristics which make enduring power in any people. Take the opportunity, so far as you can, of giving religion a real chance in your schools, because religion is the easiest way of

promoting these qualities. Put it on the low ground of finance,—perhaps I ought not to call that low ground in such an assembly as this (laughter)—but I will say, on the lower ground of finance only, the promotion of these qualities is best secured by the use of religion. Religion is the instrument, the handmaid, most likely to encourage these qualities. Use her, therefore, as a helper for your people's prosperity.

And although I suppose here, as everywhere else, the question of the extent to which religion shall be taught in the schools is a contentious one, and I would rather avoid anything of that nature, still let me speak as an individual not without some opportunity of observation and some experience of what I say: I would urge upon you to give religion a fair chance with the children. (Applause.) I don't mean merely setting up noble examples; that can be done without religion; we don't require the Bible except as a book of history to provide noble ideals for the world; there are many we would agree upon as indifferent Christians who have presented examples of noble work and noble lives. I am speaking of something more than that. It is the function of religion to open the sources of power to rise to those high ideals, and the school is the place in which it can be done with advantage to the future of the nation. I don't think there could be any difficulty if that were seen to be the end. I think it could be done without any thought of proselytizing or denominationalizing. Show the children that a noble purpose, a noble life, is obtainable only by the assistance of divine power. (Applause.)

An eminent Jew, an able and thoughtful man, a large benefactor of charities on this side of the Atlantic and on that, once said to me: "You know I have no regard for your Saviour; I don't like to hear his name mentioned; but I will say this: I taught all my children the Beatitudes before they were twelve years of age; not because I think they are the words of any divine being, but because, speaking as a Jew, I believe them to contain the highest teaching which the mind of man can conceive." (Hear, hear.)

I want one other word: materialism is a great danger to this rising nationality, this great Dominion which is yours, as it is a great danger elsewhere. Thoughtful Europe, at any rate in the last generation, has been greatly disappointed in the tremendous strides which materialism has made in your neighbor, the United States. It has been a disappointment to the reflecting, thoughtful, literary and religious Europe, that things have taken that turn across the border. Now,

beware! (Hear, hear.) The twentieth century is Canada's; you are the coming people: be on your guard; don't set too high a value on merely getting on! Dollars are very, very important, and I am very short of them (laughter) but don't set them too high. Put in your own minds, before your own children and your own clerks, on your 'Change, in your stock markets, in your own counting houses, a place for the higher things. And remember,—allow me to put it so,—a high standard is one of the greatest riches that can be possessed by any people. (Hear, hear, and applause.) Here in Ontario you have the opportunity of raising that standard for all Canada. God give you not only the opportunity but the grace and the courage to use it—if not in His name,—in His name if possible,—but if not in His name then in the name of the advancement and prosperity of what is going to be a mighty nation. God bless you! (Long applause.)
