

The  
William Booth  
Collection

## SALVATION FOR BOTH WORLDS

January, 1889

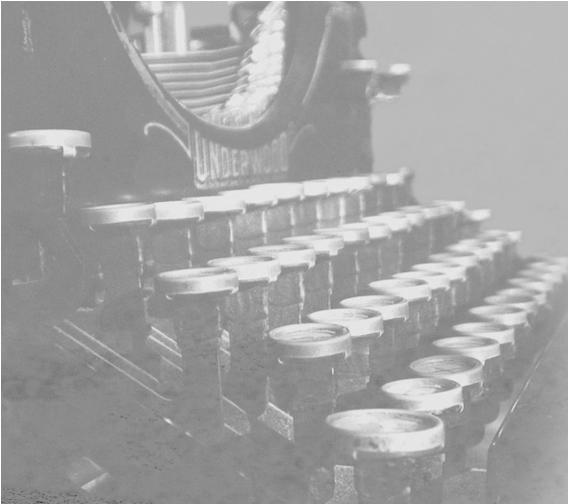
It is now nearly forty-four years since I started to serve God. I was very young at the time, and really had very little practical help in the way of teaching on the subject, and sometimes it seems to me a little remarkable that my religious life should have shaped itself in those boyhood days very much on the same principles, and have worked itself out substantially after the fashion in which it has been developed ever since.

At the very onset, I felt that I ought not only to cease doing the things that were displeasing to God and to embrace with gratitude all the beauty and blessedness which He offered to bring into my own heart and life, but that I ought to devote myself with all my powers and all my might, to that course of action which would be most likely to advance His honor and carry out His wishes on the earth.

The doing of this, I soon saw, included something beyond a belief in the doctrines of the Bible or the offering of repeated acts of worship and praise, important as these might be, even the giving up of myself to advance to the uttermost of my ability the highest interests of my fellow-men.

The very first article in my creed, which I held with all the certainty of a direct revelation from heaven, was a belief in the sacrificing love of Christ to men, love which impelled Him continually to seek their welfare. And my new-born love to that same Saviour urged me continually to seek the fulfillment of His will with respect to the men and women around me. This love had taken the place of the selfishness of former days, creating within me a continued pity and an indescribable yearning for the welfare of those for whom a short time back I only cared so far as they seemed capable of yielding me earthly pleasure or gain.

The manner in which I could best render this service to man did not seem to require a single question: it was there, right before my eyes, as plainly as it could be. Everywhere I beheld him engaged in red-handed rebellion against God, and consequently exposed to His wrath and its awful results. The Bible and my own observation concurred in showing me that the highest service I could render to man, was to rescue him from this position of antagonism to the Divine Government.



The  
William Booth  
Collection

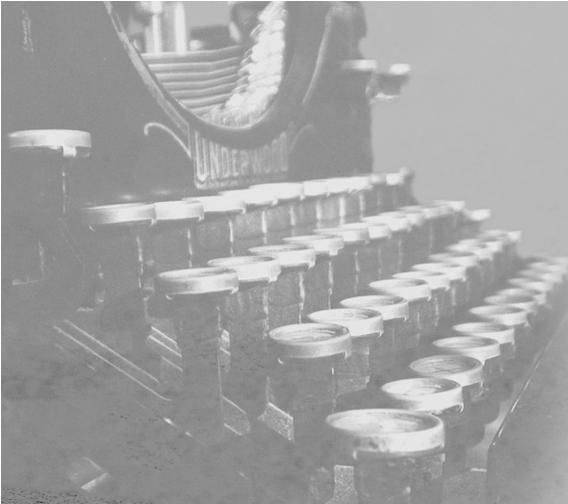
## SALVATION FOR BOTH WORLDS

Alongside this aspect of his condition, any temporal modification of his lot appeared trivial – nay, almost contemptible. What were any of the sorrows of earth when compared with everlasting damnation – let men interpret that terrible doom however they would? And what were any of the joys of time when contrasted with the felicities which endure forever? Thus the desire to persuade men to be reconciled to God became henceforth the main propelling purpose of my life.

I felt like a man on a rock-bound coast strewn with wrecks on which the struggling mariners, unless rescued from the shore, were certain to go down beneath the raging surf. Their temporary comfort or discomfort was as nothing compared with the business of their rescue. To get them safe on to the beach was the first matter which absorbed all the powers of my being, and I do not know that I have since seen reason to modify in any way this view of the necessities of man and the highest service that can be rendered him.

But as time wore on, the earthly miseries connected with the condition of the people, began to force themselves more particularly on my notice. In the town in which I lived I saw men walking about, wan and worn with hunger. I saw others wallowing in drunkenness, vice and other abominations, which reduced them below the level of the beasts of the field. I saw poor women and children compelled to live in hovels of the most wretched squalor and filth, from which light and air were all but excluded. I saw the people dying prematurely of disease from the want of food and attention. I knew that thousands of young women were being sacrificed to the gratification of the lusts of men who bought and sold them, body and soul, for the most paltry prices; and, worst of all – most agonizing of all – I saw the indifference of those who had the means to help, or I heard those whose place it was to deliver the poor, plead their powerlessness to change this state of things; nay, even heard them say that there was no remedy, or, at least, no remedy on any scale at all adequate to the length and breadth and depth and height of these horrible evils.

I knew also that over all this misery, there were unjust laws that seemed to favor the perpetuation of the calamitous circumstances that pressed so heavily on the wretched multitudes, and as I looked, my heart yearned over the sorrowful crowds; the brightness of my early days was clouded by the presence of these miseries; I longed



The  
William Booth  
Collection

## SALVATION FOR BOTH WORLDS

intensely to lend a hand to deliver the perishing; and should have been quite willing to have given myself up – boy as I was – to a life of hardship, if thereby I could have relieved or removed some of these woes that darkened the earthly lot of the children of my people. But at the onset, I saw no remedy, and I said to myself, “If we cannot save them for time, we will save them for eternity!” The very thought that there was no lightening of their lot in time, quickened and stimulated me in seeking to brighten their condition in eternity.

But as I came to look more closely into things, and gathered more experience of the ways of God to man, I discovered that the miseries from which I sought to save man in the next world were substantially the same as those from which I everywhere found him suffering in this, and that they proceeded from the same cause – that is, from his alienation from, and his rebellion against God, and from his own disordered dispositions and appetites.

I saw that these made his outward hell – the hell of poverty, drunkenness, debauchery, crime, slavery, war and every other form of outward misery.

I perceived, also, that these things produced the inward hell of ungoverned lust, passion, jealousy, envy, pride and guilt and the fear and death and judgment, and that from them would spring all the deeper hells in the coming world, which would have added to them the wrath of God, the loss of hope, and the companionship of friends.

But with this discovery, there also came another, which has been growing and growing in clearness and intensity from that hour to this; which was that I had two gospels of deliverance to preach – one for each world, or rather, one gospel which applied alike to both. I saw that when the Bible said, “He that believeth shall be saved,” it meant not only from the miseries of this also. That it came with the promise of salvation here and now; from hell and sin and vice and crime and idleness and extravagance, and consequently very largely from poverty and disease, and the majority of kindred woes.

## SALVATION FOR BOTH WORLDS

Now I shouted, "I have found a remedy indeed!" Now I saw that this was the work that Jesus Christ came to accomplish – that He was manifested to dispossess all these fiends of evil for the souls of men, to destroy the works of the devil in the present time, and to set up in the soul the kingdom of heaven instead.

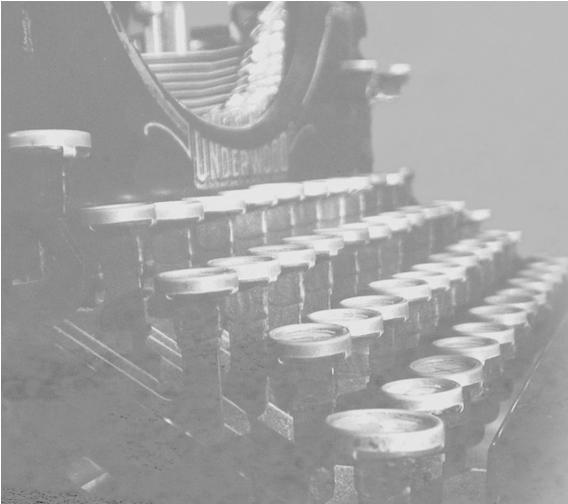
And I said to myself, and I have been saying to others ever since, "Christ is the Deliverer for time as truly as for eternity. He is the Joshua who leads men in our own day out of the wilderness into the promised land, as His forerunner did the Children of Israel thousands of yours ago. He is the Messiah Who brings glad tidings! He is come to open the prison doors. He is come to set men free from their bonds. He is indeed the Saviour of the world! Men can have liberty, gladness here now through Him, and I will consecrate my life to persuade them to apply to Him for the deliverance that He came to bring."

This has been my life's business, and I want in this paper candidly to inquire how far I have succeeded in it. I will leave out the question of eternity entirely, and suppose that my sole object had been to deliver man from the evils that afflict him in this world only – evils physical, mental, social, political, evils of every other kind, and ask whether or no I could have invested the little capital of time, and capacity of which I found myself possessed forty-four years ago, in any way which would have been likely to produce a large return of earthly happiness and well-being to mankind.

Do my readers think that when a boy, making a plan for my life, or rather yielding myself up to the grip and guidance of that Almighty hand which had made a plan for me, that I could have taken any course or followed out any scheme for the service of man more likely to have helped him in his struggle with the evils with which he is afflicted?

First. – To begin with, there was the poverty.

This oppressed me at that time more than anything else. Suppose that I had set my heart on assisting the starving, hungry crowds, and, in order to accomplish it, had gone to work to reform the laws which seemed to me to press so hardly upon them; to reduce taxation; to increase the opportunities of the wage-earning class to help



The  
William Booth  
Collection

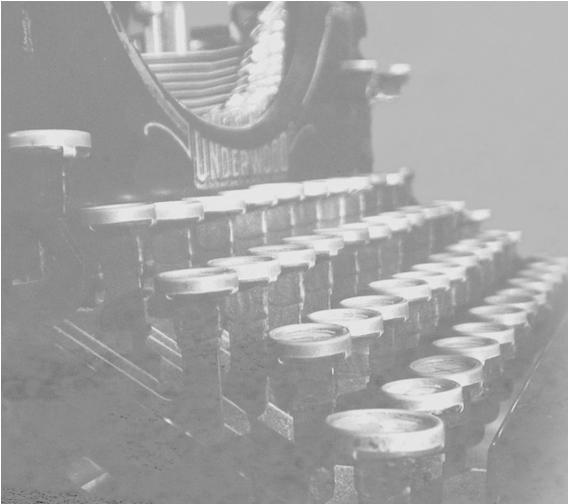
## SALVATION FOR BOTH WORLDS

themselves; to invent new forms of employment, or by various plans to increase their ability to earn money. Supposing I had given myself up to this, and thus expended these forty-four years in the struggle, does anyone, acquainted with the main causes of poverty, think that through any alterations in the laws, or by any other success that might have attended my efforts, anything like the number of poor people would have been benefited, or to anything like the extent which has been the case as the result of what we have been enabled to do in this Army for the salvation of the people?

Supposing I had set to work to make money in order to bestow it on the poor, and that I had succeeded beyond what could have been expected in amassing wealth, what would the scattering of a few thousands of pounds have been compared with the hundreds of thousands that the people have earned for themselves or saved from the public houses and the gambling hells, as the result of their regenerated characters, and of those habits of sobriety, industry and economy which flow from salvation?

Second. – Or suppose I had started upon the track of Social Reform – in which I don't know that I should have succeeded any better than those around me, but supposing that I had achieved, a remarkable success in this direction, the beneficial results to the poor people must necessarily have been immensely behind what has been accomplished in connection with the changes which have resulted from Salvation Work, whereby multitudes upon multitudes have transported themselves from slums, attics, garrets and cellars to comfortable cottages and dwellings, while in numberless instances they have advanced their families to respectable and influential social positions.

Third. – Supposing that my heart had been specially drawn out in sympathy with the joylessness and slavery of the lives of the poor, and that I had spent my years in working at the different methods which are set forth as likely to shorten the hours of toil and to cheer and elevate their existence. Had I consecrated the forty-four years of my life to this very laudable task, there is no doubt that some beneficial results would have followed. But such alleviation as I could have accomplished by any human means would not be worth mentioning beside the marvelous results which have been brought about by this Salvation Army Reform. Not only have multitudes been able to



The  
William Booth  
Collection

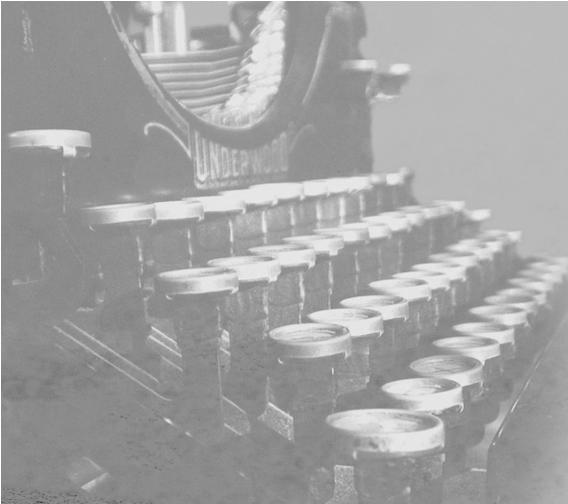
## SALVATION FOR BOTH WORLDS

change the grinding form of slavery for employment more reasonable and congenial, but their whole lives, at work and in their dwellings, have been brightened as with the atmosphere of heaven.

In thousands of homes where once nothing was known but cursing, quarrelling and misery, there is now the spirit of contentment and song of praise and gladness; while tens of thousands of individuals literally sing their way through all the hardship, persecution and difficulty they are called to endure in seeking to rescue their fellows from the abyss out of which they themselves have been lifted by the glorious salvation of the cross.

Fourth. – Suppose that, out of pity for the poor who suffer from disease, I had embarked in the study and profession of a physician, and suppose that I had prospered in this profession far beyond an average practitioner, what success could I possibly have accomplished in the removal and prevention of disease compared with what has been wrought through this wonderful movement? If cleanliness and clothing and warmth and abstinence from intoxicants and narcotics together with the practice of morality and the use of nourishing food with kindness, tender nursing, happiness and love not only prevent disease, but go far in the majority of cases in effecting its cure, then what multitudes of precious children and fathers and mothers are hale and hearty today, and likely to continue so, who but for The Salvation Army would now be pining in hospitals or suffering on sick beds or lying cold and stark in the dark and cheerless grave!

Fifth. – Suppose that, lured by the fascinating claims of the poor drunkard, I had thrown myself in his behalf into any or all of the various temperance reformation enterprises. Could I have hoped to deliver as many hundreds from the chains of the drink fiend, as, through my instrumentality, The Salvation Army has been enabled to deliver thousands? Or could I have ever dreamed, in the most sanguine moments of youth, of being able to make any infinitesimal proportion of the number of abstainers that this movement has produced? Could I have hoped to create any small portion of enlightened public opinion on the subject, or to have created any amount of the execration of the drink traffic and abhorrence of it as a fortune-making business that I have been enabled to bring about? I think not. I am sure not.



The  
William Booth  
Collection

## SALVATION FOR BOTH WORLDS

Never before has there been a people who can and do stand up in their tens of thousands, girdling the very globe and saying "This intoxicating cup is the devil and leads to hell; and we will neither touch nor taste nor handle the poisonous liquid nor have any fellowship with those who fatten on the woes and miseries of mankind by its sale or manufacture. Before high heaven we wash our hands of it!"

This is the stand that is taken against the drink by the Army. Could I have hoped by any human means of argument or agitation or legislation to have raised up such a cloud of witnesses, such a host of warriors, who every day, by the most practical methods fight this demon? I think not.

Sixth. – Supposing that my heart had been drawn out on behalf of the criminal population which I was told were scattered all over this highly civilized country – say for instance, the multitudes of men and women who obtain their livelihood as thieves, who were bred and fed and maintained for robbery and wrong.

There they were, and there, alas! They are today. Commercial thieves, society thieves, religious thieves, thieves secret and thieves avowed, thieves of all sorts and conditions. Now, supposing I had undertaken some sort of special crusade on the behalf of this miserable class, and had spent my life in making them honest by setting forth the advantages thereof and by other human methods!

Will any one who has had any experience in dealing with this class, and who, not being a rogue himself, will honestly speak the truth; will such an one tell me about this criminal reforming business, whether they think that I could by any coaxing, bribing, watching, re-startings in life or any other human devices, have been as successful in making scoundrels by profession into honest citizens, as I have been by the plan that I have followed? I am sure he will not.

Seventh. – Then there is the Social Evil, which has long been alike an employment and a perplexity to the Moral Reformers.

## SALVATION FOR BOTH WORLDS

It interested me at the onset of my religious reforming career, when I had but comparatively little knowledge of it. Still I knew it was there, like a black ocean largely veiled from view; but soon this veil was lifted, and it excited a serious interest in my soul.

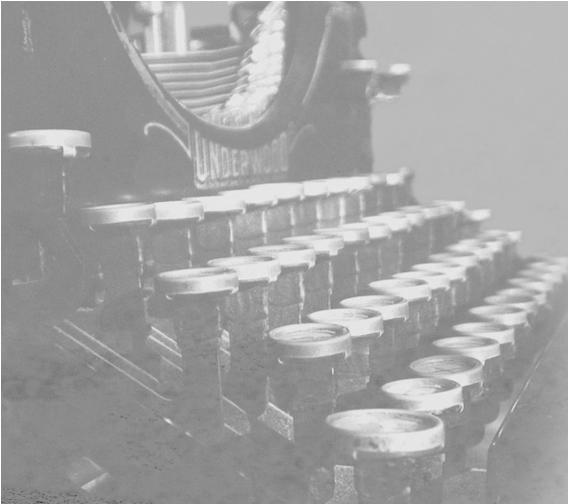
Suppose that in those early days I had gone for the rescue business and had sought to accomplish it by the use of human methods, influences and energies only, is it probable, nay, is it possible that during these years of my life of which I am speaking, that I could have done a tithe of the reform of my adulterous, unclean fellow-men, or for the deliverance of my poor, lost, desolate sisters, that by the grace of God I have been privileged to realise by the salvation methods which I have been permitted, though imperfectly, to work out.

I give only one illustration: –

During the last twelve months, the British Rescue Society alone of The Salvation Army has taken into our Homes of Love from out of the darkness, abominations and desolations of the streets, one thousand, poor, fallen girls, and have, by the power of God, set them on their feet, and sent them to their mothers and fathers, or out to situations, fortified for walking in the paths of virtue, not only by human resolutions and considerations, but in most cases strengthened by a sense of the presence with them of a protecting Saviour, and the consciousness of His pardoning and sanctifying grace.

Eighth. – Once more. There is the evil of unjust laws, about which there has been a great babel of talking and conflict ever since I can remember. My native town was an intensely political place, for party-feeling ran much higher when I was a boy, I fancy, than it does now.

Political voices were heard almost all the year around, day and night. There was the conservative party crying out, "This is the way to a heaven on earth for the human race;" and then came the Liberal party, which outdid it in shrieking the same panacea for universal well-being; and then came the Radical party, which, in activity, ingenuity and strength of lungs, outdid the other two in making the same announcement.



The  
William Booth  
Collection

## SALVATION FOR BOTH WORLDS

Now supposing that I had taken up my parable, and, addressing the poor world in which I was so deeply interested, had said, "Oh! My poor fellow man, I see you struggling in this abyss of agony; I see all the evils which prey upon you – your poverty, your hard ill-requited toil, the wretched hovels in which you live, the sad and clouded existence you are compelled to endure, the crime, the uncleanness, the blasphemies, the unbridled passions, the diseases, the doubtings, the deaths that are bred amongst you – bred very largely without your choice, and without your power to destroy. My heart will give my life for you; all my days and strength shall be spent in delivering you, in making you glad, and I will accomplish the task by political agitation; I will regenerate you by human government; I will make you happy by Acts of Parliament!"

Supposing this had been my plan, supposing that I had intended it all and spent my forty-four years in endeavoring to work it out, what would have been the result?

Does any reader of these lines think that by such a course of action I should have attained a success in any way approximate to that with which God has been pleased to favor me on the lines on which I have travelled?

Whether I had fought on Conservative, or Liberal, or Radical, or Home Rule, or Unionist lines, or on those of any other class of politicians, if the well-being of the people is really the end of Government does any one who is at all familiar with the results that have followed the operations of The Salvation Army for a moment think I should have accomplished more – should have been the author of real happiness to a greater number of the race than God has helped me to be in the track that I have followed?

And still further, is it at all probable that I should have been able to exercise a tithe of the influence for good on the law-makers and the governments of men which I have been able to do in the past, and which my followers will be able to do in the coming future?

## SALVATION FOR BOTH WORLDS

But going back, or rather going over again what I have already said by way of review, if my readers will have patience with me, let me remind them of something that is very important for coming to a right conclusion of the whole matter.

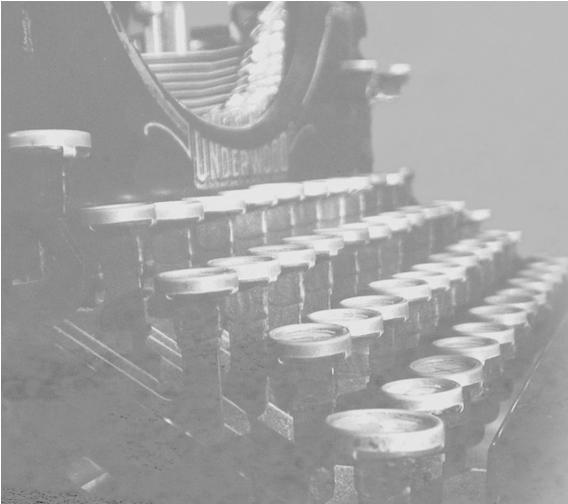
Supposing I could have produced by merely human efforts the material, earthly well-being aimed at; if I could have removed the heavy burdens of the poor; if I could have increased their wages three-fold; if I could have transferred them to comfortable dwellings; if the sick could have been healed, or their diseases prevented; if the drunken could on any large scale have been made sober – would these things necessarily have brought happiness to the people? Does misery only dwell with the poor, the sick, the harlot and the drunkard?

I think not – nay I am sure not.

Moreover, may not all these outside evils be taken away and still leave the heart a prey to cankering cares, jealousies, envyings, strifes, lusts, bitterness, hatreds, revengeful tempers and the like, which, together or apart, are the authors of nearly all the miseries of men, making life an intolerable burden though passed in gilded chambers, on the couches of ease, or in the possession of health and wealth and all else that earth can give or human power create?

Therefore, it follows, I think – nay! I am sure – that my plan for removing misery in this world – the plan to which the Spirit of God led me forty-four years ago, and in the working out of which He has sustained me ever since – has gone much deeper than any human methods could possibly have done, not only dealing with results, but healing the festering disease itself, and opening in the soul an ever-flowing fountain of gladness, which, while it sustains the spirit in the endurance of the afflictions and hardships that remain, transmutes them into sources of blessing, both for this life and the life to come.

In reply it may be said that all the remarkable things referred to in the foregoing paper have resulted from that particular form of organization into which my efforts have, with the Divine Blessing, shaped themselves rather than from any individual labor which I have been enabled to put forth.



The  
*William Booth*  
Collection

---

## SALVATION FOR BOTH WORLDS

---

Exactly so. That, dear reader, is precisely what I wish you to understand. I say with Peter, "Look not on me, as though by my own power or holiness I have done these things. The God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob – the God of our Fathers hath glorified His son Jesus Christ" in this fragment of my history. And therefore it is open to all those who may desire it to choose for themselves the same path, and to thereby realise at least a measure of the same result for the perishing world around them.