



# The *H. Mann will Booth* Collection

## CHAPTER XI

### AN EARLY BENEFACTOR

The name of Samuel Morley is now little remembered, except in the Founder's own city of Nottingham, where there is a statue of him, and in the little village of Leigh, in Kent, where he spent his last years. But a few recollections of one who united the business genius of a man of this world with the piety and benevolence of a man of the other will not be out of place, because they bear upon a matter which has been the subject of great — and not always kind — curiosity and also of misrepresentation — namely, how the Founder obtained his personal support in the early days of our movement.

When William Booth entered upon his work in the East End of London he had no personal income. His separation from his Church had involved separation from his friends, most of whom, indeed, thought his abandonment of a secure position to be little short of madness, and showed small disposition to help him. In the first year or so of the new undertaking which was to lead to the Salvation Army, he spoke to one or two good men whose acquaintance he had recently made; but, beyond a few casual gifts, they threw no light on the problem. With great single-mindedness he was resolved not to receive anything for himself from the funds which he hoped to raise for his organization, and this resolve he kept. Not a penny did he receive from Army Funds.

At this juncture there appeared on the scene the man whose association with Nottingham had first brought the Founder to his notice. Samuel Morley was the head of the textile firm of J. & R. Morley, of London and Nottingham, a Congregationalist, and a man of wide sympathies. He heard of the work down at Whitechapel, sent for the Founder, and inquired very kindly about the new enterprise, spoke of the discouragements likely to arise in such work, and discussed some of the measures already being tried. In concluding the conversation, practical business man that he was, he asked about ways and means, and said at once that a certain sum ought to be raised for the support of the Founder and his family, promising there and then to give a



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generous proportion of the total. In this way an important step was taken towards freeing the Founder from anxiety. Among other contributors — usually of small amounts — to this fund I find such varied names as John and Richard Cory, of Cardiff, Martin Hope Sutton, of Reading, W. Shepherd Allen, M.P. for Cheadle, Dr. J. B. Paton, of Alloa, John Melrose, of Edinburgh, and Lord Radstock. Samuel Morley continued his help in this direction for some years, until, in fact, it was no longer needed. A friend who had been a hearty supporter of the Mission from its earliest days, settled upon the Founder and Mrs. Booth the sum of £5,000, placing it in the hands of trustees, who remained always among the intimate friends of our work. The income derived under this settlement, together with the profits on the sale of his books, sufficed for the Founder's needs, though, of course, it never placed him in anything like the affluent circumstances which he was supposed in some quarters to enjoy.

Samuel Morley also gave liberally to the various funds which we raised. Up to that time he was probably the one really wealthy man in England who used his riches on any settled plan for the furtherance of religious work. While his principal gifts were made to help forward the cause of Independency, or Congregationalism as it is better known, to which he was deeply attached, he gave largely to other causes also, and indeed his name became associated with many aspects of benevolence.

My own first personal touch with him was in connexion with a meeting we wished him to attend. I followed him one afternoon from his City offices in Wood Street, Cheapside, to the House of Commons. He was a Member of the House for some years, at first for Nottingham, and later for Bristol, and he was an influential Member, in the personal rather than the political sense. He had a very real influence for good on Mr. Gladstone, whose devoted follower he always was. At the House on this occasion we had some friendly chat, during which he asked about the extensions of the work then going on, inquiring particularly after some of the converts of whom he had heard. After a while he took me with him into the Inner Lobby — this was before the days of the Parnellites — and I well remember how he sprung a surprise on me there. The Lobby was, indeed it is, rather a gloomy place, and going into one of the recesses which seemed more gloomy still, Mr. Morley produced his purse, and, with an austerity of manner which he often could assume,



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he took out a small white ticket, rather larger than a railway ticket, on which was printed, under The Army heading, in bold letters:

ADMIT ONE TO ALL NIGHT WITH JESUS  
MERTHYR TYDVIL  
(date)

“What,” he asked me in his most serious tone, “can you possibly mean by such a proceeding? Do you not see that such expressions are, if not blasphemous, dangerously near it? How can I support a movement which makes such improper, such absurd announcements?” And then, with great emphasis: “All night with Jesus! Shocking!” And he paused.

I took up the challenge at once, and I completely disarmed him. First of all, I said that I had been present as the leader of that very meeting, and that if he would spare me the time I would tell him just what happened during the “all night.” I told him of the kind of people who came after their day's work—chiefly miners and their wives of the addresses that were delivered, of the wonderful singing, of the earnest, persevering prayer and seeking after God, of some of the confessions that were made, of reconciliations which took place, of scenes at the penitent form, of the surrender of such small but significant things as pipes and tobacco pouches and women's finery, of the offering of lives then and there for service with The Army. I pointed out also that for prayer in the night we had the example of our Lord Himself and His Apostles, and that the fact of these hard-working men and women forgoing their rest in order to seek after God was no small evidence of the reality of the work which Jesus Christ had accomplished in them.

Mr. Morley listened most attentively, and when I had finished that peculiar stiffness had gone out of his neck - he could hold his head very high when he pleased and there was a great tenderness in his expression. He did not speak for a few moments, but in the silence he carefully replaced the little ticket in his purse, and taking my hand, he said, “I am very glad I saw you. Give my kind regards to your father. Tell him I shall come to the meeting.”



# The H. Morley Booth Collection

Another way in which Mr. Morley came to our help was in connexion with Exeter Hall. When we first applied for the use of the Hall, of which the London Y.M.C.A. had lately come into possession, it was refused. Various reasons were given; fear of damage from riot, fear of injury to the Y.M.C.A.'s reputation from any connexion with the Salvation Army, doubts as to the "teaching" we should advance, and so forth. The secretary, Mr. Hind Smith, was personally very smooth and polite, "but it would not be wise, you know." We fell back on the trustees, of whom Morley was one. He and T. A. Denny had been large contributors to the fund which purchased the property. I met him at the Hall with Mr. Hind Smith. He heard what we had to say, and although he showed the testiness and querulousness which was sometimes a habit with him, he concluded that the Hall might be let to us. His attitude that day settled for good and all the question of future lettings, and it was at Exeter Hall that some of the greatest Army demonstrations took place. The opening to us of the doors of Exeter Hall — which was not only an auditorium but a symbol — opened the doors of many public buildings throughout the country which had hitherto been closed to us. Railton's comment on all such happenings was, "Each victory will help us some other to win," and in this matter it certainly was so. But Morley's manner seemed to say, "I have grave doubts about Booth; I do not like his doings nor his people, but we had better not refuse him lest haply we be found to go against God." I was, of course, careful in my speech, and took his austere manner with due meekness, content because I was winning my plea!

One result of the "Maiden Tribute" agitation, and the Government prosecution which followed it, was a large extension of our work for unhappy women, and for such work money was needed. My mother went to see Mr. Morley only a few months before he died, and laid our plans before him. He had not cared for some of the methods adopted in our investigation, and he said so privately and in public, but, like all decent Englishmen, he was angry that the law had for so long been weak, and the police so helpless, and thankful that by any means they were now strengthened. He was very warm with Mrs. Booth, and at once promised her £1,000. She thanked him, but said that she was sure he would not regret making his gift larger, and that if he could do so it would influence others. He smiled, and promptly doubled the sum. It was, as it turned out, his last considerable gift to us, and a very fruitful gift it proved in every way.



# The H. Mannell Brookh. Collection

The last time I saw him was in his town house at Brook Street. He was very kind that morning — for his sympathies broadened and his manner softened in old age — and he discussed with me in an intimate and serious way the results, then becoming evident, of the Education Act of 1870, in the passing of which he had been greatly concerned. I remember well his expression of disappointment that the good effects of the compromise on religious education which went by the name of the Cowper-Temple Scheme had not been greater. I was more hopeful than he was; perhaps more hopeful than I am today.

Our friend, the late Dr. Harry Greenwood, a London barrister, who wrote a telling pamphlet criticizing the critics of the Founder's social scheme — a pamphlet which did no end of good — told me a humorous story connected with the death of Samuel Morley. I think it is a true story, though I must admit that Greenwood, who was a Churchman, disliked certain types of religious irregulars. The story was that at a certain gathering of Plymouth Brethren on the day of Morley's death, the leader of the meeting said in his opening prayer, "Lord, Thou wilt have seen in the evening papers that Thy dear servant, Samuel Morley, has been taken from us. We pray Thee comfort his family in their affliction." It is no small tribute to Samuel Morley to say that no one would have enjoyed that story better than himself.