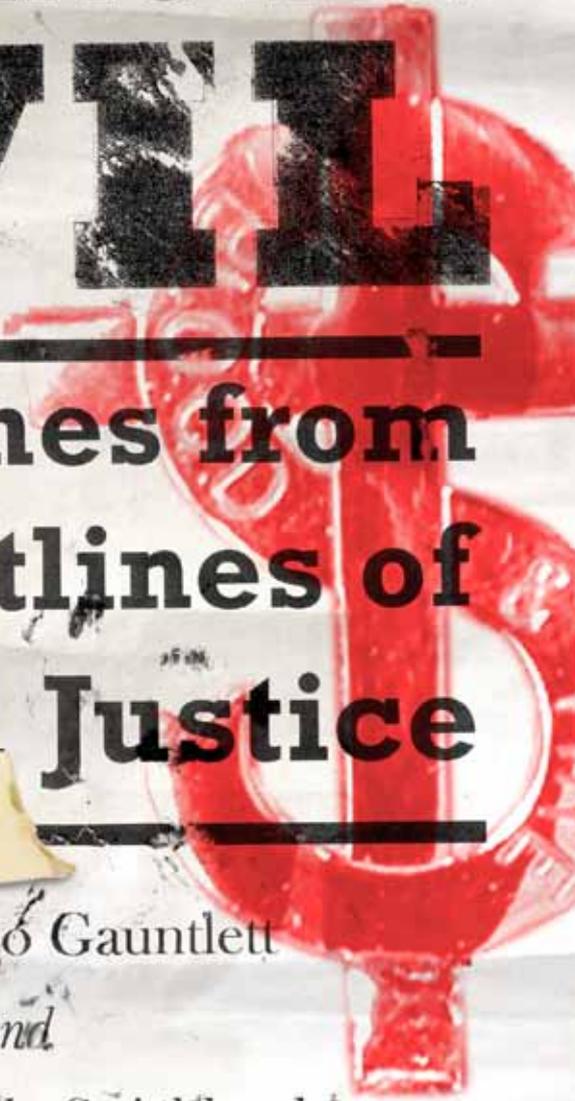


CHALLENGING EVIL



Dispatches from
the frontlines of
Radical Justice

**with Chapter
Discussion Guides**

S. Carvosso Gauntlett

and

Cpt. Danielle Strickland



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INTRODUCTION

I was born into a Salvation Army family. Both my parents were ‘rescued’ by The Salvation Army from poverty and exploitation as young kids. Their salvation meant that my life was a very different experience from theirs. It meant ‘redemption and lift’. Because of that intervention, I wasn’t raised in poverty, I have no memory of a want that left me empty, or a hopeless word. There was a new future and a new hope in our family that extended to me.

Multiply this by generations and you have a glimpse of the living history of The Salvation Army. These are the effects of the transforming power of Salvation; not only for one person, but for generations of families, communities, villages, and nations. The ‘boundless’ message of Salvation is that God’s kingdom of hope and new life has come and is coming still. Hopeless, dark, horrible places can be changed by Good News. Salvationists agree with their lives. From our history to the current daily struggle in the streets, our experience is that the message of justice is for today.

The efforts of the early campaigns outlined in this book are as relevant today as ever. I dusted off an old copy and read every story with wide-eyed wonder as our history emerged with contemporary importance. The fight for social justice is increasing in intensity around the globe. Every issue covered in this small book suggests a current application. I believe God is breathing social justice energy into the current day

Salvation Army and this book can be a catalyst for action.

In some instances, redemption and lift separates from roots and calling. Many movements with incredibly rich historical realities become comfortable with the status quo. But I believe God is restoring The Salvation Army as a force against evil and sending us to be bearers of good news by confronting injustice in our day.

Please read this book for inspiration - not the kind of inspiration that allows us to sit around patting each other on the back for what we have done in 'our' history, but the sort that ignites a fire of discontent with the status quo; a sort that lets the early pioneers set the pace for social reform and emblazes us to catch up and finish the good work they started. Human trafficking, unjust trade practises, child labour and exploitation, vulnerable people groups, women and children's rights and prison reform remain current evils in today's world. Where are we? Where are you?

William Booth went out with fighting words; "While women weep, as they do now, I'll fight; while children go hungry, as they do now I'll fight; while men go to prison, in and out, in and out, as they do now, I'll fight; while there is a drunkard left, while there is a poor lost girl upon the streets, while there remains one dark soul without the light of God, I'll fight, I'll fight to the very end!"

We are called to continue the fight, not just in rhetoric but in reality. Here's believing that these stories, along with the contemporary application and discussion guides, will fill you with hope for this generation to hold the standard and extend the fight against social evils. As Jesus' taught us to pray, "God's Kingdom come, God's will be done. On earth, as it is in heaven."

Cpt Danielle Strickland
Director Social Justice Unit
The Salvation Army

FOREWORD

GENERAL GEORGE CARPENTER

SOCIAL reformers and statesmen of many lands have paid tribute to The Salvation Army's great influence on social legislation during the past fifty years or more. This modest volume places on record some of the outstanding and more spectacular attacks The Army has made on conditions which degraded men and women materially or morally.

Though William Booth and his early helpers had undertaken social work-from the provision of cheap food and shelter for the poor to the care of discharged prisoners and fallen women-long before 1890, *In Darkest England and the Way Out*, published at the end of that year, is the classic charter of The Salvation Army's vast and almost infinitely varied social operations all over the world.

Of that notable survey and the great redemptive scheme the book outlines, something is said in the following

. pages. It is worth emphasizing, however, that William Booth was by no means opposed to, in fact welcomed, the plans for social improvement based on Education, Trade Unions, Co-operation, Socialism and so on;

in fact, almost anything short of *violent* revolution.

But Utopia was too remote for the Founder of The Salvation Army. He wished to provide 'a present help for the actual need.' He declared that the need demanded a scheme immediately practicable; on a scale commensurate with the evil to be dealt with; permanent; not seriously interfering with the just rights of any other class of the community, nor injuring, indirectly, the persons it sought to benefit.

To change the nature of the individual (he wrote), to get at the heart, to save his soul is the only real, lasting method of doing him any good. In many modern schemes of social regeneration it is forgotten that 'it takes a soul to move a body, e'en to a cleaner sty,' and, at the risk of being misunderstood and misrepresented, I must assert in the most unqualified way that it is primarily and mainly for the sake of saving the soul that I seek the salvation of the body.

But what is the use of preaching the Gospel to men whose whole attention is concentrated upon a mad, desperate struggle to keep themselves alive? You might as well give a tract to a shipwrecked sailor who is battling with the surf which has drowned his comrades and threatens to drown him. He will not listen to you. Nay, he *cannot* hear you, any more than a man whose head is under water can listen to a sermon. The first thing to do is to get him at least a footing on firm ground, and to give him room to live. Then you may have a chance. At present you have none. And you will have all the better opportunity to find a way to his heart, if he comes to know that it was you who pulled him out of the horrible pit and the miry clay in which he was sinking to perdition.

Most of the 'challenges' described in these pages sought to change conditions beyond the control of their unfortunate victims; yet even then the final triumph was won when these were not only delivered from outward thralldom, but helped to gain the supernatural power offered them in Jesus Christ.

Actually, every proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is a challenge to social and every other kind of evil. Every time a group of Salvationists lift up their voices at a street corner, they contribute something to the betterment of the world. Their very witness is a rebuke to all whose evil-doing harms themselves and others, as well as an invitation to find personal and social Salvation in the One who, by dying on the Cross and rising from the tomb, most effectively conquered the powers of evil.

1

BRITAIN'S 'MAIDEN TRIBUTE'

FROM time to time newspapers carry a paragraph headed, say, BRITAIN'S YOUNGEST BRIDE, conveying the news that a girl has been married on her sixteenth birthday.

Sixteen is, in all truth, early enough for any girl to enter upon so important an undertaking. But it is due to The Salvation Army, and one of the ablest and staunchest friends it has had, that under British law no girl can marry *before* she is sixteen years of age, and that special legal protection is extended to those who have not reached that age.

Behind that fact lies a story which forms a dramatic chapter in Britain's social history and in the records of The Army.

To begin right at the beginning would take us back too far; but one cannot write of The Army's part without referring to one of the noblest and most heroic of Englishwomen, Josephine Butler. Wife of a scholarly Anglican clergyman, Mrs. Butler had - in defiance of every convention of her time, and in the face of almost incredibly vile and brutal opposition - for years carried on a vigorous crusade for a change

of laws which were grossly unfair to women. The whole long story is far from creditable to the public and the leaders of Britain; but all the more gloriously shine the example and ultimate victory of this gracious lady and her band of helpers.

When, in the early eighteen-eighties, The Salvation Army began its battle on behalf of the younger section of the country's womanhood, Mrs. Josephine Butler wrote to Mrs. Bramwell Booth - the pioneer leader of The Army's Social Work for women - that she regarded as 'an approaching answer to many prayers' The Army's 'assault against the most hideous stronghold of Satan, against which God twenty years ago led me to make war.'

This fact (she continued) makes me once more breathe freely ... for I have often feared the work would go back. I and my old trusted workers ... are dying out, and our enemies know it and are watching their opportunity ...

Nothing but a mighty spiritual power permeating a well-considered, wisely organized scheme will prevail against this passion in men to subdue armies of women for the service of lust; and in The Salvation Army is that wonderful spiritual power.

At the time when Mrs. Bramwell Booth - then only twenty three years of age - first met Mrs. Butler, she had already gained a terrifying insight into the moral evil which the older woman knew so well.

Now and again, already in Christian Mission¹ days, a girl from the streets had come to the Penitent Form, and some kindly sister had taken her home for the night. A Mrs. Cottrill, Converts' Sergeant of the Whitechapel Corps, gave up a room to such girls.

After several moves and extensions, a first small Rescue Home was opened, and in six months no fewer than eighty four girls had been received in the small cottage in Hanbury Street, London, E.

It was while speaking to these girls that the young wife of The Army's Chief of the Staff first glimpsed something of the horrors of the underworld in which they had been ruined. An organized traffic existed which secured mere children for immoral purposes in their own country and on the Continent; and 'if they were thirteen years of age...the men who destroyed them could not be punished...!'

Her husband was the only one to whom Mrs. Booth could speak of the terrible revelations made to her. Bramwell Booth himself, in disguise, wandered about certain neighbourhoods, 'wading,' as he expressed it in a most moving letter, 'through a sea of sin and defilement.' Fresh from these investigations, so hideous to his sensitive spirit, he consulted Josephine Butler and the Chamberlain of the City of London, Benjamin Scott, who was associated with Mrs. Butler's campaign.

Then, early one morning, the housekeeper of the Headquarters in Queen Victoria Street, into which The Army had moved two or three years before, found a decent-looking girl of about seventeen years outside the front gate. Coming up from the country in answer to an advertisement for help in housework, she had found herself entrapped in a brothel.

She had been given a beautiful silk dress and compelled to attend a music hall show with her 'mistress.' Escape seemed out of the question, though, when one man in the house approached her in a particularly objectionable fashion, the poor girl had managed to barricade herself in a kitchen. Left there for the night, in her distress she had suddenly remembered The Salvation Army. She had been to some of its Meetings in her home town, and on a Song Book she found among her belongings when she was able to creep upstairs was General Booth's address. At 4 a.m. she had escaped from the brothel and at last found her way to Queen Victoria Street.

Her story, and that of girls in the Whitechapel Home, led Bramwell Booth to determine to do all he could 'to stop these abominations, to rouse public opinion, to agitate for the improvement of the law.'

The law as it stood declared that any girl of thirteen was legally competent to consent to her own seduction. It refused to allow little girls of eight to give evidence against the monsters who had outraged them, on the ground that the victims were too young to understand the nature of an oath. The law against abduction was criminally lax.

A short time previously, W. T. Stead - a Darlington man who was to become one of the greatest figures in British journalism - had been appointed editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, a newspaper of dignity and influence. Stead was a Christian man, an admirer of The Army and

¹ It was in 1878 that The Christian Mission, founded in 1865, became The Salvation Army.

particularly of Mrs. Catherine Booth, and a personal friend of Bramwell Booth. To him the latter related the facts he had ascertained concerning child enslavement and prostitution.’

Stead in turn made careful investigations, interviewed a number of girls and, in disguise, visited the worst haunts of criminal vice. He gained overwhelming evidence of the wide extent of the evils Bramwell”, Booth had told him about. Like his friends, he was horrified to find that, in , Christian England,’ girls from twelve and thirteen and up to fifteen years and more were bought and sold for the use of rich roués, big profits being raked in by procuresses and their agents who lived in luxury.

Stead’s findings were published daily for a week in July, 1885, in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, under the title, ‘The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon.’ The paper’s high reputation for exactitude increased the sensation aroused. One wonders whether anything in the history of British journalism can compare with the tremendous impression made by these articles. In the evening of the first day of publication, the few remaining copies of the paper were being snatched up in the City for half a crown each!

Throughout the country, Salvationists backed up Stead’s efforts in various ways. The Army Mother, in particular, addressed a number of great gatherings-in the West End, where Mrs. Josephine Butler and others supported her, and elsewhere. Catherine Booth also addressed letters to Queen Victoria and to the Prime Minister, Mr. Gladstone, urging that the law should be drastically changed.

William Booth himself organized a monster petition to the House of Commons, for which within seventeen days 340,000 signatures were obtained.

Coiled up in an immense roll, measuring in length two miles (says Commissioner Booth-Tucker in his biography of Catherine Booth), ... the petition was placed upon a large, open wagon and ... driven to the entrance of the Parliament, where it was carried by eight uniformed Salvationists and deposited upon the floor of the House of Commons.

Bills with amendments of the existing law-the main point being the raising of the ‘age of consent’ from thirteen to fifteen years-had three times been passed by the House of Lords, but each time the Commons

had blocked them. A Committee of the Upper Chamber had inquired for ten months into the evils reported; Lord Shaftesbury had declared that nothing more horrible or wicked than these infamies could be imagined; yet for years the Lower House had held up any legislation.

The new agitation, however - which had so stirred public opinion - also aroused the Government. The Home Secretary sought the counsel of Bramwell Booth and of W. T. Stead, and early in August - a month after the *Pall Mall Gazette* articles appeared - a strengthened Bill was passed into law. By 179 votes to 71, the age of consent was raised - not to fifteen, but to *sixteen* years! ‘Children up to that age were henceforth to be protected so far as law could protect.’

This ‘Purity Agitation’ and its tremendous victory had a dramatic sequel, of which an admirable record is given in Chapter XV of Bramwell Booth’s *Echoes and Memories*. Suffice it to say here that, in the secret inquiries which preceded the publication of Mr. Stead’s articles in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, the gaining of one vital piece of evidence had involved the ‘agitators’ in what technically could be regarded as the ‘abduction’ of a girl of thirteen years. General Bramwell Booth says: ‘We were summoned under our own Act, which, of course, provided for much heavier sentences than had been possible under the old law!’ And Mr. Stead:

The very legal officer, the Attorney-General, who had been compelled by our agitation to carry the Amending Bill through the House of Commons (as a result of the agitation of opponents of the Bill) prosecuted me and three or four of my comrades

W. T. Stead, Bramwell Booth, Rebecca Jarrett² - a recently-converted ex-brothel-keeper - and a Mrs. Combe, who had played a part in the ‘abduction,’ were brought before the Bow Street (London) Police Court and then committed for trial at the Old Bailey.

Throughout, there were certain inconsistencies hard to reconcile with traditional British justice. Indeed, Booth-Tucker, in his *Life of Catherine Booth*, speaks of a ‘travesty of justice,’ of a ‘great legal comedy.’

During the Bow Street trial the street outside was crowded with ‘lewd fellows of the baser sort,’ who repeatedly mobbed Bramwell

² The extraordinary story of this woman’s life, before and after conversion, will be found, with much else of great historical value, in Madge Unsworth’s book, *Maiden Tribute*, soon to be published.

Booth, dragged him out of a cab and maltreated him; he was rescued by the police with some difficulty.

Incidentally, the youthfulness of the actors in this drama should be remembered. Stead was thirty-six, and Bramwell Booth twenty-nine years of age; while Mrs. Bramwell Booth spent her twenty-fourth birthday at the Bow Street Court, her second daughter - then four months old - in her arms.

The Old Bailey trial lasted twelve days, and was followed most excitedly by the whole country. One interesting piece of history is pointed out by Mrs. Bramwell Booth, who recalls that Rebecca Jarrett, Mr. Stead and her husband 'were actually the first prisoners in England to go into the witness box and speak on oath for themselves.' This was the result of counsel insisting that advantage should be taken of the opportunity newly provided by the law for prisoners to give evidence on their own behalf.

The jury gave a verdict of Not Guilty against Bramwell Booth and Mrs. Combe; Jarrett and Stead were sentenced, the latter to three months - though the jury had recommended him to 'mercy' and wished to put on record their high appreciation of the service he had rendered the nation by securing the passage of a much-needed law for the protection of young girls.

Ironical that such a man should be sent to jail! Though he himself later said that the experience was one of the most valuable lessons of his life.

For us it is difficult to imagine the effect of the trial on Salvationists of 1885. The Army was only slowly emerging from a long period of persecution; in 1882 considerably over 600 Officers and Soldiers had been brutally assaulted, and more than eighty had been imprisoned. Now the rougher elements were set against them with renewed violence. The late Sergeant-Major Joe Stanton, of Norland Castle, once gave me a vivid description of the opposition encountered. Marylebone Corps, to which this veteran belonged at the time, suffered particularly, as its marches frequently led through Charles Street, where lived Eliza Armstrong - the 'abducted' girl - and her drunken mother. Stanton himself was twice carried to hospital, his life despaired of.

The spectacle of their young Chief of the Staff, the Founder's eldest son - the great Holiness preacher! - in the dock of the Central Criminal Court must have been disconcerting even to those who knew all the circumstances. Many friends of The Army must have entertained grave doubts and apprehensions. A titled celebrity indeed declared that the Armstrong Case, as it was known, would 'smash The Salvation Army.'

But The Army was beyond smashing. It was God's Army.

And in the long run, as General Bramwell Booth says-

The trial did The Army a great deal of good. It made us known, and put us at one stroke in the very front rank of those who were contending for the better treatment of the lost and the poor...Our work for women was greatly furthered...We knew... that the Queen followed the proceedings with great concern and sympathy. The case opened doors for us also in the overseas Dominions and in the United States.

More than forty years later, General Bramwell Booth visited Hungary, where I was then stationed. As soon as the preliminary announcement was given to the press, a leading Budapest paper published a lengthy article about Bramwell Booth and the Purity Agitation. At the most *we* might have thought of mentioning the story as an episode in a crowded life; but in a land where The Army had not begun work till 1924 the memory of that drama was still alive in influential circles!

Salvationists of to-day should not forget the achievement of those young men and women of great conviction, compassion and courage.

Discussion Guide...

1

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

One of the fastest growing crimes of the 21st century, human trafficking (particularly sex trafficking) is a present evil in today's world. Virtually every country is affected by the globalisation of sexual exploitation that demoralises and harms women, children and men. In the historical setting of the Maiden Tribute Campaign in Britain, The Salvation Army fought to change the circumstances of girls caught in the clutches of sexual exploitation. They created schemes intended to bring exposure to the issue and followed with political pressure to change laws that contributed to the social evil. In many

ways the reality of human trafficking in today's world is quite similar.

Definition:

“Trafficking in human beings” shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.

Article 3 of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime (Palermo Protocol)

It is happening. Deception nurtures inaction and complacency among the people of any land. “It doesn't happen here” is the common delusion. But it does. In fact, men, women and children are trafficked within their own countries and across international borders every day. Trafficking affects every continent and most countries. Due to the hidden and illegal nature of human trafficking, gathering statistics on the scale of the problem is a complex and difficult task. There are no reliable national or international estimates as to the extent of trafficking. Figures are usually counted in the countries that people are trafficked into and often fail to include those who are trafficked within their own national borders. The following statistics may represent an underestimation of trafficking, but are the most credible and frequently quoted:

Stats from Polaris Project

<http://www.dreamcenter.org/new/images/outreach/RescueProject/stats.pdf>

Human Trafficking Worldwide:

- 27 million – Number of people in modern-day slavery across the world.
Source: Kevin Bales of Free the Slaves.
- According to the U.S. Department of State's 2007 Trafficking in Persons Report (TIP Report), estimates vary from 4 to 27 million.
- The International Labor Organization (ILO) estimates 2.4 million people were victims of human trafficking from 1995-2005. This estimate uses the UN Protocol definition of human trafficking, and includes both transnational and internal data.
- 800,000 – Number of people trafficked across international borders every year.
Source: U.S. Department of State, Trafficking in Persons Report: 2007.
Note:
The TIP Report in 2001 and 2002 estimated this figure at 700,000;
The TIP Report of 2003 reported 800,000 to 900,000 victims;
The TIP Reports of 2004 through 2006 reported 600,000 to 800,000 victims.
- 1 million – Number of children exploited by the global commercial sex trade, every year.
Source: U.S. Department of State, The Facts About Child Sex Tourism: 2005.
- 50% – Percent of transnational victims who are children.
Source: U.S. Department of Justice, Report to Congress from Attorney General John Ashcroft on U.S. Government Efforts to Combat Trafficking in Persons in Fiscal Year 2003: 2004.
- 80% – Percent of transnational victims who are women and girls.
Source: U.S. Department of State, Trafficking in Persons Report: 2007.
- 70% – Percent of female victims who are trafficked into the commercial sex industry. This means that 30% of female victims are victims of forced labour.
Source: U.S. Department of Justice, Assessment of U.S. Government Activities to Combat Trafficking in Persons: 2004.

- 161 – Countries identified as affected by human trafficking:
127 countries of origin; 98 transit countries;
137 destination countries.
Note: Countries may be counted multiple times and categories are not mutually exclusive.
Source: UN Office on Drugs and Crime, Trafficking in Persons: Global Patterns: April 2006.
- 32 billion – Total yearly profits generated by the human trafficking industry.
 - › \$15.5 billion is made in industrialised countries.
 - › \$9.7 billion in Asia.
- \$13,000 per year generated on average by each “forced labourer.” This number can be as high as \$67,200 per victim per year.
Source: ILO, A global alliance against forced labor: 2005.

The fight against sexual slavery is woven throughout the pages of Salvation Army history. In recent years The Salvation Army has continued this vigilance in trying to address the issues of people trafficking around the globe. The Salvation Army International Headquarters has appointed Lieut-Colonel Dawn Sewell to coordinate the activities of the various territories throughout the world in raising awareness and advocating for the eradication of sexual slavery. An International Anti-trafficking Task Force, comprising representatives from Salvation Army territories and zones around the world has been convened.

In the United States, the Army has taken the leading role in the Initiative Against Sexual Trafficking joining with other churches, non-government organisations and faith-based organisations to lobby the United States Congress. The Salvation Army is also working in ‘source’ countries to educate women and to try to provide them with alternatives to sex-slavery.

Australian Salvos launched Stop The Traffik, an awareness campaign, in 2007 and opened the first fully supported safe house for trafficked women.

In Tanzania, for example, The Salvation Army’s KWETU Street Girls

programme works to support and educate street children, in particular homeless girls, many of whom have been forced into prostitution in order to keep themselves and their families alive. The main thrust of KWETU is to offer alternative economic activities for such girls and includes vocational training opportunities, the provision of loans for income generating activities, and resettlement assistance to rural areas. This programme has enabled many women to turn their lives around and start providing for themselves and their families.

The Salvation Army’s Care Haven Shelter for Abused Women in South Africa runs a similar programme providing a range of supports including counselling, job training, child care, nutrition education, budget planning and help in finding work.

In partnership with human rights organisations, The Salvation Army in Bangladesh is exploring ways to alleviate poverty and confront those who traffick women.

These are just a few of the ways The Salvation Army is responding to human trafficking. Progress has been made in the fight. Salvationists can be proud of the programmes and projects initiated to combat this evil, but there is much more that needs to be done. God is at work to restore our broken world and he has chosen to work through his Church. The global scope of the problem demands that Christians inform themselves, change their perceptions, educate others, speak out on behalf of voiceless victims and give of their time, energy and finances to bring about justice. These efforts, supported by our confident and sincere prayers, can change us and our world.

Questions for discussion:

1. What are the similarities of the Maiden Tribute campaign and the present horrors of human trafficking in our world?
2. What were the steps that led to The Salvation Army’s involvement in the British Campaign?
3. What modes of protest did the campaigners use?
4. Are these appropriate today? Why or why not?

5. What risks did The Salvation Army incur?
6. What costs did they result in?
7. Did the costs match the benefit? Why or why not?
8. Are we prepared for those risks/costs today?
9. What do you know about human trafficking in your country today?
10. The Modern Tribute campaign was focused on changing the law in Britain – how does the global nature of today’s sex-trafficking affect our campaigning?

Resources:

- <http://www.humantrafficking.org/>
- www.justsalvos.com (check out the human trafficking section for more information and resources).
- www.stophetraffik.org

Stop The Traffik

Because of the wide-spread reality of human trafficking and its global impact and nature, coalitions are one of the most effective organised response to the issue. These consist of partners in the fight against human trafficking who can spread the net of awareness and education wider and deeper in the long run.

Stop The Traffik remains a dynamic and growing global coalition that aims to continue the pressure, education and prevention of human trafficking around the world.

Campaign highlights from the coalition include:

- **The Chocolate Campaign:** Announcements by Cadburys and Mars were precipitated by Stop The Traffik Chocolate Campaign

that gave people access to the supply chain of cocoa by major chocolate industries and exposed the use of child slaves in the west coast of Africa. Using a public campaign and supporting fair trade as an alternative practise, people literally produced enough awareness and pressure for the industry giants to change their practice. The pressure is still on for the effects to be felt around the globe but the industry has begun to change.

- **ACTS (Active Communities Against Trafficking for Sex):** A kit that mobilises a community capacity approach to dealing with sex trafficking in local municipalities. Based on the successful campaign of Croyden Community Against Trafficking (theccat.com), the kits are provided for people seeking a grassroots approach to speeding up the process of stopping the traffick.
- **Start Freedom:** A school-based education programme geared to equip and empower a generation of young people to end human trafficking. Launched in October 2009 from the United Nations headquarters in New York, in seven languages, this global campaign to educate young people promises to ‘start freedom’ with a generation that has the capacity to be the change they want to see.

2

DESTITUTION AND UNEMPLOYMENT

THE year 1890 was a momentous one in The Army's history. Having celebrated their twenty-fifth anniversary, one imagines that Salvationists began to look back as well as forward. The Movement was acquiring perspective.

Then, in October, Mrs. Catherine Booth - after a long and very painful illness - was promoted to Glory. The end had been long expected, but it is difficult to realize what a loss her passing meant to The Salvation Army. All along she had been its 'battle-thinker,' the doughtiest fighter for its principles, its unsurpassed public speaker.

In October, 1890, immediately after the Army Mother's death,

appeared the Founder's most famous book, *In Darkest England and the Way Out*, which, as a B.B.C. broadcast declared a few years ago, did more than any other book had ever done to make people understand the condition of the poor in England.'

'Poor' seems hardly a drastic enough word. Vows of poverty have appealed to many idealists, especially in the Church of Christ. Francis of Assisi espoused himself to My Lady Poverty, and *Il Poverello* sounds quite romantic. But William Booth was concerned with what we should call *grinding* poverty-utter destitution, only too often linked with vice.

Probably no one was better equipped than he to launch on a half-indifferent world such a challenge as this book presented. All along, The Salvation Army had worked among the poorest, the most degraded. None knew more intimately the conditions in which hundreds of thousands of destitute folk existed than The Army's Officers and Soldiers. Many Salvationists, indeed, still belonged to the really poor.³

But William Booth had known what destitution meant long before he started his work at Whitechapel. In the Preface to *In Darkest England*, he says:

When but a mere child, the degradation and helpless misery of the poor stockingers of my native town, wandering gaunt and hunger-stricken through the streets ... , crowding the Union, or toiling like galley-slaves in relief works for a bare subsistence, kindled in my heart yearnings to help the poor ... which have had a powerful influence on my whole life.

William Booth knew poverty, too, in his own home; and both in Nottingham and in South London he worked in pawnshops - 'at a window, as it were,' to quote Professor Edvard Lehmann,

whence one sees human misery pass by and sees the seamy side of city life as perhaps nowhere else. There he kept daily account of the sighs and tears, the sorrow and despair of the poor ... who see no way out and seek oblivion and consolation in sin.

Now, at the age of sixty-one, this man had gained a wide experience of many types of poverty; through the Movement he had created and directed, he had long sought to ameliorate some of this vast distress.

³ General Bramwell Booth, in his *Echoes and Memories*, has a moving passage about an East End costermonger whose Sunday 'dinners' - a piece of fried bacon and some potatoes - he sometimes shared in his youth. Of one prominent East End worker it is recorded that she was obliged to starve sometimes for two or three days.

The Salvation Army was already at work in nearly a score of countries; it had a number of Rescue Homes, Slum Posts and Prison Gate Brigades, an Inebriates' Home, four Food Depots where cheap meals were served, five 'Shelters for the Destitute,' two Labour Bureaux and a 'Factory for the "out-of-work."'

The Army's battle with destitution, unemployment and other resultant evils began very early in its career, and it has never ceased. Here, however, we concentrate on the sensational challenge presented - five years after the 'Purity Agitation' - by this book: *In Darkest England and the Way Out*.⁴

The book was discussed, praised and criticized all over the land, and in other countries. A ferocious attack on it and on the scheme it outlined was made by the famous Professor T. H. Huxley. *The Times*, in a leading article, rather sneered at the would-be social reformer; and not a few eminent men raised doubts and objections.

On the other hand, Dr. F. W. Farrar, then Archdeacon of Westminster, preached a sermon on the book in Westminster Abbey, whole-heartedly supporting the Founder's plans, and sent a contribution to the fund to be raised. Bishops also approved of the scheme. Queen Victoria sent cordial wishes for 'success in the undertaking you have originated.'

Sir Henry Irving bought a copy on the day of publication, read it through that same night, then visited International Headquarters and donated a large sum to the scheme.

Support came also from Roman Catholics. Cardinal Manning, that great lover of the poor, in the course of a cordial letter to the Founder said:

I have already sufficient knowledge of its [the book's] contents to say at once how fully it commands my sympathy You have gone down into the depths. Every living soul costs the most precious blood, and we ought to save it, even the workless and the worst.

I hold that every man has a right to bread and to work.

To critics the Cardinal said:

If General Booth can gather under human influence and guidance those whom all other agencies for good have not yet reached, who shall forbid him?

⁴ The sales of this book, running to 125,000 words and priced - in 1890! - 3s. 6d., totalled a quarter of a million copies. The whole of the profits, £5,300, William Booth handed to the 'Darkest England' Fund.

When they pointed to defects here and there, he replied: ‘Then go and do it better!’

Many years afterward, Mr. Wilfred Meynell recalled that, shortly before Manning’s death, the Cardinal had asked him, Meynell, to take Herbert Vaughan - who became the next Archbishop of Westminster - to see some of The Army’s Shelters and Workshops. In a magazine Mr. Meynell then edited, *Merrie England*, he had the Founder’s book reviewed by one who signed himself ‘Francis Tancred’; that review is worth quoting:

Because I have knowledge, within certain narrow limits more intimate than most men’s, of this life which is not a life; to which food is as the fuel of hunger; sleep, our common sleep, costly and fallible as water in a wilderness; in which men rob, and women vend themselves; because I have such knowledge I have read with painful sympathy a book put forward by a singular personality.

I rise from the reading of it with a strong impression that here is a proposal which they who *will* not bless would do well to abstain from banning. Here is at last a man who has formulated a comprehensive scheme, and has dared to take upon himself its execution. Here was this vast putrescence at our very doors, and what scavengers of charity might endeavour its removal? Now comes by a man and offers to take on himself the responsibility of that removal. ‘In God’s name, give him the contract!’ one inclines to exclaim.

The reviewer then takes up Huxley’s comparison of the Salvationists with the Franciscans:

Whatever its qualifications, that joyous spirit which St. Francis so peculiarly fostered is claimed by General Booth as an integral and essential feature in his own followers. Street preaching received its first and special extension from the Franciscans.

Mr. Meynell had chosen this writer because he had’ lived in the streets, suffered hunger and cold and loneliness in the last extreme.’ William Booth was greatly impressed with the review and in his whimsical way declared: ‘Had I such a writer on my staff, I could convert England!’ No wonder! For’ Francis Tancred ‘ was none other than the poet Francis Thompson.

William Booth’s famous expression, ‘The Submerged Tenth,’ used in

In Darkest England, is based on the calculations of his namesake, Charles Booth, in *Life and Labour in the East of London*, which The Army’s Founder described as the only book he knew which enumerated the destitute. The paupers, the homeless, starving and very poor of East London alone totalled, at that time, 331,000! Basing his reckoning on these figures, William Booth declared that the population of ‘Darkest England’ was ‘three million men, women and children’ – doomed ‘to the service of the great twin devils: Destitution and Despair.’

The first part of the Founder’s challenging book, entitled, ‘The Darkness,’ briefly but vividly describes the condition of the homeless, the workless (both trade unionists and nonunionists), the vicious, the criminals and’ the children of the lost.’ Most telling are the numerous records of individuals in the various categories who have come under The Salvation Army’s care or notice.

William Booth adopts a remark of Thomas Carlyle’s that the four-footed worker has already got all that the two-handed one is clamouring for, that ‘there are not many horses in England which have not due food and lodging and go about sleek-coated, satisfied in heart’; and for all the unfortunates of whom he writes he claims’ *the standard of the London cab horse*,’ which has’ shelter for the night, food for its stomach, and work allotted to it by which it can earn its corn.’

The author assured his readers that there was nothing in his Scheme which would bring it into collision with any schools of thought in the great field of social economics - excepting anti-Christian economists....

I say nothing against any short cut to the Millennium that is compatible with the Ten Commandments (he declared). I intensely sympathize with the aspirations that lie behind all these socialist dreams. But whether it is Henry George’s Single Tax on Land Values,⁵ or Edward Bellamy’s Nationalism, or the more elaborate schemes of the Collectivists, my attitude toward them all is the same. What these good people want to do, I also want to do. But I am a practical man, dealing with the actualities of to-day...I am ready to sit at the feet of any who will show me any good...quite prepared to hail with open arms any Utopia that is offered me. But it must be within range of my fingertips...

After reviewing what was being done - very little indeed! - for the

⁵ Some years ago the Danish author of a little book entitled *William Booth-Henry George*, in which he argues that George’s Single Tax theory meets the Founder’s requirements, told me that Henry George several times discussed his plans with Catherine Booth. What she thought of them I do not know, though in *Popular Christianity* she refers to ‘land under our present iniquitous system’!

needy ones on whose behalf he pleads, William Booth set forth his Scheme in Part II of the book, entitled, 'Deliverance.' Among the 'Essentials to Success' he named first that every scheme put forward must *change the man* if his character and conduct have caused his failure. Earlier on in the book he had declared that in 'this frightful chaos of human misery' nothing could be done without God; but, with God we can do all things.'

The second condition was that the circumstances of a man must be changed whenever they were to blame for his state and lay beyond his control.

Viewing his Scheme as both a 'long term' and a 'short term' remedy, the Founder included among the essentials to success permanency, but also immediate practicability.

More than half of this famous book is occupied with an outline of William Booth's proposals, which embraced what he called the City Colony, the Farm Colony and the Overseas Colony.

The former included the supplying of food to the hungry, shelter for the homeless (citing stories of a number of Converts already gained through The Army's Shelters), work and 'regimentation' for the unemployed and a 'Household Salvage Brigade.'

The word 'regimentation' may sound somewhat unpleasant; it referred to the establishment of a system by which the workless could be put in touch with opportunities of work. 'At present,' the author wrote, 'there is no labour exchange in existence in this country. The columns of the daily newspaper are the only substitute for this much-needed register.' To a later generation, alas! labour exchanges became

a sadly essential feature of life; yet what would have been their lot had no such exchanges existed? Apart from one or two small private registry bureaux which may have existed in the provinces, The Salvation Army led the way in the establishment of labour bureaux; in 1890 it had two, in 1899 twenty-two.⁶

Incidentally, in considering the destitution with which William Booth dealt, it must be remembered that before 1911 there was no Government unemployment insurance scheme in Britain!

Behind the City Colony, the Founder's Schemes envisaged the Farm Colony, where waste labour was to be employed on waste' land. This Colony was to be both a remedy in itself and a preparation for the third section of the Scheme-the Overseas Colony: not emigration, but the establishment in other lands of more or less self-contained and self-governed colonies. 'The Founder purposed securing for this purpose' a large tract of land' in South Africa,⁷ or Canada, Australia, or elsewhere....

Such a plan, he felt, would keep men and women on the land and avoid the danger of ordinary emigrants, who so often gravitated to the towns, competing with colonial workmen and lowering the wage levels.

'Universal Emigration' however, was also included in the Scheme. It may be said to have begun on a large scale in 1903, since when The Salvation Army has been responsible for settling more than 250,000 persons in overseas Dominions, with only about one per cent failures. The Founder insisted that this Overseas Migration and Settlement work must be advantageous to the country the migrant left; acceptable to the country receiving the migrant; beneficial to the migrant.

The Salvation Army has long been the largest voluntary migration

⁶ In *The Employment Exchange Service of Great Britain*, published in 1935, it was noted that in that year it was 'twenty-two years since the first (presumably Government) employment exchanges were established' -which carries us back only to 1913 !

⁷ Years later, when such a Colony in Rhodesia was under consideration, *The Mining World* wrote most delightfully:

'General Booth has his eyes on Rhodesia. It is perhaps out of place-and yet, why should it be?-to refer in a purely clp.ss paper such as this to the religious and social work of General Booth and the immense organizations he has been the means of creating. The commencement of The Salvation Army, as the General himself would admit, was on Mile End Waste. It was on waste ground, practically alone, that he began The Salvation Army, the name and work renowned through the earth.

'We have the conviction that since the days of Peter the Hermit there has not risen in the social and religious world a man greater than General Booth. We are not forgetting John Wesley, Whitfield, Luther or Father Mathew.

'We believe that fifty years hence, when the prejudice and passion his work has excited in our own times has died its natural death, General Booth will be ranked by the historian as the leading religious and social reformer of several centuries of the Christian era.

'The Rhodesian market became firmer at the very mention of his proposal to extend his work to that territory, showing the great power for good he wields over men and things.'

society. Of its various schemes-for women, single men, lads, children-there is not room to write here. Its remarkable success has been due largely to an 'unsurpassed world-wide organization,' and to the personal interest taken by Salvationists in each migrant until he or she reaches journey's end.

Nor can I do more than refer to the fact that the proposals of *In Darkest England and the Way Out* included a Slum Crusade, a Prison Gate Brigade, redemption of drunkards and of 'lost' women, inquiry after missing folk, Industrial Schools, Poor Man's Bank and Lawyer and many other interesting ventures. Many of these proposals were supported by actual stories illustrating The Army's success in the fields in question.

What has been the outcome of the challenge of the 'Darkest England' Scheme?

The past half-century has seen many and very revolutionary changes in Britain. After the first world war, unemployment increased to a figure which once would have been considered fantastic; but social legislation had been passed which greatly improved the condition of the unemployed, and utter destitution had become rarer.

Not all the proposals made by William Booth in *In Darkest England and the Way Out* have found practical realization.⁸

Some have been applied in a modified form. But many features of that Scheme, together with some not included in the original plan, are now part of The Army's widespread Social Work.

Numerous kinds of social endeavour are carried on to-day under The Army's Flag-from those enumerated above as being in operation half a century ago, to police court and probation work, Maternity Homes, Homes and Colonies for delinquent youth, Colonies for inebriates and (in the East) for beggars, Eventide Homes for the aged, Holiday Camps for children and for poor mothers, Leper Colonies, Hospitals, and much else.

The Army's multifarious *direct* social service would be a sufficiently remarkable result of the Founder's challenge; but in some ways even more notable has been the indirect outcome. Mrs. Roland Wilkins-

⁸ For one thing, the financial response to the Founder's appeal was inadequate. The initial £100,000 asked for was subscribed within a few months; but some years afterward Dean Farrar pointed out that, instead of an annual sum of £30,000, which William Booth had declared would be required, only an average of £4,000 was forthcoming!

better known in the earlier years of this century by her maiden name, L. Jebb, author of a book on English small-holdings-declared that The Army's Land Colony at Hadleigh, Essex, had definitely influenced the cultivation of the surrounding country, where it had been 'the pioneer of fruit-growing and market gardening.' In some parts of Essex, she said, horticulture had not been practised' until The Army had shown it to be possible. Now hundreds of acres are added every year and there has been an increased value of real estate.'

That relatively unimportant consequence is typical of many other advances The Army inspired. Lady Pethick-Lawrence, in her published reminiscences, says of the eightennineties: 'The rapid development of the social side of The Salvation Army was stirring up many of the churches and had inspired them to inaugurate social missions on entirely new lines.'

In a letter published some years ago in *The Spectator*, Commissioner David O. Lamb, writing on London's destitute during the fifty years in which the London County Council had then functioned-referred to the improved accommodation for homeless men, brought about by The Army's , continued co-operation with the authorities.'

Fifty years ago the common lodging-houses - doss-houses as many of them were called - were none too clean and were full to overflowing. A large number of the homeless were verminous, and The Army set up de-lousing fumigators at most of its Shelters. In this way we made a valuable contribution to the more hygienic condition of London to-day; but it was seven years after the launching of the 'Darkest England Scheme' before the necessary legislation was passed requiring Local Authorities to provide for the cleansing of verminous persons.

In the method of dealing with infectious diseases we sometimes found ourselves in conflict with the Health Authorities-but always with the most advanced scientists behind us! In an epidemic of smallpox it was the Salvation Army leaders who, acting primarily on humanitarian grounds, challenged the wisdom of the methods by which the London Health Authorities were dealing with the disease. Ultimately our views prevailed, and instead of clean lodging-houses being closed and the centres of infection multiplied by the scattering of the lodgers, the lodging-houses and shelters were kept open and the lodgers kept under sympathetic observation for a few days.

The provision by British authorities of meals for needy schoolchildren for a number of years past is largely the result of the famous 'Farthing

Breakfasts' at one time provided by The Army in many parts of the land.

One of the interesting proposals in *In Darkest England* concerned what the Founder called a 'Household Salvage Brigade.' This did not materialize quite in the form and to the extent suggested, but the principle of the utilization of waste products has been applied both in this and other lands. Some details of William Booth's original plan may yet be found practicable and needful; they certainly foreshadowed the salvage drives familiar in more than one country during World War II.

The proposal which has found most striking application was embodied in a passage urging that 'waste paper and rags, after being chemically treated and manipulated by machinery, should be re-issued to the world in the shape of paper.' The Founder's vision extended to the use of such paper for The Army's own needs - already then thirty tons a week - mainly for its periodicals.

Not only do Salvation Army Industrial Homes in many lands employ a number of men in sorting paper and so on, but The Army's pioneer efforts in this direction have been emulated by many firms working on a purely business basis, with no primary concern for the improvement of their workers' character. One authority has computed that in Britain alone this industry, together with the paper-mills and related undertakings, before 1939 employed about 250,000 persons.

This chapter may well include a reference to the great social and economic effect of The Army's general work, as apart from its specifically social challenge.

From the earliest days of the Movement, many wastrels, drunkards and other vicious characters have been converted in its Meetings. From being non-productive and a burden to the community, they have become steady wage-earners, contributing in rates and taxes to public funds. Not a few have rendered distinctive service to their town and nation. Their new mode of living has created an increased demand for food, furniture, etc. Quite a number have removed to better districts and often bought their own houses. Their children, and grand-children, have enjoyed an education and gained a social standing and economic efficiency very different from that which would have been their lot had

not their fathers, through contact with The Army, turned to God.

The number of such Converts must, in the course of years, have run into many thousands. Assume an average diversion of only ten shillings a week from drink, gambling and so on to more productive expenditure - well, you can do your own multiplication....!

When, in 1927, General Bramwell Booth unveiled the bust of his father on Mile End Waste, John Scurr - a Socialist and Roman Catholic - then M.P. for Whitechapel, in his speech gave considerable credit to The Army for the great improvements that had taken place in the social conditions of that part of London.

The young people here (he said) cannot have any idea of what Mile End was like sixty years ago. To-day it is a place of which we can be proud, and William Booth's sacrifice has been largely responsible for this.

What was said then of Whitechapel could be declared of many another place.



Discussion Guide...

2

THE WAY OUT

Experiencing poverty provoked William Booth and the early Salvationists to urgent action; understanding it equipped them with innovative solutions. To 'see' poverty up close and personal and understand the grinding reality it has on the lives and generations of people is part of the recipe for action. One person has suggested that the first step in contributing to injustice is to choose not to see it. This is quite often the reality of middle class western lifestyles. Many people have grown up with poverty removed from their experience – they have never known or ever seen poverty up close. This is a buffer zone that keeps us separated from the pain and suffering in the world and can keep us dull and lethargic in response.

Questions for discussion:

1. Where have you seen poverty up close and personal?
2. What has been your response?

Extreme Poverty:

The first part of the Founder's challenging book DARKEST ENGLAND AND THE WAY OUT, entitled, 'The Darkness,' briefly but vividly describes the condition of the homeless, the workless (both trade unionists and non -unionists), the vicious, the criminals and 'the children of the lost.' This kind of exposure often moves the heart toward action on behalf of the poor. Hugh Evans (founder of Oak Tree and the Global Poverty Project) names his life-change moment on an immersion trip to a family who lived on a garbage dump in Manila. Bono talks about Ethiopia and Tony Campolo remembers a Haitian man begging him to take his only son in order for him to survive.

Poverty is complex and in a Western context can be difficult to nail down. Economic, social, educational and spiritual influences are each elements of what poverty looks like in the developed world – in a global context they are much simpler to define. Global poverty measures are anyone who lives on less than 2 dollars a day. Almost half the world — over three billion people — live on less than \$2.50 a day (<http://www.globalissues.org/article/26/poverty-facts-and-stats>). This is considered extreme poverty. This is the kind of grinding poverty that William Booth first recognized in the UK. Now this kind of poverty can be even more difficult to see because, for most readers of this book, it only occurs 'over there'.

Questions for discussion:

1. How do we increase exposure and create urgency in the face of extreme global poverty?

2. What are some solutions to extreme poverty in the world?
3. Does global poverty matter in your life? How?

Immigration:

William Booth set forth his scheme in part II of the book, entitled 'Deliverance.' Deliverance schemes included short-term and long-term solutions. Short-term solutions include many of our social services today (homeless shelters, domestic violence, addictions etc...) but other longer-term ideas had some powerful implications.

Today, long-term solution requires hospitality of developed nations towards those suffering from extreme poverty. Asylum seekers and refugees are part of a migration system that is lacking in power and punch. In our history, The Salvation Army has been part of the transformation and relocation of families and people as a long-term solution to their poverty.

Questions for Discussion:

1. Are we still part of a migration solution for the global poor? Can we be?
2. In what way can we champion the cause of those suffering from extreme poverty?
3. How can you get involved personally?

Recycling

Recycling was also part of Booth's solution in the deliverance section of the social scheme. His vision for The War Cry and all other SA periodicals was to utilise waste and employ those who weren't already employed.

Questions for Discussion:

1. What part does recycling play in our current systems?
2. How can we maximise waste for good?
3. Booth suggested wasted places as well as wasted products. Are there wasted places in our communities that could be maximised to benefit the poor?

Salvation:

Booth understood and outlined in his book that real change is both internal and external. The circumstances that people are in must change but also the condition of people's hearts must be transformed. Outside-in and inside-out – the recipe for true Salvation. This is a deep belief and experience of The Salvation Army – only God can change the heart. This is not an excuse to ignore social justice, but rather an invitation to do social justice from the inside out.

Questions for Discussion:

1. Do you have an experience of salvation? (Has Jesus been part of your life?) If so, when? How? What kind of difference has it made for you?
2. How do we maintain our spiritual urgency in the midst of our social service?
3. How is mission advanced through the Gospel?
4. What does Jesus have to do with justice?

Resources:

- Makepovertyhistory.org.au
- Globalpovertyproject.com
- Michachallenge.com

- Surrender.com.au

3

SWEATED LABOUR

SOME folk, it appears, collect match-boxes and their labels. A teacher of languages resident in London is said to have 15,000 different match-box labels - from all over the world; though the 'queen' of this hobby evidently is a lady living in Surrey, whose collection is more than double as large: 35,000 labels!

Among this huge number, very probably, is one bearing the crest of The Salvation Army, and inscribed:

LIGHTS IN DARKEST ENGLAND

Security from. Fire-

Fair Wages for Fair Work.

The Salvation Army Social Wing.

To modern eyes the box would look rather large, perhaps clumsy;⁹ but behind it lies a story that is worth recalling.

About the time when William Booth's *In Darkest England and the Way Out* was published, the making of matches was a far from pleasant

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The Army's Museum at Judd Street, King's Cross, has a sample or two.

occupation. Wages were low - 'sweated' - and working conditions dangerous. As in so many businesses, the welfare of the workers was scarcely considered, if only high profits and dividends could be secured. The matches were made in factories, where workers were paid on a piece-work basis, or in the poor people's 'homes' - singleroom tenements where men, women and children worked long hours, even on Sundays, to earn a few shillings.

Matches in those days were made with phosphorus, which had the advantage that you could strike them on any dry surface.¹⁰ But phosphorus was poisonous. If it got to the gums or jaw it caused necrosis - commonly called 'phossy jaw' - which slowly ate away the jaw bones. This disease - also known as 'match-maker's leprosy' - was most painful and, of course, disfiguring. Quite young girls suffered agonies from this 'living death,' and despite operations lost health and their occupation.

The trouble arose, in the main, from the fact that the workers - most of them, it appears, women - ate without first washing their hands. Pay was so low that no time could be wasted, so folk worked on while they had their lunch or tea, and fingers dipped in phosphorus conveyed the poison to the mouth *via* the food taken.

Trade unions and others had protested, and various strikes had taken place. A number of people were striving to improve the terrible conditions. The Government issued regulations that factories must provide (a) hoods to protect the workers against the phosphorus fumes; (b) proper washing arrangements which must be used by workers before they partook of food.

That, of course, was an advance; but it did not effect very much until a model factory was established-an enterprise for which credit belongs to The Salvation Army.

In May, 1891, the Founder himself opened this match factory, situated in Lamprell Street, Old Ford, London, E. It produced only safety matches, which did away with all danger from phosphorus. The premises were comfortable, light and well-aired. About a hundred workers were employed. A room was set apart for the convenience of those who wished to make tea.¹¹

¹⁰ Safety matches were manufactured, but only in the proportion, approximately, of one to every thousand phosphorus matches.

¹¹ At midday a brief 'Meeting for prayer and praise' was held; attendance was, of course, voluntary, but

The wages paid to match-box makers by the big firms was 2¼d. or 2½d. per gross. The Salvation Army paid its workers 4d. per gross. This, as the Founder said, was 'a very considerable improvement,' made possible partly by the elimination of needless 'middlemen.' A shilling, of course, was worth far more than nowadays.

Working at the average rate, a first-class box-maker ... would earn 15s. a week as against, formerly, 9s. 4½d. A medium hand, producing twenty-five gross of boxes a week, earned 5s. 2½d. on the sweating scale, but would get 8s. 4d. from The Salvation Army.

The selling price of these safety matches - not yet produced in vast quantities-was only slightly dearer than of those made with phosphorus by the large manufacturers.

Up and down the country The Army's venture found support -from the press,¹² co-operatives and many business men. The chemistry professor at University College, London, spoke of The Army's matches as superior to others, and said: 'We use these matches alone.' The matches were being sold by the middle of 1891.¹³

The great British match manufacturers soon had to abandon their old, unhealthy methods and conditions, and adopt better rates of wages. A firm abroad, using the process by which The Army made its matches, put on the British market boxes with the Founder's picture! The Salvationist enterprise had the desired effect, and by the beginning of the twentieth century safety matches were the rule, and 'phossy jaw' was a matter of history.

The Army's factory was closed, and though this was but one venture in our battle for the rights of the poor, it is worthy of remembrance-next time you strike a match!

evidently averaged about thirty- 'real typical East-enders who sing most heartily,' as an early report states.

¹² One provincial paper offered six months' free advertisement; another hoped that 'the sweater has" met his match" in General Booth.'

¹³ A large number were prepared for sale at The Army's great Crystal Palace Day on July 7th; just before the date, however, it was found that the Crystal Palace authorities would not allow this. Commissioner Cadman, then in charge of The Army's 'Darkest England' work, filled a quantity of boxes with dummy matches-splints only; these were sold at a penny each, so that friends could take away a specimen box .*. to see the size, style of wrapper, etc. Actually they were in great demand.



Discussion Guide...

3

FAIRTRADE

Extrême poverty and exploitative trade situations around the world exacerbate already difficult conditions for farmers and producers in developing countries. Sweatshops, human labour trafficking, and oppressive and underpaid work conditions are common.

One global campaign that has promoted another way to do ‘business’ that can benefit the economy, the worker and the producer in developing world is fair trade.

“Fairtrade is an alternative approach to conventional trade and is based on a partnership between producers and consumers. Fairtrade offers producers a better deal and improved terms of trade. This allows them the opportunity to improve their lives and plan for their future. Fairtrade offers consumers a powerful way to reduce poverty

through their every day shopping.” (http://www.fairtrade.net/what_is_fairtrade.html)

What looks like ‘free labour’ – really, slave-like conditions (for children, men and women) – is pervasive in some markets.

In 2000, it was exposed that children were being sold and trafficked into the West Coast of Africa to harvest cocoa beans. Those beans made up 70% of the global cocoa market, so every major industry that produced chocolate was implicated in allowing slave-like conditions for their workers in the developing world.

The Salvation Army joined with Stop The Traffik campaigning to change the chocolate industry. After two years of direct efforts towards the chocolate industry, Cadbury’s made a global announcement in 2009 that it has begun to embrace Fair Trade as a way of changing the industry and creating a better world. Mars followed with a commitment to ethical product sourcing for their full range by 2020. Nestle too, has made a step towards changing their production and buying practises.

The Salvation Army has embarked on demonstrating fair trade principles and micro-credit possibilities to create employment options in the developing world as well.

Sally Ann products: In essence The Salvation Army is partnering with some of the world’s poorest people and providing the hand-up for them to trade their way out of poverty. The first ‘Sally Ann’ Fair Trade store opened in a prime site in Oslo, Norway, in June 2003. It was a fairly simple operation, with small consignments from Bangladesh being sourced from production groups linked with Salvation Army projects. The Norwegian team successfully established ‘Sally Ann’ as a leading fair trade brand in Norway by adding marketing expertise and business acumen to the process. Peru became the second supplier and a second shop opened in Sweden in September 2006. Other links were soon made and production groups were established in Moldova and Kenya. Currently, new suppliers are being sourced from Chile, Brazil, Ghana and Pakistan to name but a few, with ongoing work in improving and expanding the capacity of existing suppliers. Christmas (2009) the UK Territory with the Republic

of Ireland starts a test distribution via mail order and negotiations have begun with the Netherlands and Czech Republic Territory and the Canada and Bermuda Territory on how they could begin to distribute ‘Sally Ann’ Fair Trade products. (http://www.salvationarmy.org/ihq/www_sa.nsf/vw-issue/969BE8022F2BE6298025753C007D2B30?opendocument&id=236AEC6DD426Do808025753C0055AC5C)

PNG Coffee Farmers Collective: Half a day’s drive from Lae is the city of Goroka, in the Highlands region of PNG. Many people in the region are coffee growers, but while big companies are growing increasingly wealthy from the coffee trade the farmers rarely see their fair share of profits. Exploitation is rife and many in the rural coffee-growing villages live in poverty. The Salvation Army’s Major David Temine is campaigning for fair trade in PNG’s coffee industry. It’s a real David and Goliath struggle as Major Temine takes on some of the “giants” of the coffee trade while, at the same time, bringing about social change – through instilling Christian values – in rural communities. (http://salvos.org.au/about-us/news-and-resources/documents/pipeline_02feb2009.pdf)

Questions for Discussion:

1. Are you aware of fair trade?
2. Have you participated in the campaign?
3. Do you buy fairly traded products?
4. How can slaves be used for labour in today’s world?
5. How can we be part of a system that uses slave labour and not know?
6. How can we change those realities today?

Resource:

<http://www.fairtrade.net>

Domestic Labour:

The Salvation Army contributed to better work conditions in the UK for the workers as well as around the world. Supporting workers' rights is a tradition of ours. Even today, in western nations, workers are often exploited and unregulated parts of the labour industry go unchecked and leave people in desperate situations. Immigrant students, working mums and other marginalised groups of people lack options when their rights are violated.

Discussion:

1. In what ways can The Salvation Army continue its fight for adequate and proper employment within our own country?
2. Do you know anyone or any industry that doesn't provide workers rights?
3. Have you ever encountered human rights abuses in the workplace?
4. What would you do about it?

4

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IN JAPAN'S 'LICENSED QUARTERS'¹⁴

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THE challenge next to be recorded resulted in one of the most remarkable social victories in Salvation Army history. Its story takes us to Japan, and is all the more notable because The Army—a 'foreign' organization, of course—had been established in the country only five years. In 1900 the total number of Salvationists in Japan was not more than a few hundred.

For nearly three centuries a system of licensed prostitution had prevailed in Japan. Throughout two hundred and fifty years girls could be openly sold to such a life for a fixed period; then, in 1872, an Imperial Ordinance forbade the selling and buying of girls¹⁵ and, indeed, ordered the release of all licensed prostitutes.

¹⁴ For the facts of this great story I am indebted mainly to Commissioner Henry Bullard (promoted to Glory in 1/9/45) and to Bufo and Tamiko Yamamuro, gifted son and daughter of The Army's distinguished Japanese Commissioner.

¹⁵ The immediate cause of this Ordinance was peculiarly interesting. A boat in Yokohama harbour was found to have on board over two hundred Chinese who had discovered that they were to be sold as slaves to work in mines in Peru. One of them escaped to a British warship. The Japanese authorities succeeded in setting the men free or sending them back to China. Peru evidently raised objections, but the Russian Tsar, who re-tried the case, supported Japan's action. Then, however, Japan was accused of having, in her system of prostitution, an institution worse than slavery! That challenge sufficed to bring about the 'Woman's Emancipation Law.

Unfortunately, few at that time understood the meaning of the new law, and the change was formal rather than actual. Girls were not bought; but loans were made to them-or, generally, to their parents or friends-the girls agreeing to practise the calling of a licensed prostitute in the house of the keeper until his loan be repaid. The unscrupulous brothel-keepers saw to it that in the accounts the cost of maintenance appeared always larger than the income, so that the debt only increased!

Brothels were situated together in what were called licensed quarters, generally just outside a town. Often these were surrounded by a high fence and had only one entrance. Tokyo had five such quarters; the largest and best known was the Yoshawara, with no fewer than 5,000 prostitutes.

It may be difficult for us to understand that no disgrace was attached to the professional vice of many of these girls. At times of famine, epidemic, earthquake and other disasters, girls bartered themselves away in order to help their starving family, a self-sacrifice which, in a land where filial devotion is very strong, was regarded as meritorious and deserving of respect.

Most of these girls had no idea to what they were condemning themselves. They soon became disgusted with their 'calling,' the conditions of which were terrible. Often, moreover, they were underfed and brutally maltreated. A large number contracted disease and had to undergo hospital treatment.

Yet, however much they might loathe their life or wish to regain their freedom, they were bound until the accumulated debt was paid. A police regulation prevented any girl from leaving a licensed house without the signatures of the brothelkeeper and the manager of the licensed quarter; if she tried to escape, the police, who kept a register of the girls, would arrest and punish her, and then return her to the licensed house.

The turn of the century was to witness the doom of this slavery. In the city of Nagoya an American Methodist missionary, the Rev. U. G. Murphy, had become interested in the terrible problem and had set himself carefully to study the law of the land. In February, 1900, Murphy won his first case-his three contentions being:

1. The plaintiff (the girl), having attained adult age (full twenty years), could not be bound by any contract entered into by her father while she was yet a minor.

2. Even though the contract be considered as binding on the plaintiff, yet a person could not be deprived of liberty on account of debt, for that would constitute slavery - and Japanese law prohibited the purchase and sale of human beings.

3. The rule which until now had bound prostitutes to their business must be considered null and void, as it was founded on an immoral purpose, and the law regarded as null and void any juridical act which was contrary to the public welfare and good morals.

The Nagoya police, however, refused to carry out the court's order that the brothel-keeper must sign and seal the girl's 'notice of cessation.' They declared that the police regulation did not allow them to force a keeper to release a girl, irrespective of her indebtedness.

It was well-known that the brothel-keepers and their depraved and reckless men would stop at nothing to safeguard their business interests. But Murphy defied the police 'regulation' and the brothel-keepers; he courageously took into his home two girls who had escaped from the Nagoya licensed quarter.

Commissioner Henry Bullard, who had recently taken charge of Salvation Army work in Japan, had repeatedly been asked by his Officers whether The Salvation Army could not attack this evil. Knowing, however, that Japan would be entering the comity of nations before long - when all foreigners would come under Japanese law - he insisted on postponing action until that change had taken place.

At last the time came and, after conferring with Murphy and others, Bullard decided that The Army should move.

The first consideration was the provision of a refuge and of after-care for girls who might be freed from their horrible serfdom. Without delay-in July, 1900-a Rescue Home was opened in Tokyo. Its first Matron was Mrs. Captain Yamamuro,¹⁶ who later had seventy women under her care and in this difficult work displayed notable understanding and fearlessness.

¹⁶ Wife of Gunpei Yamamuro, who years afterward became leader of The Salvation Army in Japan. Mrs. General Carpenter's *Women of the Flail* contains an excellent sketch of Kiye Yamamuro

Then the victims of licensed prostitution must be informed that The Salvation Army would help them if they so desired.

A special Rescue Number of *Toki-no-Koe* (*The War Cry*) was issued. On the front page it had, in bold characters, the operative clause of the 1872 Imperial Ordinance-rendered by Gunpei Yamamuro into *colloquial* Japanese, which was different from the official, classical language, and far better understood by the common people. This special issue also dealt with the evils of prostitution and declared God's power to deliver from sin, as well as the Salvationists' willingness to protect and aid all who wished to leave their degrading calling. Commissioner Bullard then summoned all Officers-some fifty in all, Japanese and' foreigners '-to Tokyo, where he met them in the Hall of the Kanda Corps. The veteran Lieut.-Colonel Matilda Hatcher recalls vividly how the group knelt in the little Hall around the pile of *War Crys*, while their leader explained the situation and pointed out that fierce opposition would follow the enterprise they were planning. The whole of that night was spent by those men and women in passionate prayer for courage and wisdom, and Divine aid.

In the morning the dedicated band of Salvationists marched behind the Army Flag from Kanda into the notorious Yoshawara quarter, beating a drum and singing all the way. At the various street corners they stopped to explain their purpose and to distribute the Rescue Number of *Toki-no-Koe* to the girls who came out to see' what was up.'

This invasion naturally caused great excitement. As soon as the Salvationists' aim was understood, trouble began. They were violently assaulted by men in the brothel-keepers' pay. Their Flag was torn to shreds, the drum smashed. The valiant invaders were badly injured, and escaped only with much difficulty.

A party of Salvationists setting out from other Tokyo Corps fared similarly on their expedition to another licensed quarter.

When, a few days later, in response to a piteous appeal from a sick girl, Bullard and a group of Salvationists again went to the Yoshawara, they were escorted by more than fifty policemen. As soon as they entered the licensed quarter, they were surrounded by hundreds of rough men, armed with sticks and worse. While the Commissioner demanded

the girl's release from the chief brothel-keeper, a menacing mob of several thousand men gathered outside the office. The police, though reinforced, could not deal with the situation and barely managed to get the Salvationists out by an otherwise unused exit.

Other Officers-including Charles Duce, Matilda Hatcher, Gunpei Yamamuro and Kataro Yabuki-went far afield, even to places a considerable distance from a railway line, and at great risk to themselves secured the liberation of girls.

Bullard himself went to Kobe, whence a pathetic appeal had reached him from a girl who was being cruelly maltreated. On arrival he discovered that she had been removed to Kyoto; there he was able, though with considerable difficulty and danger, to free her. The girl was taken to the Tokyo Rescue Home, later was converted and afterward married and settled happily.

The very violence used against the Salvationists secured valuable publicity for their crusade. The most important newspapers gave full details of The Army's attack and of the Rescue Home newly established, and quoted at length from the Rescue Number of *The War Cry*.

Practically the whole of the Japanese press supported the Salvationists' action and joined in their demand that any girl who wished to leave the licensed quarters and return to normal life should be free, to do so.¹⁷

For the first time in their history, Japanese newspapers issued special editions-two, and even three, a day.

Their agitation made the expression' Free Cessation' a national slogan. Both in the capital and in the provinces the challenge became a chief subject of conversation and discussion. The Japanese nation, it was said, had rarely, if ever, been so stirred on a social question.

The movements and addresses of Commissioner Bullard and other Officers, touring the country to explain to great crowds The Army's social campaign, were fully reported in the press. Girls who read the papers appealed to the editors, or directly to The Army, to help them.

Early in September the whole staff of one newspaper went to the Yoshawara to liberate a girl. Several of them were badly beaten, but

¹⁷ Many individual Japanese expressed their admiration for The Army's courage, faith and tactics, as did most Westerners; e.g. the Anglican Bishop of North Japan-who, incidentally, had confirmed Matilda Hatcher when she was fourteen-and the editor and proprietor of the *Japan Mail*, who had lived many years in the country and was amazed at Bullard's daring.

though the police still refused to release a girl unless her notice of cessation was signed by the keeper they succeeded in their mission. On the same day, Duce and Yamamuro, on their return from an attempt to free a girl in the provinces, were severely beaten and had to be escorted back by forty policemen!

A few days later a regulation was issued to the effect that if a keeper refused his signature, *without adequate reason*, the police might liberate a girl without such a signature. Even so, the determination of an 'adequate reason' was left to the police, and many girls were not allowed to leave. However, a large number gained their liberty.

That, of course, only served still further to enrage the brothel-keepers and others whose earnings depended on this vile traffic. A gang from one of the licensed quarters wrecked the offices and machinery of two large Tokyo newspapers which had specially supported The Army, and seriously injured members of the staff. The licensed quarters were picketed to keep out Salvationists and pressmen, and anyone who looked like either of these was not safe! For nearly a year the homes of leading Salvation Army Officers were guarded by special police.

What was described as the 'reign of terror' in the licensed quarters, and-despite all attempts to prevent it-the departure of very many girls, kept away numerous well-to-do 'customers.'¹⁸ During the month of September, 1900, the number of visitors to prostitute quarters in Tokyo alone decreased by *2,000 per night!*

The Japanese Government was not slow in responding to the nationwide agitation. They took a course possible only in a supreme emergency: on October 2, 1900, an Ordinance - prepared by the Ministers of State and signed by the Emperor - was issued with the full authority of law.

The Ordinance declared that any prostitute who wanted to be freed need only go to the nearest police station and state her wish. Her name must then at once be removed from the register and, irrespective of any indebtedness to her keepers, she would be free. Indeed, it was made a punishable offence for a keeper or anyone employed by him to hinder any girl who wished to leave.

The new regulation, moreover, made it more difficult for a girl to

¹⁸ A number of ordinary visitors, suspected of being pressmen, were badly beaten by the pickets and refused admission

become a licensed prostitute; no girl under sixteen years of age was allowed to register as such. Of course, keepers also became much more wary of advancing' loans'.

The Rescue Number of the Japanese *War Cry* had been issued on August 1st, and within two months a victory surpassing their utmost hopes rewarded the tiny band of Salvationists who had so boldly challenged an entrenched evil. Japan had responded very nobly to the challenge, but no wonder that the name of Henry Bullard, together with that of Charles Duce, is among those of half a dozen Europeans inscribed in a permanent national record of benefactors of Japan.

During the first year alone, after this revolutionary event, twelve thousand young women¹⁹ abandoned their lives of immorality. From one of the licensed quarters of Tokyo, by the end of December, 1,100 out of 6,835 girls had forsaken their evil calling. Thousands of homes throughout the land rejoiced over the return of daughters who had been enslaved seemingly beyond hope of deliverance.

The agitation had in some measure created a 'conscience' on the whole question. Immorality was not by any means abolished, but many men ceased to patronize the licensed quarters. A number of houses had to be closed.

A group of influential Japanese gentlemen issued in the columns of a national newspaper an appeal for funds in aid of The Army's Rescue Work. There was evidence, moreover, that the unexpected homecoming- of so many liberated girls opened many doors for the Gospel, and not least for its proclamation by Salvationists. No doubt the remarkable standing rapidly gained by The Army in Japan may be attributed in no small measure to this agitation.

The amazing triumph in 1900 was only the beginning of a gradually extending work of rescue for women. Strange though it may appear, the days of danger were by no means over because the Ordinance had been issued, and this chapter of Salvation Army history should include at least a reference to a very valiant Japanese Officer who passed to his reward in 1923.

Fujio Itoh, in his youth, had been very pleasure-loving, but his

¹⁹ In 1898 there had been in Japan 50,553 licensed and some 80,000 unlicensed prostitutes, and 30,386 registered geishas

conscience was awakened when a friend, whom he had introduced to vice, committed suicide with a prostitute. Itoh, a skilled workman prominent in the Japanese labour movement, was converted, became a Local Officer and, later, an Officer in *Kyu-Sei-Gun*, as The Salvation Army is called in Japan.

From 1912 to 1923 he served as Rescue Officer at Tokyo Headquarters and dealt individually with nearly 1,200 cases, mostly licensed prostitutes. He helped nearly 1,000 of these to give up their 'calling.' Scores of times he risked his life. Near the police station, to which he took so many girls for the final seal of their liberation, men often waited to try to carry off the girls, or to injure the rescuer. They would call at Headquarters or at Itoh's home; twice, at least, Itoh was thrashed within an inch of his life and had to spend weeks in hospital. The brothel-keepers even tried to bribe him, sending coins or bank notes in boxes of sweets or cakes.

But neither to threats nor blandishments - nor to the influence of association with girls accustomed to a different type of man - did Itoh ever succumb. Hero and saint he remained to the end, a Salvationist Samurai.

'The name of Adjutant Itoh,' Isowo Ake, the Japanese Christian scholar and labour leader, has declared, 'will be permanently recorded in the history of the abolition of licensed prostitution.'

Discussion Guide...

4

Prostitution today

Prostitution law reform is a contentious issue in many societies. It's debated and hashed over, with different outcomes. "The managers of the commercial industry often promote pornography and prostitution as occupational 'rights for women' with many liberal feminists joining them in claiming that selling sex is a legitimate form of work. Masked as a freedom, selling sex is portrayed by the media as an exciting venture. But the realities of the sex industry around the world are sadly familiar. Vulnerable groups of women, exploited by the industry, driven by male demand and societies' complacency, find themselves used and abused – resulting in degradation, emotional trauma and even physical death.

No matter the context of every country's attempt to deal with

the reality of this evil trade in human lives, Salvationists agree that people were created for and with dignity and deserve to be treated as human beings. The commodification of women's bodies for the purchase and 'satisfaction' of sex buyers is not congruent with the values that we hold for all of humanity.

Consider this excerpt from an academic research paper "Bad for the Body, Bad for the Heart": Prostitution Harms Women Even if Legalized or Decriminalized by MELISSA FARLEY Prostitution Research & Education (<http://www.prostitutionresearch.com/laws/000165.html>)

Sexual violence and physical assault are the norm for women in all types of prostitution. Nemoto, Operario, Takenaka, Iwamoto, and Le (2003) reported that 62% of Asian women in San Francisco massage parlors had been physically assaulted by customers. These data were from only 50% of the massage parlors in San Francisco. The other 50%—those brothels controlled by pimps/traffickers who refused entrance to the researchers—were probably even more violent toward the women inside. Raymond, D'Cunha, et al. (2002) found that 80% of women who had been trafficked or prostituted suffered violence-related injuries in prostitution.

Among the women interviewed by Parriott (1994), 85% had been raped in prostitution. In another study, 94% of those in street prostitution had experienced sexual assault and 75% had been raped by one or more johns (Miller, 1995). In the Netherlands, where prostitution is legal, 60% of prostituted women suffered physical assaults; 70% experienced verbal threats of physical assault; 40% experienced sexual violence; and 40% had been forced into prostitution or sexual abuse by acquaintances (Vanwesenbeeck, 1994).

Most young women in prostitution were abused or beaten by johns as well as pimps. Silbert and Pines (1981, 1982b) reported that 70% of women suffered rape in prostitution, with 65% having been physically assaulted by customers and 66% assaulted by pimps.

Of 854 people in prostitution in nine countries (Canada, Colombia, Germany, Mexico, South Africa, Thailand, Turkey, United States, and Zambia), 71% experienced physical assaults in prostitution, and 62% reported rapes in prostitution (Farley, Cotton, et al., 2003). Eighty-

nine percent told the researchers that they wanted to leave prostitution but did not have other options for economic survival.

International statement on trafficking and prostitution:

"The Salvation Army recognises that there is a great deal of sex trafficking, and that the majority of those trafficked for sex are women and girls. It rejects this commodification of women in any circumstance – including pornography, prostitution and sex tourism - and works both to eliminate human trafficking for this purpose and to create alternatives for women who would otherwise be forced into prostitution." (http://www1.salvationarmy.org/IHQ/www_ihq_isjc.nsf/vw-text-dynamic-arrays/97D576234A111Co480257646005873Do?openDocument)

The Salvation Army has always been an abolition movement when it comes to prostitution. We want to see hope transform the lives of all women, children, and men who find themselves in the grip of sexual exploitation. One means is law reform that supports women's equality and the empowerment of women at risk of exploitation. Another is the grassroots connection of those already caught in the clutches of sexual servitude with a goal of their restoration.

Questions for Discussion:

1. Are you aware of the realities of prostitution in your country/state?
2. Do you know anyone affected by sexual exploitation?
3. Are you concerned about the reality of prostitution and pornography on the next generation?
4. What can The Salvation Army be doing to help combat sexual exploitation?
5. What can you do to support women and children at risk?
6. Does your culture support the idea of a man's right to buy sex? What can be done to challenge sexual norms that promote the notion of male entitlement to sex in your community/country?

Resources:

Getting Real: Challenging The Sexualisation of Girls (Melinda Tankard Reist) http://www.spinifexpress.com.au/author.php?author_id=36

The Johns: Sex For Sale and The Men Who Buy It by Victor Malarek (http://www.arcadepub.com/book/?GCOI=55970100736130&fa=author&person_id=308)

Women's Forum Australia <http://www.womensforumaustralia.org/>

FAAST (Faith Alliance Against Sexual Trafficking) <http://www.faastinternational.org/>

Coalition Against Trafficking in Women <http://www.catwinternational.org/>

Prostitution Research <http://www.prostitutionresearch.com>

Initiative Against Sexual Trafficking <http://www.iast.net/>

The Social Costs of Pornography: http://www.winst.org/family_marriage_and_democracy/social_costs_of_pornography/consultation2008.php

“Making Sex Work: A failed experiment with legalised prostitution”, Mary Lucille Sullivan, Spinifex Press, 2007

“The Idea of Prostitution”, Sheila Jeffreys, Spinifex Press, 1997

“Not For Sale: Feminists Resisting Prostitution and Pornography”, Spinifex Press, 2004

5

INDIA'S CRIMINAL TRIBES

THE word ‘challenge’ may not apply quite so literally to this remarkable chapter in Salvation Army history; the authorities *requested* The Army to attempt a very difficult task. The Salvationists’ response, however, was certainly a challenge to a widespread feeling that nothing could be done really to solve the problem. And the success of Officers labouring among the Criminal Tribes is now warmly acknowledged by all.

What or who are these ‘Criminal Tribes’?

India’s social life is dominated by the age-old idea of Caste - a conception which, with a few advantages, has grim disadvantages. From birth every Indian belongs to some caste: his life will be spent perhaps as a high-caste Brahmin, as an artisan, or as an Untouchable. Short of some miracle, nothing can change this order.

In his book, *Muktifauj*, the late Commissioner Booth-Tucker has several very interesting chapters on the Criminal Tribes - ‘all the members of which are devoted from the cradle to the grave to a life

of crime ... they glory in it, and regard themselves with all the pride of ancestry of warriors engaged in a perfectly legitimate war against society.'

While some parts of the land are rich in agricultural resources, in other parts the people have a struggle to exist. From time immemorial they have supplemented the scanty yield of their mountainous or desert homes by periodical raids on more prosperous, and generally less warlike, neighbours. Though these turbulent tribes have gradually been restrained, a widespread residuum of crime and criminals had remained to baffle the British rulers' best efforts.

In a smaller book, *Criminocurology*, long since out of print; Booth-Tucker thus described the situation:

On the one side are ranged the police forces of the Indian Empire, backed up by a powerful army. On the other side we find a compact phalanx of trained warriors - including men, women and children - often marshalled and led on by women-chieftains. They meet power with cunning, and force with fraud. They utilize the railway for rapid raids, the post office for remitting their loot. Locating themselves on the boundaries of different States and Provinces, they pass rapidly from one to another, baffling the vigilance of the police. Inured to hardship, adepts in every artifice, trained from infancy by their expert leaders, they carry on a guerrilla warfare which defies the combined efforts of an army of 150,000 police and 700,000 village watchmen to repress.

They are soldiers rather than robbers, though like other armies of a more civilized character they make the territory which they occupy contribute to their support. Unencumbered by weapons, ammunition or commissariat, they can move rapidly from point to point. Amidst the 675 States and 250 Districts into which India is divided, they can always find some easy-going officials who will turn their blind eye toward them.

The Criminal Tribes were reckoned to number several millions. Efforts to control, punish and reform them included an Act of Parliament which, however, was 'more or less permissive'; not even all the provinces of British Indian territory enforced it. Here and there

groups of 'Crimis' were induced to settle and work on the land, but when officials responsible for this policy were transferred or left India the lack of continuity made itself felt.

Criminal Tribesmen could not easily be persuaded to settle down to steady work. Their lives had been full of daring and adventure; to rob and plunder was almost a matter of honour with many of them. Commissioner Booth-Tucker, in *Criminocurology*, said that 'some 10 per cent of the male adults are away all the time from a village²⁰ on raids.' If one was arrested, a successor was chosen and sent out; the imprisoned man's family was cared for. If any man should shrink from a dangerous job, he was ridiculed by the women of the Tribe.

The Salvation Army's close association with the problem of the Criminal Tribes dated back to 1908. A Meeting conducted by Commissioner Booth-Tucker-The Army's pioneer missionary leader-at Bareilly, in Northern India, was attended by the Hon. Mr. Tweedy, then a member of the Government of the United Provinces and Commissioner of Rohilkhand. Mr. Tweedy, keenly interested in the Crimis, afterward asked Booth-Tucker whether The Army could not do something toward solving their problem. Proposals were submitted in due course to the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir John P. Hewett, and warmly approved by him.

The Army was asked to take over, to begin with, some 300 members of the Dom Tribe, who were under police control at Gorakhpur. For none too honourable reasons, the police were not eager to have Salvationists take over the Settlement; nor were the Doms. They declared that they would never give up drink and gambling, nor the robberies and other crimes with which they supplemented their legitimate income from road-sweeping and scavenging jobs in the city.

Commissioner Booth-Tucker, in *Muktifauj*, describes them as apparently 'very unpromising material.'

That, however, did not deter the Salvationists. Brigadier and Mrs" John Hunter-who in 1914 went down with the *Empress of Ireland*, on which they were returning from a furlough in Canada-were appointed

²⁰ 'Crim villages,' note Commissioner Booth-Tucker, 'are planned to facilitate escape, should the police appear on the scene; or to introduce booty unseen should the police be already there. A Crim village is like a rabbit warren Or they will scatter themselves over a wide area amongst out-of-the-way villages .. " There are chains of connecting posts reaching from the Himalayas to Bombay, Calcutta and South India.'

to this difficult work.

At every point they encountered prejudice and the force of age-long habit; but gradually their faith and love conquered. The Crims' refusal to wash their clothes was overcome, and by and by these dishevelled and ragged folk began to look clean. Visits paid by the Hunters to the many Doms in Gorakhpur prison added to the effectiveness of their work. They had the happiness of seeing a large number of the people in the Settlement soundly converted. The names of Bahadur and Ratna Bai, as they were known, are not forgotten in India.

he marked success at Gorakhpur led the Government to hand over to The Salvation Army other Settlements.²¹ One, a large dismantled fortress, another in a disused brewery, a third in a deserted railway settlement, yet another in an old jail.

It is difficult to imagine the condition of the Tribes when Salvation Army Officers took charge of them. The first to arrive at one Settlement, newly organized, were sixteen women and thirty-one children, with hardly a rag to cover them.' Everyone of their menfolk was in prison for theft or robbery. It was most difficult to persuade them to enter the Settlement or, afterward, to remain. But before long these Tribes were actually *eager* to come to The Army. One gang sent word that 'they were marching from a distant point to one of our Settlements, hiding in the jungles by day and travelling by night'!

Not infrequently, respectable inhabitants were much disturbed when a Settlement was to be opened near their city though they had long enough put up with the Crims being *in* the city and carrying out all sorts of crimes. Opposition arose for other reasons. Sir John P. Hewett, in a meeting at the Royal Society of Arts in London, told the following story:

Very shortly after certain Tribes in the United Provinces were made over to The Salvation Army, some Hindu members of the local Council raised a debate on the question. They contended that it was unfair to employ a Christian agency in preference to Hindu agencies.

But these opponents were in a minority. The Indian members, with few exceptions, were firmly of opinion that no Hindu or Indian agency was so fit to

have control of the Criminal Tribes as The Salvation Army. Every Mohammedan member voted in favour of the Government's decision, and a Brahmin, now one of the leading non-co-operators, made a speech on the same side. The voting in favour was something over forty, to about seven against.

In the Madras Presidency The Salvation Army was asked to see what could be done for the Yerikulas, who for many years had given the police much trouble. In 1912 it was proposed to intern about a thousand Tribesmen near the river Krishna, in a deserted railway settlement with about one hundred acres of land. In the neighbourhood were extensive stone quarries, where the men, women and children could be employed.

Many difficulties were encountered. The Tribe, nomadic, objected both to internment and to work in the quarries, which was hard and paid by results. Particularly were they prejudiced against The Salvation Army's religious services. They complained to Government that attempts were being made to lead them to *change their religion!* - a religion restricted to efforts to appease offended spirits by sacrifices and crude devil worship.

Major Charles Mackenzie (Anandham)²² was placed in charge of the Settlement and lived amongst these difficult Tribesmen for several years. His inexhaustible patience had its reward, and his efforts and those of the Officers who succeeded him were ultimately crowned with success. The Tribes came to recognize them as their true friends.

A significant story is told in *Muktifauj*:

One day the news flew round the Settlement that their Major had been assaulted by some caste people from Bezwada. The whole Tribe -men, women and children- rushed to the rescue, and it would have gone hard with the caste people but for the prompt intervention of one of the European Officers' wives (Mrs. Beatty). She was nursing her baby at the time, but seeing that trouble was brewing she laid her baby in its cot and rushed between the Tribesmen and the objects of their wrath in time to prevent bloodshed. She was afterward awarded a police medal for her plucky action.

In the marvellous change wrought in these hereditary criminals, for whose redemption most people had no hope, the Bible has played a considerable role. One Officer reported that every evening he saw lads on their beds reading the Bible. A group of lads would sit together reading verse by verse in turn, with evident interest... Many lads, when

21 *Capturing Crims for Christ*, by H. Pimm Smith.

22 Now Commissioner; has given more than forty years of missionary service in India

giving their testimonies, spoke of some story, incident or portion of the Scriptures which had influenced them to a decision for Christ.

After a distribution of Bibles at one Settlement, a lad asked to be given work and for his wages to receive a Bible instead of money. He was very poor and earned his living by doing odd jobs; but he wanted a Bible so that the family might gather at night, read the Bible and have family prayers.

For the annual Bible distribution at one Settlement, a settler from a new Colony-where a distribution took place later in the *day-walked four miles to make quite sure that he received a Bible*. This Settlement has a Women's Bible Class with over sixty members and a Men's Bible Class with a membership of over 'Crims,' who meet weekly for Bible study and prayer.

Day Schools have been set up in every Criminal Tribes Settlement. Among the Pans of Orissa - where no Settlement was established, but Officers relied on visiting the folk 'in their remotest haunts' - the supervision of some thirty-five village schools, started by the authorities, was entrusted to The Salvation Army. Before long, one of the district officials said to Lieut.-Colonel Wm. J. Johnston²³ who inaugurated this work: 'The Pans in the District last year showed the lowest record of crime of any caste. You will have to go easy, or there will be no need for The Salvation Army!'

It was no easy matter to find suitable and remunerative work for Crims, though in most of the larger cities of India there was an increasing demand for labour. The hope that, under wise and sympathetic guidance, they could be gradually absorbed in the ordinary channels of employment was realized in a number of places. In others the age-old barrier of caste rendered the process more difficult. In consequence, various industries had to be established in The Army's Settlements - purely industrial, or agricultural, or both.

A report dated 1916-eight years after this difficult work was begun-listed the following forms of employment provided by The Salvation Army:

OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT, in the ordinary labour channels during the day time; the settlers returning to their Settlements before dark.

SETTLEMENT INDUSTRIES:

- i. Silk.
 - (a) Growing silk worms.
 - (b) Reeling and spinning.
 - (c) Bleaching, dyeing and twisting.
 - (d) Weaving.
- ii. Weaving cotton or wool fabrics.
- iii. Darri and carpet making.
- iv. Mat and basket making.
- v. Treasury bags and box making.
- vi. Carpentry and handicrafts.

SETTLEMENT AGRICULTURE:

- i. Field crops.
- ii. Garden crops.
- iii. Poultry.
- iv. Donkeys, cattle, goats, sheep, etc.

MISCELLANEOUS:

- i. Quarrying stone.
- ii. Cutting forest.
- iii. City scavenging.

A much more recent Report, of 1938, includes the following list of occupations by which the settlers - once 'work-shy' were gaining an honest livelihood: weaving, agriculture, carpet-making, grass-cutting, needlework, mat-making, leather-work, munj mat-making, scavenging, carpentry, labour in outside mills. Some are engaged as domestic servants - evidence of their trustworthiness - and even as school teachers, both in the Settlement and the village schools. The womenfolk of these Settlements - greatly influenced by the work of the Home League -

have not only done much to help their husbands but, in some instances, have taken up nursing and midwifery.

The Times of India, dated September 9, 1921, reported on The Army's efforts at an Agricultural Settlement among the Maghaya Doms of Bihar, which had been established by Sir Edward Henry, who later became Head of the London Metropolitan Police. Though during twenty-five years much had been done there for the Crims, they showed little sign of reformation and, indeed, remained a source of anxiety. Then the Settlement was entrusted to The Salvation Army, and under the charge of a Norwegian Officer, Niels Corneliusen (Parmanand),²⁴ the difficulties were overcome. Said *The Times of India*:

Application was made to Government for twenty-five bullocks, which were sent. These the Doms refused to have anything to do with, and the Commandant (Corneliusen) and his assistants had to feed and tend them themselves.

The Commandant studied the nature of his people to see how he could make it seem to them to be worth while to take up work on the land. He commenced himself by cultivating a model holding. He arranged that the bullocks could become the personal property of individual selected families on conditions of easy payments. On similar conditions he parcelled the land out. He offered to guide their unaccustomed hands in the rudiments of preparing the ground and ploughing, and he offered to do all the actual sowing himself.

Now and for some time, to quote the Commandant, his people 'are mad' to take up cultivation. They are on their own, and will not stop.

The fields as I saw them were good to see, but in September, I was told, they are veritable gardens. These statements were confirmed by Mr. Amman, of Kharpokhra, a planter.

The assistants and some of the Doms own highly cultivated gardens adjoining their houses. These houses are well built of bricks and tiles and are surrounded by high walls.

There are practically no cases of bad behaviour on the Settlement and no complaints from outside. This is remarkable to those who know the Dom and what he was. But here the desire to prosper, to be respectable and at peace seems to have crushed out former propensities.

Their racial bump of acquisitiveness has been shown a more convenient way of development.

²⁴ Now Brigadier, retired.

There is moral and spiritual development also.... I saw some evidences of it, particularly in the teacher of the younger children's class. She is a Dom girl in her teens, a pure product of the Settlement, who has prospered in appearance and mental and spiritual equipment, whilst her parents have been hard at it prospering materially.

But the dominating factor of the Settlement seemed to me to be the personality of Commandant Corneliusen himself. Unassuming, practical and pious, he is a type not uncommon in The Salvation Army.

Behind quite a few of the industries lies a story of unusual enterprise, and even of romance. The Salvation Army has done some remarkable pioneer work in this field. The record of its silk-weaving experiments would make thrilling reading. The quality of the silk produced may be guessed from the fact that when the Duke of Windsor, as Prince of Wales, visited The Army's Silk Farm at Bangalore, he ordered silk shirting for his personal use. The introduction of artificial silk dealt the death-blow to this fascinating industry.

With the weaving industry will ever be associated the name of the late Major Frank Maxwell.²⁵ Beginning with experiments in rough packing case wood, Maxwell constructed the automatic hand-loom which carried his fame far beyond India, being awarded first prize at one exhibition after another. Light yet strong, cheap and easy to manipulate, after thirty years some of the earliest of these cam-action looms are still in working order. They are used not only in The Army's Institutions, but in many Indian homes; they are also a favourite with hundreds of Mahatma Gandhi's Swadeshi (home-industry) folk.

In Criminal Tribes Settlements in the Northern India Territory, hand-loom weaving has been a speciality. *Millions* of yards of cloth-in widths of from 18 to 108 inches-have been woven there on The Army's patent looms. Naturally much care has to be exercised and close oversight given, especially while the 'Crims' are unskilled in weaving work.

The advantages of hand-loom weaving are, however, considerable. Lieut.-Colonel Edwin H. Sheard points out that it provides work for men of differing capacities as weavers, and also for women as winders. The comparative isolation on the loom, and the application of mind necessary to become efficient, have a most wholesome effect on the

²⁵ *Voiceless Inventor*; by S. C. Gauntlett.

individual.

Goods of general utility can be manufactured, such as towels, kitchen cloths, table-cloths, serviettes, sheetings, suitings, shirtings and cloth of similar character, in which fashions change little from year to year, and for which there is a steady demand.

Work on hand-loom lends itself to payment by results.

In reformatory work of this character, when those to be helped are neither bodily nor mentally defective, it is clearly helpful -after the necessary training period on day wages - to put the workers on piece rates, as is done where power looms are employed. Rates per towel, or per yard of material, are fixed, which ensure to workers of average industry a wage generally higher for less working hours than is paid to the village weaver for work of a similar character.

Lieut.-Colonel Sheard (Fauj Singh)-now Chief Secretary of the Northern India Territory - was closely associated with the most remarkable piece of work among Criminal Tribes folk.²⁶ The Colonel, once a plumber and a Salvation Army Bandsman at Blackpool for public service in India was awarded the Kaisar-i-Hind Silver Medal (in 1916) and the Gold Medal (in 1924) ..

A number of years ago a notorious band of ' Crims ' who, from constantly shifting 'bases' in the dense forests at the foot of the Himalayas, had terrorized large tracts of the United Provinces, were at last captured. In three or four years they had committed over three hundred dacoities or robberies, involving many thousands of pounds' worth of property and over fifty murders. At least two police constables had been brutally done to death

The gang was under trial for nearly two years. To prevent their escaping, the men for most of the time were in irons - a bar of steel 18 ins. long attached to a ring of steel riveted round each ankle, the prisoner, when walking, having to hold up the bars by a ring connecting the other ends. The specially dangerous men, indeed, for some time had an extra bar fitted between the ankles.

Practically all these 120 men were sentenced to transportation for life-to the Andaman Islands,²⁷ which the Government was planning to

colonize, and in that project The Salvation Army's co-operation had been requested. The Sheards, who had worked among Crims in the United Provinces, were chosen for the difficult and not undangerous task. Actually, the *prisoners* had asked that Fauj Singh should go-an amazing compliment to his reputation!

They set out on a twelve hundred miles journey to Calcutta in charge of a large party of wives and children of convicts. The convicts, in irons, travelled in cells on the ship which took their relatives to the Islands, a four days' voyage. On arrival at Port Blair, despite the warnings of the authorities, Sheard insisted on the men's irons being removed. They spent some time in the segregation camp with their wives and children, after the long separation while they had been in the shadow of the scaffold (eight of the gang had been hanged in India).

On the Colony site, some twenty-three miles from Port Blair, temporary accommodation was fixed up. Soon the men were busy building their houses with material gathered from the forests.

Sheard planned the village which was to be established, himself pegging out the house-sites. Each house was to be detached and surrounded by sufficient land for a vegetable and fruit garden.

With few exceptions the people responded well to the opportunities given to them to improve their condition. Some had been taught weaving in The Army's Settlements in their homeland: a hand-loom weaving factory was started, and soon fair quantities of good cloth were being made. The Government gave the Colony a contract for the supply of convict clothing to the Andamans Penal Settlement; the men wove the cloth, the women making up the garments.

In a broadcast from London, in which he related this story, Sheard told of the dangerous situations that had to be faced from time to time. When he and his wife took charge, a police officer had urged them never to sleep without a revolver under their pillow.

I smiled (said the Colonel) but made no reply. The joke was: I hadn't got a revolver. It certainly looked as if we might need one, but my wife and I had agreed that our best plan was to trust the people we had come to help.... And, after over five years in the Andamans with that crowd of robbers, our answer is: 'The Eternal God is our refuge, and underneath are the Everlasting Arms.'

Fauj Singh and his wife devoted special attention to the spiritual

²⁶ *I Had No Revolver*, by F. L. Couetts
²⁷ In the Bay of Bengal, some 600 miles out from Calcutta

needs of the, 'Crims.' Meetings were held every Sunday and during the week; attendance was voluntary, of course. The Officers' mastery of the language of their Colonists was a great help. To groups or to individuals they were able to show that by allowing the spirit of evil to prevail in their lives they had brought sorrow and ruin to the places they had raided and misery to themselves.

Gradually, in ones and twos, these dark and often cruel folk decided for Christ; many in the Cottage Meetings held in the verandas of their village homes where, said Lieut.Colonel Sheard, "in the dim light of a hurricane lamp swinging from the low roof, we could kneel together on the mud floor, when they would enter into a new relationship with their Maker. There, in the heart of these lonely Islands, seeking and earnest souls found the Way of Life."

The sincerity of the men's determination was evidenced by their honesty in business dealings, and by the helpful attitude they adopted toward other Colonists. Not that this secured them any preferential treatment, for in the affairs of the Colony Christian and non-Christian were treated alike. A decision to serve Christ would mean a higher standard of conduct and no favours.

Mrs. Sheard, with marked courage and devotion, worked among the women and children and soon brought about a great improvement in their habits and appearance. The annual baby-show demonstrated the results of kindly, but definite, teaching on the care of children.

The Sheards were the only white people in the Ferrar Ganj Colony. All their helpers were appointed from among the Colonists: the Burmese cook, the Pathan orderly and the Punjabi bearer, like many others, had committed murders! But the Sheards' experience proved that even 'the worst criminals and the most uncivilized savages in the North of India,' as they had been described, were capable of the finer things of life.

The young people became most proficient in dramatic presentations of Bible and other stories. On Sunday all work ceased, and the Salvationists of the three villages with Bible and Song Book answered the call of the big brass gong and gathered in the Army Hall.

The Corps of the Colony had its Band-with a big drum given by the Chief Commissioner and flutes made of brass; a troop of Life-Saving

Scouts, and other sections of Salvation Army work.

The Army's work among 'Crims' began in 1908. Fifteen years later, *Muktifauj* gave the latest statistics, which told of seventeen Settlements²⁸ with some 7,500 settlers. The latest report to hand gives the number of Settlements as six, with a population of 4,351. The decrease is a tribute to the success of the work.

The Act governing the care of 'Crims' provides that any who-on the evidence of police records and of the Salvation Army Officers-have remained crime-free for a specified number of years may be released. In the course of the years large numbers of men and women have left The Army's Settlements and have become free citizens of the Indian Empire. Thus, for example, from Stuartpuram (Madras Presidency)-one of the largest Settlements, with over 2,000 settlers-over 1,500 *have been freed in this manner*.

One striking result of the Criminal Tribes work was reported a year or two ago. A former inmate, now converted and a Salvationist, secured at Presidency College, Madras, the Bachelor of Arts degree. The authorities commended especially his debating abilities, his thorough sportsmanship and his example as a Christian gentleman. He now occupies a Government position, the authorities having set aside, in his case, the regulations governing age of entry!

Discussion Guide...

5

Incarnation - The Strategy of Transformation

The early Salvation Army social justice campaigns were rooted in principles and practice. The Gospel principle of incarnation is manifest most profoundly in Jesus' entry into the muck and the mire of human experience and misery. From that place in occupied Israel, Jesus walked, lived, spoke and experienced all aspects of the human condition in order that He might communicate 'up close and personal' the message that God's kingdom has come.

This strategy of incarnation – embracing the realities of marginalised, segregated and exploited people groups, and bringing God’s message encased in real lives and spilling over with love, is still the Gospel message incarnate. In the early days, The Salvation Army embraced incarnation through the slum sister brigades that lived in the city slums in order to bring transformation from the inside out. In India, The Salvation Army (by request) entered the lives and communities of broken, criminal tribes and, due to the presence and power of Christ, saw transformation come to those people groups. This transformation is rooted in principle (the Gospel truth to change the inside of a person) and practical realities (the practical justice principles of meaningful work and a new start).

Booth suggested, in his classic social justice plan, *In Darkest England and the Way Out*, that both the condition and the circumstances of a man (and woman) must be changed. Incarnation is often the only way to change our perspective and embrace a people – the only way to communicate the full extent of God’s love and possibilities to change a people, a family, a community and an entire nation. Talk is cheap.

William Booth encouraged his officers to “Go straight for souls and go for the worst”. This was a strategy that encouraged The Salvation Army to embrace those people the world had lost hope for with a defiant faith statement that had social justice implications. No one is outside the loving reach of God. Every person has value and dignity and potential in God’s kingdom.

Questions for Discussion:

1. What areas or people groups has your world given up hope for?
2. What people have you lost hope for?
3. Do you have any contact with marginalised or exploited people?
4. Have you experienced any incarnational Christian communities? What struck you about them?
5. Where do you live? Why do you live there?

Professional Social Work:

Over the years The Salvation Army system of social reform has become increasingly professional. In many cases this is cause for great celebration – our services are offered in love and in excellence. In other cases the richness of Gospel principles like incarnation has been lost because of ‘boundaries’ and professional work practices that discourage personal involvement and faith integration. Things are changing. Social work without the transforming power of God working through people in love leaves us lacking results and desiring to see more of God’s kingdom come on earth. All over the world Salvationists have been embarking on the ‘Incarnational Strategy’ again – re-examining the call to go for souls and go for the worst – and embracing the early practices of Jesus in an attempt to communicate the Gospel with more than words.

Communities of committed warriors, willing to get down into the muck and the mire of human misery in order to offer a way out, are setting new standards and examples of how transformation happens in today’s context. Around the world, The Salvation Army has communities of people who have chosen to live in economically, spiritually and socially challenging places in order to be lights in the darkness. We join with other church bodies in this strategy and recognise and celebrate incarnation as a Gospel imperative that will reach the world with news of God’s kingdom come.

Questions for Discussion:

1. What is the strategy behind incarnation?
2. How do incarnational communities among the poor differ from how you have viewed church?
3. How does Jesus’ example teach us about Gospel strategy?

Resources:

6

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‘THE ABANDONED CHILD’

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GENERAL BRAHIMWELL BOOTH, in the last chapter but one of his book, *Echoes and Memories*, tells of one problem in the presence of which he always felt dumb.

It is the problem of suffering children. I cannot grasp anything tangible in the Divine purpose which permits little children to suffer. I cannot doubt His love. I know that wisdom belongeth to Him. All the same, I feel, not merely pain, but a sense of profound mystery when I approach the suffering of children. I hear above the voice of the crippled and starved another voice which stirs me. I am in the presence of the insoluble. I realize this in connection with those states of misery of the innocent and helpless, as I do not realize it even in experiences which might be thought more solemn, such as the presence of death or of widespread calamity.

That passage explains the passion with which The Army’s second General, when still a young man, threw himself into the fight against the abuse of small girls (see Chapter I) and the poignancy of some of his letters of those days. No doubt it also explains his earnest efforts on behalf of ‘the Abandoned Child.’

In H108a. Bill was brought before the House of Commons which was

to amend the Industrial Schools Act of 1866 and 1880, by making the provisions of those Acts, regarding “ the setting up and maintenance of Industrial Schools, and the committal to them of children found in certain circumstances, compulsory instead of permissive.”

Drafted by Bramwell Booth, the Bill was backed by a number of influential Members of Parliament. These included T. P. O'Connor, Atherley Jones, K.C., F. E. Smith, K.C. (later Lord Chancellor and first Earl of Birkenhead), and Ramsay MacDonald (years later to become Prime Minister).

A notable and in parts terrible book - *The Abandoned Child* - was issued by The Army's International Headquarters for private circulation among Members of Parliament and other influential personages. It contained a statesmanlike plea by Bramwell Booth, at that time Chief of the Staff of The Salvation Army; The Print of the Bill; and 'An Appeal to all Lovers of Children' based on thorough investigations made by The Army into conditions in many parts of Britain. The language of this latter document at times departs from the sober tone one would expect in a book of this kind; obviously the horrors disclosed, and the helplessness or indifferences of the authorities, had made a deep impression on the writer's mind and heart.

In 1908, 5,000 children of tramps were estimated to be continually 'on the road,' with consequences to their health, education and morals which can be only partly imagined. Among cases cited by Bramwell Booth in his introduction to the book are those of a tramp, all of whose seven children had been born 'upon the road'; and of two little girls living with their mother in a house of ill-fame: the mother had been repeatedly imprisoned for neglect or cruelty, but each time, on her release, *the children had been handed back to her!*

The book quotes a speech by Sir William Treloar, at one time Lord Mayor of the City of London:

One of the most terrible sights I ever see as a magistrate (said Sir William) is the sight of a big policeman bringing before me little boys of eight and ten years, charged with the crime of wandering. That means that the policeman found them, perhaps at three or four o'clock on a winter's morning, walking about wet through, shoeless, ragged, hungry, trying probably to eat a cabbage-stalk to keep their little bodies and souls together. It is from such as these we get our cripples.

To this latter statement, The Army's investigator added:

Ay, and far worse even than cripples, too; far worse! For he might have spoken of little girls - little girls who share equally in all the misery that befalls their brothers; and, in addition to that, are the victims of horrors unspeakable, of outrage, such as one cannot think of without shuddering, such as Sir William could not mention at a public gathering.

The 5,000 'children of the road' were but a small part of the host of endangered childhood whom Bramwell Booth and his helpers had in mind. It was estimated that 30,000 children ought at once to be sent to Industrial Schools. The book suggested that it would be better to relieve the parents of their responsibility for these children than to allow the boys and girls to become an army of criminals, loafers and outcasts.

The Salvationists agreed with the chief constable of a large seaside town who had declared that it was a very good thing to lift up men and women as The Army was doing, but far better still to take a child by the hand and prevent it from falling.

The published report of The Army's investigator - a 'toned-down' summary of the original, which contained stories almost incredible, and not fit to be read by the general public - is crowded with sickening examples of 'children of all ages not merely living in the same house with the most degraded of fallen creatures, but occupying the same rooms -the same bed.'

In the presence of such a problem, Bramwell Booth must indeed have felt 'a sense of profound mystery.' But, as many times before, perplexity led him and The Army to take action.

Back in 1866 - forty years before the Salvationist agitation began - Parliament had recognized' the need for protecting endangered children and had passed the Industrial Schools Bill. Industrial Schools were to rescue such children. They could also be used as a means of punishing youthful offenders - this being regarded as a necessary part of the rescue work; though a clear distinction was made between that and their primary object.

The Elementary Education Act of 1870 empowered education authorities to send truants to Industrial Schools. Alas! the new use soon overwhelmed the earlier purpose. By the beginning of the twentieth century, the redemptive function of the Schools, as The Salvation

Army's inquiries disclosed, had ceased almost everywhere. In large towns and cities, as well as in small places, The Army's investigator had found the same conditions: practically nothing was being done under the Industrial Schools Act; all was done under the Education Act. In the densely populated as in the sparsely peopled counties, no children were being considered, except school truants.

Moreover, even in the few places where something was being done for boys, the authorities had 'nothing for the girls'!

Many parts of the country had not adopted the Act at all.

Elsewhere it had been put into operation only because officers of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children had managed to make their influence irresistible.

The main defect-which the Bill sponsored by The Salvation Army set out to remedy-was that the Industrial Schools Act was only *permissive*.

Bramwell Booth pointed out that, under the Act of 1866, 'any person' *might* bring a child of under fourteen years 'found begging, wandering without home or proper guardianship, destitute, having parents in prison, who frequents the company of thieves, or who lives with or frequents the company of prostitutes' - before a Justice of the Peace, and the latter *might* commit the child to an Industrial School.

The Army proposed to impose on education authorities as well as on the police the obligation to bring such a child before the court. And the court, in turn, if its inquiry showed that the child should be dealt with under the proposed Act, *should* - not *might*, as previously - order him to be sent to an Industrial School.

Magistrates were to be empowered to issue search warrants, so that houses of ill-fame might be entered and children searched for and removed, as magistrates were already empowered to act under the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act.... This provision would mainly affect brothels.

It was further proposed to make it *compulsory* on the education authorities to provide any needed Industrial School accommodation, as it was to provide elementary schools.

Under the old system, as The Army's investigator stated, whenever a child was brought before them, many local authorities adopted a very

simple means of procedure. The clerk was asked two short questions and gave two even shorter answers.

'Will it cost us anything?'

'Yes.'

'Are we obliged to do it?'

'No.'

And here it often ended. Whatever happened, the rates must not go up!

The result was a gross inequality as between different towns. London, though far from perfect, ever since the passing of the 1886 Act had supported a staff of Industrial School officers, and according to the latest reports had sent 752 children to Industrial Schools. Liverpool, with about one seventh of London's population, sent 616. On the other hand, Manchester and Salford, whose combined population was nearly 80,000 greater than Liverpool's, sent only about 100 children - one sixth the number of Liverpool. Birmingham sent 120, Glasgow, 165, and Edinburgh only 21. In many districts absolutely nothing was done.

If all the country were worked as well as Birmingham, it was pointed out, the total of 4,061 would have been 10,000; if as well as London and Liverpool together, 14,000. If the country had received the same care as was given to Liverpool, the total of 4,061 would have mounted to 30,000!

Against the criminal reluctance of many authorities to spend money on the rescue of endangered children, General Bramwell Booth used this notable argument:

If, as has been recently stated on high authority, a child at birth is worth £5 to the State, and a skilled mechanic at twenty-five is worth £200 to the State, then it is obviously to the interest of the country that a child who is in danger of becoming a pauper, thief, hooligan, or unemployable, should be rescued so as to make it an asset instead of a burden. In this connection it may be mentioned that 90 per cent of the girls who have left Industrial Schools during the last three years, and 86 per cent of the boys, are now in permanent employment. It is submitted that the money spent on these children has been a good investment, for if it had not been

spent, the majority of them would probably have cost infinitely more to keep in workhouses and prisons.²⁹

What of the *results* of The Army's plea and its effort in Parliament?

The Bill drafted by Bramwell Booth passed the first reading and, while it encountered some criticism, its main clauses were accepted by the Under Secretary for Home Affairs Mr. Herbert (now Viscount) Samuel. These clauses were included in the Government's own Bill, which - known as 'The Children's Charter' - became law in the same year, 1908.³⁰

At this distance, it is of some interest to recall a few of the effects of the legislation resulting from The Army's agitation:

A parent, or any other person who has charge of a child under five years of age, may be fined a sum not exceeding £3 if he gives the child intoxicating liquor, except upon the orders of a doctor or in case of sickness or other urgent cause. A mother, even if she be a temperate woman, who allows her child to sip from the glass of beer she is taking, is liable to punishment. In the interests of children every citizen should see that this law is carried out.

Parents ill-treating or neglecting their children can be punished, if the ill-treatment or neglect causes or is likely to cause actual suffering or injury to health.

Children of drunken and criminal parents-and they must number many thousands-can also be sent to an Industrial School. If this clause of the Act is vigorously carried out, large numbers of such children may be saved from becoming drunkards or criminals.

Children living in houses of ill-fame, and associating with immoral women, can also be rescued.

A pamphlet published by The Salvation Army after the passing of the Act-more especially for the guidance of its Officers - concluded with this passage:

Many of the offences for which children can be rescued are in no sense crimes.

It is not a crime, for instance, to be the child of a drunken, criminal or immoral

²⁹ The cost to the ratepayers, as far as could be ascertained, would not exceed 4s. per week per child; most authorities admitted that it would be cheaper and more profitable for the State to spend money for the rescue of children than to provide workhouses, prisons, reformatories and similar institutions for those who are allowed to become failures for life.'

³⁰ Twenty years later, when Sir Herbert Samuel was Home Secretary, further reforms were provided for by the Children Act of 1928.

parent; or to associate with thieves.

It will, therefore, be necessary to strengthen the hands of the police, by bringing cases to their notice and assisting them in every possible way. If any citizen sees a crime being committed, his first impulse is to run for the police, so that the criminal may be arrested. He is bound to do this, or come under the penalty of the law; he is also bound, if called upon in the King's name, to assist the police in the apprehension of the criminal. *Is it not as important to save a child as to punish crime?*

Every Officer was called upon in the name of Christ to save His little ones from the road that would ultimately lead them to the abyss of vice, misery and crime. Just as no Officer would see a little child drown without attempting to rescue it, or see a baby starve for want of a little bread and milk, so no Officer would allow a child to be ruined in body and soul without doing his utmost to save it from perdition.

In the thirty-odd years since then, Salvationists throughout the land have done much to abolish the social evil against which this particular challenge was directed.



Discussion Guide...

6

Children and Poverty

Hope HIV is a non-profit organisation headed by UK Salvationist Phil Wall. Their slogan is 'Today's orphans, tomorrow's leaders.' They desire to transform the desperate crisis of African orphans into a strategy for hope and empowerment. In today's world, children remain the group most likely to be taken advantage of, marginalised and stripped of power and possibility. When AIDS and war strike a village it is often children who are left to deal with the aftermath.

The poorest 40 percent of the world's population accounts for 5 percent of global income. The richest 20 percent accounts for three-quarters of world income. (2007 Human Development Report (HDR), United Nations Development Program, November 27, 2007, p.25)

According to UNICEF, 25,000 children die each day due to poverty.

And they “die quietly in some of the poorest villages on earth, far removed from the scrutiny and the conscience of the world. Being meek and weak in life makes these dying multitudes even more invisible in death.” <http://www.globalissues.org/article/715/today-over-25000-children-died-around-the-world>

Around 27-28 percent of all children in developing countries are estimated to be underweight or stunted. The two regions that account for the bulk of the deficit are South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. If current trends continue, the Millennium Development Goals target of halving the proportion of underweight children will be missed by 30 million children, largely because of slow progress in Southern Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. (Millennium Development Goals Report 2007 . The report importantly notes that “As high as this number seems, surveys show that it underestimates the actual number of children who, though enrolled, are not attending school. Moreover, neither enrolment nor attendance figures reflect children who do not attend school regularly. To make matters worse, official data are not usually available from countries in conflict or post-conflict situations. If data from these countries were reflected in global estimates, the enrolment picture would be even less optimistic.”)

Despite the despair, some of today’s orphans are becoming examples to their peers as cycles of poverty are being broken through education and empowering strategies.

In the western world, the plight of children is usually more difficult to see.

Consider these statistics:

- › Striking disparities in what children know and can do are evident well before they enter their first year of school, and these differences are strongly associated with social and economic circumstances and they are predictive of subsequent academic performance.
- › “Children at risk for the worst developmental outcomes are

those who have a combination of biological and environmental risk factors; these risk factors operate in a cumulative fashion, so that the more risk factors present the greater the likelihood of a poor developmental outcome.

- › Children exposed to six indices of family adversity had 20 times the risk of adverse behavioral or cognitive outcomes compared to children exposed to one or none of the same risk factors” (The Centre for Community Child Health, 2000:10).
- › When children don’t have nurturing relationships to protect them, stress hormone levels remain persistently elevated, which have a toxic effect on the developing brain (Families and Work Institute, 2006:7). M.Ramphela, Managing Director of the World Bank states:

“The first few years of a child’s life have multiplier effect. Young children who are well nurtured tend to do better in school and are more likely to develop the skills they will need to compete in a global economy. Investing in young children is an essential investment in human and economic development.”
- › Researcher James Heckman states that ‘remediation for impoverished early environments become progressively more costly the later it is attempted in the life cycle of the child. The track record for criminal rehabilitation, adult literacy and late teenage public job training programs is remarkably poor (James Heckman, 2006).

Commissioner Joe Noland campaigned for kids at risk throughout his Salvation Army officership. As a young boy growing up in poverty, a neighbourhood family had invited Joe to attend a Sunday school. That experience led to his transformation and the reality of that conversion was a changed life, a new understanding and a new beginning. Suddenly, Joe’s options changed – he has lived a life full of value and contribution in a society where he would have been easily ignored and exploited.

The Salvation Army has always been convinced that children are the hope for the future. Many of our own leaders in the current

Salvation Army came from households of hopelessness and generational poverty – until Salvationists entered and offered hope for their future. Around the world, The Salvation Army has spent many years sowing into schools, homes, services and strategies to reach children who have been discarded by the world.

In western contexts today, the children's homes that were once established and led by The Salvation Army have been shut down and replaced by the Foster Care system. This is a new strategy designed by the social systems of western governments to reduce stigma and place infants into the care of a family unit rather than an institution. It is a great system in theory, but the realities of foster care are often far from ideal. Notable exceptions are those life-giving families who have responded with open homes and hearts to kids caught in the system and without families in the world.

I recently spent time with a leader of The Salvation Army who heads up the program operations in a number of countries - he was a foster child himself. Taken in (along with 30 other kids) by members of The Salvation Army women's league, this man was taught his value and told a new story of hope that transformed him and his future.

Although children in the foster care system need justice, there are also the majority of kids that grow up outside of 'the system', but are still locked in fragile, low socio-economic and otherwise unsatisfactory situations.

The good thing about having this information is that we have an easy way of helping. Solutions include salvationists getting involved in a child's life: helping them with homework, playing sport, providing nutritious food, reading to them, listening to them, providing a nurturing relationship. Helping a four year-old child could radically change her entire life and all it might take is reading her a few stories and providing a few fun activities each week.

Questions for Discussion:

1. Are you aware of the realities of children at risk in your city or community?

2. How have you engaged in reaching children with hope?
3. Have you considered opening your home and doors to the unwanted children of today?
4. Do you know any people who foster? What is their experience like?
5. Would you consider getting involved in a child's life?

Resources:

- <http://www.globalissues.org>
- <http://www.themicahchallenge.org>
- <http://www.unicef.com>
- <http://www.makepovertyhistory.org>
- <http://www.fostercaremonth.org>
- <http://www.hopehiv.org/>

7

IN FRENCH CONVICT SETTLEMENTS

THE problem of the overseas penal settlements of the French Republic-with which The Salvation Army grappled in the years preceding the second world war-is not, strictly speaking, a 'social evil' like those with which this series has dealt so far. It is the outcome, however unfortunate, of an attempt to solve another problem-or rather two: the safest and most profitable disposal of convicts, and the situation in French Guiana after the abolition of slavery decreed by Parliament in Paris in 1848.

By that decree, Guiana, 'the marvellous garden of Equatorial France,' was deprived in one day of all its man-power. The liberated Negroes were able to live without much work, by fishing and collecting the wild fruits of the forests.

The colonists were faced with total ruin. Within two years the primeval forest had overrun the cultivated land and less than ten acres remained cultivated throughout the countryside. So convicts were to supply the required labour.

In 1852 the first convicts were sent to Guiana from France.

By the end of that year no fewer than 2,220 had been landed. An average of 1,200 convicts have been sent practically every year since then to the Guiana penal settlements-at Saint Laurent-du-Maroni and at Cayenne on the mainland; and on the 'Isles of Salvation' as, ironically enough, they are called. These latter consist of Devil's Island³¹ (the smallest), Royal Island and St. Joseph.

But the climate and the conditions under which the men live are so terrible that, despite the importation of a total of 70,000 men, the convict population of the Settlement has long been decreasing by 400 a year!

Let us consider the different classes of men in these Settlements, or the stages at which they have arrived. The first are the *transportés*-described by Pean as

men found guilty by a jury and sentenced by a judge to hard labour. They may have committed murder or manslaughter; burglaries, armed thefts or ordinary thefts; or certain immoral acts. 'Transportation' is to give forced labour the character of punishment and intimidation, to contribute to the condemned man's reformation, to safeguard society, and to further colonization by the convicts' labour.

In August, 1938, when The Salvation Army arrived in French Guiana, the number of 'transported' men was 3,303. Some of these men-according to their conduct and the time they have served - are allowed to secure jobs as servants in private houses; or they have been 'let out' - ceded - or assigned to work for private individuals. They return to the Settlement each evening; the employer pays the authorities so much per man per day.

The physical condition of the convicts, as well as their spiritual state, deteriorates terribly amid the stench of immorality, in which all the

³¹ Devil's Island-a small rocky island jutting out of the ocean about twenty miles from the coast of Guiana, and covered with coco-nut palms, is reserved for convicts found guilty of political offences. (On it was confined from 1894 to 1899 Captain Alfred Dreyfus, the victim of a political intrigue whose 'case' divided the French public into opposite camps for more than a decade.) The island is charming enough for an hour's sojourn (says Major Pean); the exile, very often an intellectual, is surrounded by the immensity of the ocean; he remembers his country and his loved ones, who call him and that is his punishment.

The appellation 'Devil's Island' is now popularly applied to the whole of the penal settlement in French Guiana.

vices germinate and grow. Each new arrival contributes all he has of vices, diseases, corruption and obscene stories. As Pean says,

the horror of Convict Land is the hell in the convict himself. Its torture is due not to the military warder, but to the convict's corrupt nature, with its terrible demands and unquenchable thirst which drive him to the vices he abhors, and in the end destroy in him all that is human.

The Army's pioneers found also some 1,700 *relégués* - 'relegated' men, who are considered incurable and sent to the Camp at St. Jean du Maroni - and about twenty *déportés*, 'deported' political prisoners guilty of high treason or who have escaped the death penalty. These live in isolation on Devil's Island proper, need not work, can correspond freely, and after five years' good conduct may secure permission to live at Cayenne, where some of them engage in trades.

Those in whom The Salvation Army was particularly interested were the *libérés*, 'liberated' men: over 1,500 in 1933. Criminals condemned to less than eight years³² penal servitude must, after serving their sentence, remain in Guiana for a further number of years equal to the term of their sentence-hence the name *doublage*. The 'Administration' no longer houses or feeds them; in fact, is not interested in them-except to try to capture and then punish them if they attempt to escape across the frontiers of French Guiana.³³ The intention behind this law of *doublage* was to prevent the return of convicts to France (the high cost of the return voyage is another deterrent) and to assure the Colony a constant supply of man-power.

The plight of the *libérés* is the most pitiable of all. They leave the Convict Settlement enfeebled, morally corrupted and brutalized. On account of their vices, nobody is willing to employ them. Most of them become drunken idlers -beggars or thieves-despised by the civil population.

About twenty years ago public opinion in France began to demand some amelioration of conditions in the Penal Settlements.

At the beginning of the century (says Major Péan in *Devil's Island*³⁴, a perturbing report was published by Pastor Richard; then came letters from the convicts that

³² If the sentence exceeds eight years, they must- 'liberated' - remain in Guiana for the rest of their life.

³³ Escapes are, of course, frequently attempted. Few succeed and many men perish in the pitiless jungle, or at sea if they have tried to get away in a boat.

³⁴ Hodder & Stoughton. (Now out of print.)

had escaped the censorship of the Penitentiary Administration and further revealed the reprehensible state of affairs. A tragic book was written on the subject by the anarchist, Liard-Courtois, who lived in the Penal Settlement for five years. This was followed by a series of articles by various journalists, notably those written by Jacques Dur, and culminated in 1925 with the alarum sounded by Albert Londres in his contributions to the *Petit Parisien*. His book, *Au Bagne*, which followed, at last thoroughly awakened public opinion.

Government decrees issued toward the end of that year 1925 - 'designed to improve the conditions of the convicts, reduce the authority of the warders, and decrease and regulate disciplinary measures,' did not achieve much. Three years later The Salvation Army secured Government permission to send an Officer to Guiana for the purpose of a first-hand investigation and an exploration of the possibility of some work of amelioration on behalf of the convicts and liberated men.

In July, 1928, Charles Péan was dispatched to the Penal Settlements. Two years later appeared one of the most tragic and terrible books in Salvation Army literature *Terre de Bagne* (Convict Land). It contained Péan's journal from July 17 to September 13, 1928, including a month's close inspection of the Guiana Settlements.

Péan received a cordial welcome from the authorities in Guiana, as well as from many of the convicts and *libérés*. One of the remarkable features in his record is the attitude of the men in charge of the Settlement and of the Governor of Guiana. The latter expressed to the Salvationist investigator the hope that The Army would not only seek to undertake ameliorative efforts, but succeed in abolishing the *doublage* residence. The Governor's final word was: 'I beg of you to use all your influence to have the Penal Settlement suppressed altogether.'

Major Péan saw the various sections of Convict Land in all their stark horror. One of the worst experiences was a visit to the 'New Camp,' which at a distance looked inviting, but soon revealed itself as the 'ante-room of the grave, the very door of hell.' Here were housed over 260 sick and dying men, suffering from the most repugnant diseases-tuberculosis, paralysis, syphilis, cancer, leprosy. Rarely did even a doctor call. 'No one who has visited the "New Camp" can have any difficulty in imagining hell,' says Péan.

Another dark picture is given of the isle of Saint-Joseph, with its

black cells of solitary confinement, in which are locked away those who have tried to escape or been guilty of disciplinary or other grave delinquencies. There they spend from six months to five years of their convict existence. The madmen are also kept here, and their screams and other outbursts attract the attention of passers-by.

In some ways even more terrible appears the Relegation Camp at Saint-Jean-' a rotting scrap-heap of humanity, the dead end of the Settlement.' Epileptics and idiots and such like here live herded together with paralysed, tubercular, syphilitic and cancerous men-all in nameless misery.

But worst of all, to Péan, was the prevailing hopelessness.

A man sentenced to relegation is simply a variety of convict, just as slime is a variety of mud (he wrote). What generally characterizes him is the terrifying number of convictions. He is a recidivist. He has stolen often - very often - little or much.

Arrived at the Penal Settlement, he continues to steal; it has become a passion with him. Some have ten, fifteen, twenty convictions; others have thirty or even more. Few murderers are to be found amongst them.

In the Relegation Camp the regimen is the same as in the other camps. What makes the situation of these convicts worse than that of the convicts of Saint-Laurent-who, nevertheless, have committed worse crimes-is that relegation is always for life! Not more than two per cent obtain a pardon.

The whole question of the guilt of these men appeared as one of the great problems. Many were thoroughly bad; others had committed a capital crime in a moment of mad anger or under the influence of drink. But some few appeared to be quite innocent of the crime of which they had been accused, and a large number had committed offences or crimes which certainly did not seem to warrant condemnation to this hell on earth. A man was considered a criminal even if he had been caught in the *attempt* to commit robbery with violence - if he had so much as broken a lock in order to steal, though the robbery had not occurred. The intention was enough!

The Camp Commandant told the Salvation Army Officer: 'I expected to find here dangerous bandits, and I find weak types of character,

mainly peaceable, but of feeble will and spirit. Some are mentally deficient pilferers, not clever enough to escape from the gendarmes, nor sufficiently intelligent to profit by their exploits.'

To which Péan added:

I feel sick at the thought that these relegated men are victims rather than culprits, and that the law in hitting them has missed its proper objective. Evidently the main object now is to get rid of these recidivists, The solution is simple, but not very worthy, It seems to me that to be condemned to imprisonment for life in the Penal Settlement is very severe punishment for men who are habitual thieves. If relegation freed the country from those wholesale defrauders who fleece honest people of their savings, something might be said for it. But that kind is usually much too clever to be caught. Relegation is reserved for those who know neither how to live well nor how to steal successfully!

Quite a few of the men in the Settlement had had some contact with *l'Armée du Salut* in France. The Army wanted, of course, to help them all, though the investigator's chief interest was centred in the more than two thousand *libérés* about half of whom roamed in the bush, where many perished without anyone worrying about them.

The really critical period of a convict's life begins after he has served his sentence and begins his *doublage*. Deprived of food and lodging, and shut *out* of prison, only a few find occasional occupation, and then only if they are skilled mechanics, masons or painters, etc. The others just earn a few odd coppers when they can, spending them on *tafia*.³⁵

Such an idle existence soon makes the men hate themselves; they become disgusted with life, live by plunder or similar expedients, sleep anywhere and eat little and rarely. They become like some evil flotsam, carried along and buffeted without resisting. They have nothing more to lose, and are ready for anything. Some become so dejected by this terrible law of *doublage* that they do all they can to be condemned once more to the Convict Settlement.

In Europe (wrote Major Péan) internment in the Convict Settlement is imagined to be an inhuman punishment simply because of the scandalous treatment meted out to the men. Actually it is made odious chiefly by the degrading vices which prevail, by the absence of obligatory work, the lack of right ideas of punishment, the absence of all justice; by the sufferings engendered by liberating a man after subjecting him to a system which forces him to become physically, mentally and

³⁵ morally lower than he was when he arrived at the Settlement-and then condemning decent men became raving and vicious.

him to living conditions worse than those of his imprisonment!

It seems impossible that in this twentieth century such an altogether scandalous and futile system could exist; that over four hundred warders, employees, deputy directors and directors should be engaged in a penal service, the only result of which is the almost complete physical and moral degradation of 6,000 men, at a cost of thirty million francs a year.

Of the few *libérés* able to obtain work, hardly any manage to save enough to pay for the long voyage home to France. One man, after several years in the Convict Settlement, had his case revised and was found innocent. He was given a small indemnity, but this did not even cover his fare to France. And though he had been proved not guilty, he was still looked upon as a convict.

The thought of wives, mothers and other loved ones tortured many of the men in the Guiana Settlements. Péan wrote of one who, for a not very serious crime, had spent ten years on the rock made famous by Dreyfus. He had just obtained his pardon, and was earning 250 francs per month at a job he had obtained. By eating only one meal a day, he hoped to obtain decent clothes and save up the large sum of 2,000 francs for the return voyage. All the time he was thinking of his unhappy old mother living in France in utter misery. Tears filled his eyes when he spoke of her.

Could The Army help him to find work when he returned to France? he asked the Major. His one thought was to be of some assistance to his mother and to make up for all the distress he had caused her.

If a man really managed to get back to France, who would employ him - his only reference being from Convict Land?

In the summer of 1933-five years after his first voyage of investigation - Major Péan returned to French Guiana, with three other Salvation Army Officers, including a married couple. Another young Officer, expert in agriculture, followed some time later, when the Cayenne' Farm Colony' was being opened.

Hundreds of miserable men welcomed the Salvationists.

The authorities also received them kindly and endeavoured to give all assistance possible. Nevertheless, the beginning of Salvation Army work in the Penal Settlement was not altogether encouraging.

A number of *libérés* clamoured for employment when a huge one-story building was taken over at Saint-Laurent and fitted up as The Army's *foyer* (Home) - with dormitories, dining hall, kitchen and a hall for Meetings and recreation. But on the day of the opening-when many leading men attended - the newly-engaged cook celebrated by getting drunk and being locked up. The two 'house-boys' also 'celebrated'; one was found under the stairs, the other in the bread trough!

Many of The Army's first 'customers' indulged freely in *tafia*. By ten p.m. half of them, no longer able to find the door to the Home, kept walking round the garden fence! On the morning after the opening, the Officers found that the cords of the flags, half the tools from the workshop, three sacks of charcoal and all the cutlery from the restaurant had been stolen; likewise the reserve of meat and the cook's cap.

That was only the beginning. Worse was to follow, including an exceptionally tall Arab's murderous attacks on the Salvation Army Lieutenant. The first time, the Officer's jaw was broken; the second, he narrowly escaped having his stomach slit open by the Arab's dagger.

The work itself was increasingly heavy. The Officers' average day was from 5 a.m. to 11 p.m.- in such a climate! Yet, when the distance of their Quarters from the *foyer* caused some difficulty, the Captain and his wife moved cheerfully into the Home, sharing the life of these *libérés*, eating with them and sleeping under the same roof.

Rarely can any Salvationists have laboured amid such degraded characters, men who had long despaired of themselves and whose mental and nervous condition was bound to be affected by the climate. Yet this 'work of amelioration' produced its Converts, whose stories must be among the most remarkable to which The Army can point.

As a rule the Camps were visited on Sundays. Into the 'library' - an innovation since Péan's previous visit - would swarm several hundred convicts, sitting, standing and even hanging from the window bars! A gramophone reproduced moving songs of Salvation; the words and melody of these were soon picked up by the men, who listened most attentively to the Gospel message.

For the liberated men, the Officers held Meetings at the *foyer*; and every Tuesday evening the Captain gathered the little group of

Converts for Bible study and prayer. The changed lives of such men bore magnificent testimony among the *libérés* to the power of God's grace.

The employer of one told Major Péan that before his conversion this man had been continually drunk and incapable of work. Now he no longer touched alcohol, and was a model employee. When the employer-the mayor of the town entertained officials and numerous bottles of champagne were opened, converted *libérés* were requisitioned; the mayor knew that they would not touch a drop of the champagne! Lemonade was provided for their use.

Another Convert, who had been a persistent *tafia* drinker, was appointed 'guardian' of the town square. On Sundays he filled his haversack with Gospels, New Testaments and Bibles, and hawked them in the surrounding villages. When the steamer from France arrived, he would go on board and offer Bibles and Salvation Army periodicals to the passengers. Thanks to his zeal, all the crew of the steamer possess Bibles. Such successes compensated the Army Officers for many hardships, dangers and disappointments.

At Cayenne a *big shed* at the quayside was rented, to be turned into a carpenter's *shop*.

Later, a building with three large halls was made into a home, called *La Maison de France* (the House of France). *Libérés* could sleep in the shelter, and in the restaurant eat their meals. A much-frequented restroom has table games and so on.

The first Meeting in the Hall in this building witnessed the marriage of a young Officer with a plucky girl Lieutenant who had arrived from France that morning. In *Devil's Island*, Major Péan gave a moving picture of a Meeting, with the songs and testimonies of twice 'liberated' men.

At the Penitent Form of this Meeting Hall not a few 'hopeless' men have found life in Christ. One, unable to work or even to walk about, sat himself outside a shop and distributed Gospels to passers-by. In less than a fortnight 800 accepted these booklets and he sold eight New Testaments and fifteen complete Bibles.

The Cayenne Officers also visit the penitentiary and the hospital, where they conduct Meetings and distribute copies of *En Avant* (*The*

War Cry) and other good literature. From time to time they also pay visits to the three 'Isles of Salvation.'

In some ways the most interesting of The Army's ventures in French Guiana has been the Farm Colony at Montjoly, eight miles from Cayenne. A peninsula - facing toward far-distant France - was purchased and, aided by *libérés*, the Officers cleared away the jungle growth, irrigated the land, and developed a market garden and a banana plantation,³⁶ a chicken farm, piggery, etc. They also erected buildings, which they furnished with tables, chairs, beds, etc., made at The Army's workshop in Cayenne.

Here, too, Meetings have been held and conversions registered. The latter, one senses, have been due particularly to the personal influence of the Officers, who share the men's hard life and labour and receive as salary hardly more than they.

Major Péan records a brief conversation with a *libéré* whom he hardly recognized from a previous encounter, so changed was he.

'In a year I shall soon be through, you know,' continues the lamplighter.

'And what will you do then?'

'Oh, there is no question about that. I shall have earned my passage. *Vive la France!* And long live The Salvation Army, for without you I should have croaked in some hole.'

The Lieutenant joined us (said Péan), for night had fallen and he was afraid that I should break my neck on my return journey to the farm.... On leaving the kitchen-garden I remarked to the Lieutenant:

'This man is a *relégué*, sentenced eighteen times for theft - and you make a watchman of him!'

The Lieutenant smiled.

'He is the only one who does the rounds conscientiously,' he said. 'You see, he was converted several months ago, and now gives full satisfaction.'

At the time of Major Péan's second visit, of which he wrote in *Le Salut des Parias* (The Salvation of the Pariahs), the men working at Montjoly received - in addition to board, lodging and pocket money -

the equivalent of forty francs per month. They were encouraged to save this, and when 800 francs had been accumulated The Army would give in exchange a ticket for France costing 1,750 francs.

Back to France! The Army has enabled hundreds of men to return to their native land-men who had not believed that they would ever see it again.

The returning men were up against great difficulties.

Their impaired health, their police record and the suspicion of the public were formidable enough. Apart from those who have been received back into their families or into The Salvation Army's social institutions, very few have survived the ordeal.

Devil's Island gives a memorable description of the arrival back in France - or, in several instances, in North Africa of such men, of some after thirty or more years' absence. One moving story concerns a young man whose return The Army Was *able* to expedite in *view* of the serious illness of his mother.

The father waits at the railway station of Saint-Lazare in Paris (wrote Major Péan). Since yesterday afternoon he has been telephoning us constantly to know whether the mail boat has arrived, and now, as he paces the platform, he cannot restrain his impatience. From the last third class coach descend a group of men; their suitcases, deck-chairs, torn and shabby clothes, and the tan of their skin make doubt impossible. Surely these are our Salvation Army party from Guiana.

'Is Verber there?' I inquire of the group.

A young man turns. 'I am Verber,'

The two men embrace amid tears.

'How is mother?' murmurs the son.

'You must come quickly!' is the only reply.

When father and son reach home, the dying woman has strength left only to put her emaciated hand on the head of the son as he kneels at her bedside. It is her last movement. While the prodigal sobs: 'Forgive me, mother, oh, forgive me!' she passes away, content at last to have looked once more on the face of her boy.

Everywhere, *l'Armée du Salut* has been in evidence as The Army of the Helping Hand. What magnificent work these French Salvationists have done!

Besides its ameliorative work in Guiana, The Army in France for years worked hard to secure the *abolition* of the Penal Settlement - an endeavour which, as we have seen, had the support of the authorities out there.

The ways of governments are often devious and difficult to understand. After a suspension of convict transports, another 'shipment' was sent to Guiana toward the end of 1938 - to the bitter disappointment of the reformers, among whom Salvationists were very prominent. Ironically, men condemned for major crimes were to serve their sentences in French prisons specially adapted for this purpose; but men condemned to relegation or exile in consequence of numerous but generally minor delinquencies were still to be sent to Guiana.

However, that chapter in the tragic story was a short one.

The war - which incidentally cut off the handful of Officers in Guiana from moral and financial support by their comrades in France³⁷ - made further transportation of convicts *impossible*. The latest word is that the new French Government not only will discontinue the practice but will, as soon as feasible, bring back to France the men still in Convict Land.

The Army's work in that terrible field, already curtailed by the abnormal decrease in the convict population, which has had no reinforcements for five years, will thus soon come to an end. But The Salvation Army will never forget the heroic labours, under most distressing conditions, of the French Officers out there. It glories also in the remarkable success that has crowned the persistent and self-sacrificing challenge to the system on the part of its comrades in France.

³⁷ During the greater part of World War II they became the care of The Army's Central America and West Indies Territory.

Discussion Guide...

7

Prison Reform

Because of our work among the poor, The Salvation Army has always been involved in prison reform. By that I mean both the care and protection of the prisoners themselves, along with advocacy and policy work that ensures a just and fair treatment of every person in the correctional system. Even though most justice systems claim to be 'blind' and 'fair' - it is the poor that are crowding the prisons. A toxic combination of lack of resources and unjust societal systems seem to work prejudicially against those who lack economic security.

The Salvation Army has always been present with and an advocate for prisoners. Indeed prison reform is some of our earliest work.

In Australia, James Barker led the way to establish the first Salva-

tion Army social institution anywhere in the world on a permanent basis.

In 1883, Barker leased a small house in Lygon Street, Carlton (Vic) to provide accommodation for prisoners discharged from Melbourne's jails. This led to the formation of the Prison-Gate Brigade, the members of which met discharged prisoners upon their release and offered them a home and the prospect of a job. The efforts of Barker grew quickly and The War Cry reports only two years later; "The Melbourne Prison-Gate Brigade Home since its establishment 4 years ago, had received 3,982 men, and had supplied 82,284 meals and 27, beds; while since its establishment in August 1885, the Ballarat Prison-Gate Home had received 227 men, had supplied 27,677 meals and 7,244 beds.

"The Rescued Sister's Homes, established in February 1884, had received some 2000 women, of whom upwards of 100 had been restored to their friends, 25 had been married, and 8 had returned to their husbands."

Now, in many nations around the world we have chaplains, court workers and volunteers who work daily in jail cells and prison blocks to provide counsel, support, representation, rehabilitation and programs for people accessing court, prison and post-referral services. Jesus talked about setting the prisoner free in his mission statement in Luke's Gospel, chapter four, and William Booth left a stirring poem about his commitment to fight against the unjust system of prison in his day. Both understood that when the poor are treated unfairly it will be reflected in the prison population. To this end, The Salvation Army offers services and provisions to convicts, and their families. The Social Parliamentary Unit in New Zealand released a study that calls for Prison Reform called, 'Beyond The Holding Tank' and launched the rethinking crime and punishment project. The "Rethinking Crime and Punishment" project including the website (<http://www.rethinking.org.nz/>) were launched on the 26th of October, 2006.

"Rethinking Crime and Punishment" is a strategic initiative to raise the level of public debate about the use of prison and alternative forms of punishment in New Zealand. The Salvation Army and

Prison Fellowship New Zealand have joined to lead this project, with support from a wide group of significant stakeholders.

The stated purpose and aims of the group:

In the western world, New Zealand is second only to the United States in the rate at which it locks people up. Whatever your view of prison, there is a need for fresh thinking, new ideas and a much wider public debate. This project aims to facilitate this debate to raise the level of discussion about prison and its alternatives. It aims to increase public understanding of and involvement in the criminal justice system and inject fresh thinking into the public debate by: improving public understanding, promoting fresh thinking about alternatives, and promoting active community involvement and engagement.

This project will propose new, imaginative and creative ways to address a serious ongoing social issue. The boundaries of this programme have been deliberately left fairly open. It has national significance, and is intended to create alternatives to prison, and community based responses to crime and punishment.

This project will support approaches which actively involve members of the public in the criminal justice and penal system. We propose to engage such groups as business leaders, the judiciary, the families of offenders, churches and community groups in dialogue and debate. We will also publicise the ways in which volunteers can get involved in the criminal justice system.

New Zealand offers a model of active engagement with the contemporary social justice issues around prison reform. While much of their work emerged from the social provision of prisoners, they have moved beyond the problem and are seeking to challenge the root causes of injustice through prison reform.

Questions for Discussion:

1. Do you think your current justice system is fair?
2. Do you have any idea of the economic or racial background of

prisoners in your nation?

3. Why do you think the poor are over-represented in most correctional facilities?
4. Have you ever known someone in jail?
5. Do you know a chaplain or court worker that you can speak to about these issues?
6. Have you considered visiting prisoners?

Resources:

Rethinking crime and punishment: <http://www.rethinking.org.nz/>
 Boundless Salvation DVD (for full story of prison reform: <http://www.boundless salvation.com>)
 Prison Fellowship

Conclusion:

I remember hearing Gary Haughan, founder of the International Justice Mission, talk about the people who wish they had been around during the 60's when they could have fought for civil rights in America or have protested the Vietnam War. Yet, as Gary suggests, some of the greatest injustices on the planet are happening right now! I have the same tendency as a Salvationist. I can read these stories of the courageous fight against injustice and dream about having lived in the 'good old days'! What I wouldn't do to have been part of the brothel invasions in Japan or the criminal tribes in India. Yet, the reality is that the fight against injustice is as fierce now as it has ever been. The Salvation Army is positioned as a global movement of people committed to challenge the evils of our society – today! We can be part of the new and living history of our movement.

There is room for everyone to get involved to stop the fastest growing crime on the planet in human trafficking. Absolutely every person can be part of ending extreme poverty in our lifetime! Every person can choose to engage in day-to-day justice by living in broken neighbourhoods around the world – offering the gospel up close and personal. We can invest in areas where our life and efforts can

result in changed lives and broken cycles and new futures for generations of people. This is the good news of the Gospel and the full salvation that The Salvation Army champions by its existence.

Catherine Booth, the co-founder of the Salvation Army used to tuck her children in at night and tell them, 'you were born to change the world.' She was right. And this book project is about reminding you that in many ways she is tucking us in tonight. Whispering in our ears the stories of ordinary people who with extraordinary effort and supernatural energy rose to confront evil in their day. Now, it's our turn.

