

# 50 Articles of War

GEORGE SCOTT RAILTON

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ON

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Why are we spared to commence another year? Is it merely that we may look back with thankfulness to the good times that have been, and talk about them? Surely, if God had wished us to be thus occupied, He would have transported us to a world where nothing unholy could break in upon our festivity—nothing to slightly mar our vision.

But here are these poor people shivering in the cold, and the wretched drunkards staggering out of the public house, and making merriment for the crowd which comes pouring out from the theater where they have had three hours' fairy-land. The policemen must find it very cold such a night as this. But what must the poor women feel like, with no huge great-coat, shawl over head, and not even the prospect of a warm bed and a fire in the morning?

And the millions now asleep—how many of them would awake to a bright day of glory if the great cry were to be raised just now, "Behold the bridegroom cometh"? Ah, there is a greater work for us than the contemplation of the past, or the recital of its joys. There is a great work yet to be done. Millions of miserable ones call upon us to come and rescue them from the eternal woe to which they hasten.

We have only begun yet. God has mercifully spared us to go on, and we must press forward as long as He lends us breath, or millions must die, as millions, alas! have died already, only to perish.

## A GOOD BASE

is necessary to a safe advance. An army cut off from all its supports, with enemies on every side, and with no other alternative than a surrender at discretion or a wild adventure, may possibly escape, and may even effect some grand achievement; but, as a rule, the army which succeeds is that which,



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starting from strong positions, and keeping up constant communication with them as it leaves them behind, goes on from stronghold to strong, founding each forward movement upon some safe place of defense.

We are always hearing of people commencing "the struggle or the battle of life;" and yet how few, alas! have any foundation on which to build their life-conflict! And, oh, how hopeless and weary that conflict is without that only sure Refuge, that only foundation worthy of the name, Christ Jesus, the Lord!

Wandering aimlessly along, snared and taken, driven hither and thither, sore, broken, dismayed, and confounded, the poor servants of Satan are far from help and safety, and can only expect destruction to overtake and overwhelm them at the last.

Thank God that so many have found in Him a resting-place during the past twelve months, and have started upon a new career, with the prospect of victory before them!

But how many of those who know that all their springs are in God utterly fail to keep up that constant resting upon Him, and drawing of support and supplies from Him, which are indispensable for anyone who wishes to make solid progress! "This poor man cried and the Lord heard him, and delivered him out of all his distresses."

But the Lord does not hear *that* poor man do anything of the kind and therefore does not deliver him. He goes on through a certain round and services and life, and if you come across him twenty years hence you will find him just where you left him, if not overcome by the world altogether.

Poor fellow! he may have his name inscribed amongst the members of many a good society, and may be made a deacon, or an elder—perhaps even a minister; but as to making any advance not founded upon the power of God, it is out of the question. He will be in 1876 and 1886, if still in the land of the living, just what and where he was in 1875, only with so much more time and opportunity gone.

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God wants us to advance, and will never allow us to want anything we need for the purpose if we only fall back upon Him; but if we flap our wings ever so we shall rise no higher by our own exertions. He insists upon bearing His people upwards Himself, and if we want a year of progress, we must have a year of God.

## WHITHER SHALL WE ADVANCE?

A question for each one to decide for himself. Is there anyone who has got *all*, and wants nothing? Is there anyone who sees no blessing to obtain, no task to perform, no difficulty to surmount, no benefit to confer on anyone, no one to reach with a message of merely, no one to lift up, nothing to pull down? Oh, miserable one, you have lived too long!

Our hearts were gladdened but the other day when heard of a statesman, who seemed to have got to the end of the list of reforms he desired to see accomplished, declaring his intention to attack the monster Drink, and, in spite of all his mighty hosts, to put some limits on his destructive power.

But you, ye kings and priests of God, who have a Divine prompter and a task which no man in his own strength can perform, you who represent God Himself, and upon whose activity the whole world depends for salvation—you who have not an hour, it may be, left to complete your preparation of the Master's way before Him—have you nothing left to do? Will you suffer yourselves to rest in this 1876?

Can any of us console ourselves that our work is all done—that there are no forms of evil, no companies of evil ones, no haunts of vice for us to attack? Ah! it may seem an idle question in this East End; but let us remember, that to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin. To see great work for us to do as yet untouched, great enemies to overcome as yet unattached, and to remain just where we are, to do no more in 1876 than in 1875 will be sin.

Death is advancing everywhere. Today in the colliery, tomorrow on the seas, whole companies of our fellow-men are snatched away in a moment. Before the end of this year sixty-eight thousand more will be gone into eternity from

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London alone. We have no time to lose. We must be quick indeed, if we would have a word with thousands, ere they pass away from our reach for ever!

England held its breath while it read of the exploring party underground picking slowly their way along the miners' dark alley amidst the deadly afterdamp, and finding at length, a mile from fresh air and daylight, one poor living body—a man nearly dead, but living still. Oh, how the strong brave men rejoice to hear him back, and what a glow of hope the news inspires as the blackened, mutilated form comes up—only to die.

My brothers, there are millions around us slumbering in Satan's awful embrace. Their souls are poisoned within them. They have been dashed against the unchanging laws of God by a thousand fierce explosions of passion, and they lie dying in the dark. But they are alive yet.

Oh, shall we not rush to help them—to save them if we can? Our Leader, our Hope our Master, went forth into the deepest darkness. He went on, and on, and on, till the horrid afterdamp of sin overwhelmed Him, and then, flinging us His light with His latest breath, He told us to go on to the very end, giving ourselves to the very death to save the rest. "I will rise again and be with you even to the end," He said. He is risen. He is with us. It is His cheering voice that has encouraged us, and His strong arm that has sustained us to this hour.

Let us push along farther and farther still amongst the masses of ruined men around us, giving ourselves no rest until we have spread throughout the world the honors of His name who bought us with His blood.

Have we not been too ready to accept some settled order of things, and to go through the same round of work month after month, flattering ourselves that we were really doing a great deal, and "could not be expected to do much more" although we knew all the time that what we had done had not proved sufficient to overturn the kingdom of hell, and bring multitudes to Christ?

"But we have had open-air service every day all through this winter, and there is something doing in our hall every night." Very good. Praise God!

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But what about the people around the hall? Are there not streets very near it in which no open-air service has ever been held, because there are better stands elsewhere? Are there not thousands of people within a small distance who have never once heard our voice? Is every day a great day, and every service a great success? We have got a great God. We must never be content with little things. On! on! on!

The country is before us. In many a great population there exists no successful agency such as ours for the salvation of the masses. Town after town, in the terrible wail of sin and misery that goes up from its crowded hives of industry, cries aloud, "Come over and help us!" We must rouse every talent, every voice, to respond to the mighty appeal.

But above all, London lies before us. Its vast throngs utterly eclipse the claims of any other city. Half-a-dozen of our largest manufacturing centers put together cannot match the vast roll of its artisans and laborers. Along these weary miles of streets a nation of poor people are pacing daily to the grave. Here lurk a tribe, they tell us, of 110,000 people of the criminal class, whom an army of 11,000 police watch and prevent from making a general onslaught on the huge stores of wealth which abound more and more every year. Here are hundreds of thousands of people who never bowed the knee to God, who never read or heard His Word, and are as far from Him as any race of men can be. Whatever we may be enabled to do for other cities, the four millions of London must ever claim our first and best attention; for what would a hundred halls and a hundred evangelists be amongst so many?—one for every 40,000; and we cannot imagine that anyone would dispute whether, in addition to all that others do, there was not ample work for one of us amongst such a population.

Oh, how the very thought of the mighty burden lying at our door overcomes us! How can we go on writing about it, or talking about it? We must be off to hold up Jesus before these hundred cities in one. God help us to be faithful to our mighty calling!