



The
William Booth
Collection

ESSENTIAL MEASURES

Hadley Wood
Tuesday 25 December 1911

My dear Brigadier and Mrs. Deleri Singh,

I am sending this Xmas time the assurance of my good wishes and prayers to my Commissioners and TCs throughout the world.

Of all men what a chance you have to do something that will help the Army to make a name for God and Christianity.

Sir John Hewett (then the British Government's Chief Administrator for the United Provinces of India) called to see me at Headquarters when last in London and the way in which he spoke of the effective methods we practise for teaching the Criminal Tribes and the tone of respect with which he referred to our people generally cheered me immensely.

But greater things still have happened since then and are going to happen but it is the salvation work in which you are more particularly concerned on which I place my good reliance.

We are the only people who have taken our stand to the extent we have on conversion and the benefits that flow out of it and we must keep this great feature that is salvation to the front. God bless you and your dear wife and make you both more than ever a great blessing to India.

And now, I find that I shall not be able to go any further with my own pen, but there are several things of very considerable importance, not only to you, but to other Territorial Commanders, that I should like to say as to what I consider some of the essential measures that must be taken, in order to make our work the triumph that we all desire.

I am, therefore, going to dictate them to a confidential secretary, and send them to you and to others who occupy similar position. I shall trust to your reading them,

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reflecting on them, and considering wherein and to what extent they apply to your own responsibility, and the manner in which you are dealing with it.

You will admit that it is likely that I should know something of the measures necessary for effective work, and the manner in which that work should be discharged. It would be a shame if after 66 years experience I did not. Well, without any boasting I think I know what course a Territorial Commander should follow in order to reach the goal on which his eye is fixed, and secure the success which is expected from him.

I will strive to lay these down in as brief a manner as is possible, and with the recollection of my years, the honour God has put upon me, the effective work I have done, the fact that you are my selection for the position you occupy, and, I may say also, the love you bear me, I have ground for expecting you will not disappoint me.

Before, however, I come to the main topic of my letter, I think you will expect that I should say something with regard to the present condition of my health and the prospects I entertain for its restoration.

On this, although I cannot report a complete recovery, I think I am gradually approaching it, and the doctors whom I have consulted, some of them the most eminent men in their profession, assure me that there is good ground for hoping that the operation on my eye will restore my vision, and that, with care and a reasonable limitation of my labours, I may calculate on staying with you for some years to come. And now, to the main object of my letter – you will remember that I want to lay down some of the principles that are essential to success and:

1. I remark that the first and foremost of these is the absolute necessity for SPIRITUAL LIFE.

Without life there can neither be affection, beauty, useful labour or any other good thing, but, on the contrary, everything that is powerless, repugnant and injurious. Even the woman who has thought for so long that husband or children were necessary to her very existence says, when death intervenes, 'Give me a piece of land that I may bury my dead out of my sight.' And if you are to have life, with all its advantages in

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your command as a whole, you must have it in individuals.

If you want life it will not help you to have a large number of dead people. The quantity will not produce the quality. You must have men and women who have life individually.

When dealing with officers, soldiers or professors of religion of any description, the first question should be: 'Is this man really a regenerated man? Is he converted?'

2. The next essential to successful fighting is right Salvation Army training, and training that takes in the detail of every important class of work to be discharged.

One of the drawbacks in the way of training is that those who are trained are not always made to understand the detail of the duties they will have to discharge. It is impossible to set the value of Thoroughness in Training too high. I am supposing that you have got the hearts of your young officers in your hands, and, as you know, neither men nor women, whatever their abilities may be, will be lasting service in The Salvation Army unless their hearts are right with it.

And now, having got the hearts of your people, what you want to do is to secure and instruct their brains. You must take them to the sort of ground they will have to occupy in the future and place before their eyes the sort of work they will have to do. You must point out their shortcomings, applaud their budding abilities, and not let them go out of your hands until they have not only the desire but the ability to do the work for which they are designed.

3. The third essential to your success is FAITHFUL OVERSIGHT of the officers whose work and destinies are placed in your hands.

a. This will include a correct knowledge of your officers. Beware of hearsay, gossip, the belittlement born of envy, the slander that comes out of that bitterness which ever wants to pull down anyone who is, or gives the promise of being, better or more useful than those who entertain it are themselves.



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When you hear an evil report about an officer, get to know what proof there is of its correctness. Do not be afraid, follow it down and you will often save a wrecked reputation and a broken heart. Oh, if you only stand up for the people who ought to be stood up for, what gratitude you ensure.

b. Faithful oversight will include direction as to duty and all that concerns it.

c. It almost amounts to cruelty to put officers down without careful guidance to the discharge of duties, which priests and bishops, who have spent years of studying and practising, would stagger at.

You must help them in their talking; help them in their praying; help them in their singing; help them in the management of their soldiers; help those who are engaged in office or other work behind the scenes, and see that they get a share of work on the public battlefield; help them all as far as you can to do their work, and do it well, and you shall share in their reward.

d. Faithful oversight will include the exercise of impartial discipline.

You must be disciplinarian or you will be a failure – but you must be an affectionate one, an impartial one, and if your discipline is based on these qualities it will not only be accepted, but those who are disciplined will ‘kiss the hand that gave the blow’. And, if your discipline has the core of affection running through it, it will show itself after the fashion of the child who said, ‘Whip me father, but don’t cry.’

I very seldom give a man a difficult task to perform or make a difficult requirement, but I ask myself how far I am acting in the spirit of self-denial and sacrifice which I expect from him.

4. The fourth essential to success is ENCOURAGEMENT. I have seldom, if ever, known either officer or soldier who has not been subject to strange visitations of depression, often bordering on despair. Sometimes these visitations are to be accounted for, and sometimes, on the other hand, they are a perfect mystery, and unless a superior officer is prepared to make allowance for such trials in the treatment of his people he



is not fit to have the control of the lives and labours of men and women – often with superior qualities to those possessed by himself – however devoted he may be.

But with regard to clouds so dark as those to which I have referred, there are always, especially in young people, times when Satan or some natural weakness suggests to the officer that it is no use – he has misused his vocation – he will never make anything out – he has made a fool of himself, and he is tempted to write to his friends, if he has friends, and tell them he is going to give up.

Now, it is worth a king's ransom in these moments of darkness for an officer who has influence to come in and find out the good qualities of the downcast soul, spread them before him, cheer him up, and send him forward with a new life.

I know how valuable such words of cheer have been to me in the years gone by, and I know also the fact that some of the first writers, and speakers and governors of men that the world has ever known have been subject to such times of depression.

While you deal faithfully as to the sins and shortcomings of those under your command, cheer up the people who deserve it, my comrade – cheer them up again, and again, and again.

5. Another quality essential to successful leadership is the discovery of SUITABLE WORK for those under your direction and making them do it. No man, woman or child can keep the grace of God alive in the soul without making some constant effort for the spiritual welfare of others. The profession of a man who claims to be a Christian when he does not possess the Spirit of Jesus Christ is a positive contradiction, and it is impossible to possess the Spirit of Jesus Christ without making it manifest in such efforts as Jesus Christ himself would make, were he in the same circumstances.

6. The sixth force required for the creation of the sort of Salvationist we desire is EXAMPLE. Show the people about you what they must be. Show it to them, and show it them by your own life, your own activity, your own zeal, your own manner, your own work, and your own faith in God in times of difficulty and storm.



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This is the only way you can make men and women understand many things that are essential to their happiness and success, and this is the only way by which you can make them seek and enable them to find these treasures.

For instance:

- a. It is the only way you can show them the value of a satisfying assurance of a personal salvation.
- b. It is the only way of making men and women see and feel the charm of holiness, the gladness of salvation, and the many other things which a Salvationist ought to possess.
- c. It is the only way you can create in them a restless love for souls, and make them realise the joy that comes with the saving of them.
- d. It is the only way in which you can inspire them with courage. When they see you dare they will dare. When they see you go through floods, fires, persecutions and devils to gain your end, they will want to do the same.
- e. This is the only way in which you can create in them that loving and enduring zeal which is, as it were, the life blood of The Salvation Army, and without which it would languish and shrivel up, lose its beauty and become a byword instead of blessing to the world.

It is good to possess this spirit of zeal, the spirit that can flame out and stir up everybody within your reach. It is good for you to go about commending and approving lives of risk and daring for the sake of souls and the sake of your command; but it is better still to show it them in *your own life*.

You can tell a man that he should be holy, tell him that he should be on fire, tell him that he should fight, tell him these things over and over again, but he will say, 'How am I to do it?' But when he sees you do it before him he will be likely to try himself, and if he tries and keeps on trying he will succeed.



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'Do as I say and not as I do' is felt to be as impotent, if not as ridiculous, as ever it was; it stamps the man who demands it with inconsistency, nay, with insincerity, and ensures failure in the long run.

I do hope that in your daily life you are striving to manifest those economies which have so much to do with the happiness and influence not only of your own peace of mind and that of your household, but of everyone about you, whose eyes are ever on you and who are continually asking in their hearts whether you are living in harmony with what you profess. The very existence of The Salvation Army is closely connected with the practise of Christlike economy.

Do not think me unnecessarily particular on these things, but I feel compelled to say that I attribute a very large part of the great influence that God has given me in the world to the fact that my simple life has impressed those who have been watching my career. They have said 'Judging by this man's practise, he evidently believes what he preaches.'

Good-bye, my comrade. This is only a poor reflection of my feelings towards you, my sympathies with you in your arduous work, and my longings for the prosperity of your future and your ultimate meeting in the World to come.

You will know that I am building on you and that I never think of this great work and its future in my mind without associating you with the self-denial, toil and skill which have been so unceasingly connected with the Army's continuance and extension, and I am anticipating seeing you in my mind as I lie on my dying bed, and as I cross the River, and looking down upon you from Heaven itself, and blessing you there.

William Booth