



The
William Booth
Collection

SERGEANT-MAJOR DO-YOUR-BEST
OF DARKINGTON NO.1

CHAPTER IV: A LOVER OF THE JUNIORS

Now, there's one more thing about our Captain which I like, and I won't say any more after that, lest you should think I am partial, and have favourites, which I haven't, except it is for those who come up to my notions, which I have told you what they are, so that you can judge for yourself.

But there is one thing I do like our Captain for, and that is, he is the boy for the Juniors. Now, perhaps it is through Sarah drilling it into me at home that it's the children that makes the men and women Soldiers of a few years to come; and perhaps it is through thinking that I might have been a Captain myself, or perhaps a Divisional Officer, if there had been anybody to make me a Junior Soldier; or, perhaps it is through having seen the children of so many of my neighbours, and some of our Soldiers, grow up to be drunkards and ne'er-do-wells, for want of being taken bold of when they were young. I don't know, but I do believe in the Juniors, and I do want to see them done well for.

Then, perhaps it is because our Junior Corps has been so shamefully neglected for some years past by some of our Officers, that has made me think so much more of what our Captain has done for it.

There was Captain Highflyer. He told me himself that he was not going to spend his precious time, and his God-given abilities, on a lot of ignorant children. He had something more important to do. His mission was to their fathers and mothers: he would get them saved, and they must look after the children.

Then, there was Captain Mary Tall-talk. Why, the first week she was here she met the Junior Locals, and addressed them for three-quarters of an hour about the importance of the children being saved, and about the way the thing should be done, and a great deal more, but she never lifted her little finger towards doing it. Bless her, she had a good deal to do, and worked very hard at it, but she did nothing for the children.



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There was Captain Bigheart. He worked night and day, himself and his Lieutenant, and made quite a respectable thing of the children's meetings; but not having made a proper Junior Staff, and taught them how to keep our work going, it nearly all fell away when Bigheart left.

Now, our Captain, you see, goes into the work like business. He has fixed himself up at some of the meetings, and he takes his appointments like a machine. He examines the Junior Soldier Locals, visits the sick children, and loves and labours for the youngsters as conscientiously as he does for the Seniors.

And he has some blessed times with them, I can tell you. Why, there was dear little Patty Paleface, who was sick for six weeks. He visited her almost every day, and talked and sung to her, and took her nice little cups of milk stuff with his own hands, that his wife made for her. And when Patty died it was like Heaven to be in the chamber, and half the place came to the funeral, and he got her drunken father and back-slidden mother both saved at the memorial service.

Yes, I like our Captain. Long may he live! I have only one regretful feeling about him, and that comes over me when I think of the day that he will be taken from our Corps. But God must have many more as good as he is in this blessed Army, for I thoroughly believe in our Officers.