

WOMAN  
IV

Comrades and Friends, — I commenced this series of Messages on the position, privileges, and duties of Woman, by describing the treatment some members of my own family had received at my hands.

I then went on to insist upon the equality of woman with man, and to ask for a higher estimate and a more generous recognition of her position in the family.

I now want to show more particularly what position should be given her in the Army, and what work she should be expected to perform there.

I am sure you will agree with me as to the value of the Salvation heroism she has displayed in the past years of our history.

She has descended into the foulest slums of the great cities.

She has sought out and rescued the most hopeless of her own sex.

She has fought and conquered the roughest, coarsest, and wildest of men.

She has presented a holy example to the most ignorant and savage tribes of the heathen by living amongst them.

She has nursed the sick and blessed the dying; and, following the example of her Lord, has laid down her own life in her efforts to deliver others from destruction.

On the other hand, her ministrations have found access to the hearts, and a welcome to the homes, of the richest and highest of almost every land where our Flag is flying. She has filled



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with honour the most important positions of authority in our ranks, and directed with success many of our most difficult enterprises.

Indeed, she has justified every demand ever made by The Army upon her capacity, her courage, and her love.

Woman has done well for The Salvation Army.

The names of these heroines can never die. I prophesy that their memories will be handed down from one generation to another, and will constitute an inspiration to The Army as long as time shall last.

The heroines of the present are before your eyes. The unselfish devotion, unquestioned capacity, and dauntless courage of our women warriors, form a large part of the strength of every Corps in The Salvation Army.

Yes, God be praised, much has been done by woman in the past, much is being done by woman in the present, but much more is going to be done by the woman of the future. To that end more must be done for her.

We have done something important for her already. We have welcomed her to the platform and to the council chamber. We have set before her an open door to every position of power and usefulness in our ranks.

I. — But, we must go further, and in order to do so, let us search our borders for the women suitable for leading positions.

There ought to be a post created, if it does not already exist, for every capable earnest woman now found fighting under the Flag, and a suitable woman ought to be found for every post which woman is specially qualified to fill.

But that time is not yet, although we have travelled some distance towards it. If every woman were to have the work assigned her for which she is best adapted, together with some training



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for its performance, and some encouragements as she went along, think what a blessing to the world would be the result!

There are thousands of women capable of rendering valuable assistance to the cause of God and humanity, who only need to be discovered, trained, and set to work. These unoccupied Soldiers must be hunted out.

Let every husband in this Corps help us in this search by asking whether his own wife is doing all she might for God, and let every father and mother assist us by asking the same question with regard to their daughters.

I do not leave the sons out of my calculation; but I cannot help feeling that the capabilities of our girls for this warfare are in more danger of being overlooked than those of our boys. Moreover, the latter are not under consideration at the moment.

II. – We need to be at more trouble in the selection of positions and work suitable to the character and ability of the women we have already called to action.

The abilities and opportunities of women, like those of men, differ. Some can give time in the day who cannot give it in the evening, and others can give time in the evening who are fully occupied with home and other duties during the day.

Then, tastes and inclinations vary. Some will find real pleasure in visiting the sick, others will be more suited to the task of caring for the new Converts; while others will be willing to sell our papers, and prove successful in doing so.

III. – We ought to encourage the women to stand up more courageously to the difficulties connected with the positions they already hold.

The old prejudices against women doing public work, together with their natural timidity, and the foolish notion so often entertained that their place is in the background, have too often deterred them from coming to the front, or maintaining positions there when they have been assigned them.



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Indeed, the difficulties with which many of our sisters have to contend in the discharge of public duty are far greater than those encountered by men in similar work, and a word of cheer, spoken at the right time and in the right spirit, will often keep a woman going in a track of usefulness, who would otherwise be likely to lose heart and retire from the front.

Let us continue to pray for these Comrades, and count upon and love them more.

Let us banish the mean, selfish heathen, and unchristlike habits that so largely prevail of depreciating the value of woman, using her merely as a passing makeshift, only required for lesser duties and subordinate positions.

On this important question woman must do more for herself. She has not always done all she might have done to maintain the position given her, and effectively discharge the duties connected with it.

I appeal to the women of The Army everywhere to boldly rise up, enter the door of opportunity so widely set before them, and, by a devoted discharge of the duties devolved on them, justify the stand I have taken and the words I have spoken on their behalf.

God bless our women Soldiers, and grant that my labour and my plea for them be not in vain in the Lord.

Your affectionate General,  
William Booth.