

not pretend to follow any recognized Church polity. The leaders allege that the New Testament does not prescribe any definite ecclesiastical order, and that they are at liberty to organize their followers as they think best. Now we can understand those who maintain that scope is left for the Church in successive ages to adapt and adjust its organization to new conditions of society; but for any one man to assume authority to put aside all the indications which we possess of the pattern followed by the Primitive Churches of Christ, and to institute a brand-new system, placing preachers and people under his own unchecked authority, must be noted as the evidence of a wilful and peremptory mind. No goodness of motive can make such arbitrary action right or safe.

The relation, too, which this Army proposes to bear toward existing Churches requires some comment. It claims credit for being "not antagonistic to the Churches," and no doubt it is true that it does not openly assail them. But just as the "Brethren" disparage the Churches as impure, so the Salvationists disparage them as supine and inefficient; and in this manner they harden rather than heal the alienation of the proletariat in our large cities from public worship and orderly Church-fellowship. They act in a manner quite different from the well-understood practice of the great London City Mission, which seeks not only to visit the poor, but to bring them to attendance and communion at some recognized Church or Chapel. It seems to us that if the Salvation Army is to gain a lasting influence, and to promote edification as well as conversion, it must form itself into some kind of Church for the people, like the Primitive Methodists. We say nothing of Mr. Booth's right to add a new item to the puzzling list of sects, or of the practical difficulties which he will have to encounter when he attempts a further development of his system. The dilemma is one which he must have foreseen. It is all very well to emphasize the aggressive element in our religion, but growth in Christian knowledge, formation of Christian character, and guidance of the Christian life have also to be provided for; and these ends cannot be attained by the shout and clang of a *soi-disant* Army.

What awakens our most serious misgiving is the intentional sensationalism of

Mr. Booth's system. We cannot agree with those who consider that any and every method of presenting religious truth, however wild and extravagant, is to be justified and commended if it can be shown to have done good. Some people exclaim: "If sinners are converted, drunkards made sober, thieves induced to steal no more, black sheep turned white, what more would you have? How can you blame methods which bring about such blessed results? Do not the ends justify the means?" Indeed this plea is expressly advanced in one of the authorized publications of the Army: "If it can be proved from the results that these methods lay hold of the ignorant and godless multitudes, compelling them to think about eternity, and attend to their souls' salvation, we think they are thereby proved to be both lawful and expedient, and such as should command the approbation of all good men."

This notion, indeed, prevails beyond the bounds of General Booth's command. Lay preachers of an ardent temper have been heard to announce that they would stand on their heads in the street, if thereby they could draw attention to the Gospel, and save souls. They were eager to be counted fools in so good a cause. It seems to us a quite mistaken view of duty. A Christian is to behave himself wisely. If his wisdom be constructed as folly, he is not to be deterred or turned aside by ridicule. But he is neither required nor warranted to adopt any extravagant methods, or expose himself and the sacred cause which he seeks to advance to the contempt of the public.

When objection is taken to the clamor and hubbub of Salvationist meetings, and the free-and-easy familiarity with the most sacred names, reply is made that what might shock and offend refined people may suit and benefit the unrefined. It is alleged that they cannot assimilate religious truth and conviction but in ways that their betters may count fanatical. We doubt this very much. We question its necessity, and dispute its utility. It cannot be well to teach the people to comport themselves before the Divine Majesty in a manner on which they would not presume in the presence of an earthly superior. And the greatest historical exemplars tell against it. There is no indication that Jesus Christ had descended to a lower and coarser method when "the common people heard