

*GEN. BOOTH'S SCHEME.*

The support, the extraordinary ready and substantial and widespread support, which General Booth's scheme is receiving, will, no doubt, surprise many of us. We think how many established and proved agencies of social amelioration are in our midst, hampered or languishing for want of funds, which will not flow in to any appeal or undeniable evidence of good work done. Then comes along Mr. Booth, writes a book, propounds a plan, says "Give me the money to carry it out, and give it to me at once;" and lo! it is given, without hesitation, without delay, without stint. The Prince of Wales gives the thing his blessing, the Duke of Fife gives it a check for 100l., Canon Farrar throws his heart and soul into it, and Mr. Bancroft makes offer of a thousand pounds.

We do not here discuss Mr. Booth's scheme. If it is a good scheme we have no sort of jealousy because it did not originate in the English Church, nor do we grudge one penny of the funds which keep pouring in to support it. But it is extremely interesting and instructive to note how the world is still led and governed by individuals; how a powerful personality asserts itself irresistibly upon us, and makes us dance to its tune. If Mr. Booth's scheme had come upon the world from some unknown person, or even from some corporate body, it would not have won its way so immediately. And this is so, not merely because Mr. Booth has shown his genius for organization in the Salvation Army, it is because it is a single, living individual. Few of us have wit

enough to judge a thing on its merits. Somebody charms us, and we yield ourselves unresisting to the spell, only too glad amid life's confusions to have found a visible head, to whom we are ready to intrust everything.

We have noticed a statement in a South Wales Liberal newspaper which is noteworthy. It is to the effect that a Nonconformist minister in Swansea, whose name is given, has sent in his resignation of the pastorate of the chapel of which he is in charge, his reasons for this step being that he has come to the conclusion, as the result of an historical investigation of the question of the Sacraments, that as a general rule Nonconformists pay less attention to, and exhibit less reverence for, the rites of religion than they ought. The gentleman to whom we are referring is young, but he has nevertheless gained a reputation for the quality of his addresses, and is esteemed a well-read and cultured man. By itself the incident would not, perhaps, count for much—it is too purely personal, and might be regarded as an idiosyncrasy—but, in conjunction with other things, it is not too much to say that it, at least, indicates a tendency of the thoughtful and well read men among the Nonconformists.

When Herbert was dying, and a friend was reminding him of his many acts of well-doing, the holy man answered: They be good works, if they be sprinkled with the blood of Christ, and not otherwise."

"Of all poverty-stricken contradictions a Christian with little faith is the worst."