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### "LA MARECHALE."

When one listens to a slight, frail woman tell how, within the last ten years, she has, in a Protestant country, been thrust into prison dozens of times, been stoned, lain in dungeons on straw, with rats running over her all the night, one realizes the mistake we have made in thinking that the age of persecution has passed.

"The Swiss are not a humorous people," remarks a newspaper man who interviewed Mrs. Booth-Clibborn when she was in Montreal recently, "That is why they always sent sixteen policemen (armed to the teeth) three officers (also armed to the teeth) and two covered carriages (drawn by two horses each) to arrest a poor young girl for beseeching sinners to be reconciled to God. That is why the assemblies of the Cantons solemnly met, and solemnly expelled Miss Booth long after she had left the territory, and why they sealed with sixteen seals the public halls which she never intended to enter! Humor is not a common property, but Mrs. Booth-Clibborn has an exceedingly lively sense of humor, and she laughed heartily at the recollection of those sixteen policemen and the three officers. I used to say to them: 'Are so many of you gentlemen necessary?' and then I would point to my poor slight figure, but they never laughed."

"Mrs. Booth-Clibborn is tall, fragile, spirituelle. She looks as if a breath would blow her away. Her frame is slight, and her health is not good, and she suffers from a spinal complaint. (This is where we get the humor of the sixteen policemen.) But the indomitable spirit of her father shines out of those large, mild-looking blue eyes. She is like the father, too, in the general contour of her face. The forehead is lofty, and above it is brushed carelessly back a mass of dark brown hair. (No curl papers or curling tongs in the Salvation Army.) Her voice is soft and richly musical, and her diction carefully chosen."

"I did not mind the rats in the prison," she told her interviewer, "and I did not mind the straw, but the odors of the prison were what nearly killed me. I was placed next to what it would have been a crime to have placed a dog near. The food was wretched, and owing to the odors it would not stay on my stomach. I was slowly starving to death when the British ambassador intervened and threatened to rouse all England. Then they would have given me anything I liked to eat. But it was too late."

"But I do not regret what I suffered in Switzerland," continued the lady, "for a glorious work was wrought there. There was a regular upheaval. For months there was nothing in the papers but the Salvation Army. Thousands were turned away from the meetings. Hundreds were converted. And not merely ignorant people, —educated and representative men and women. I have letters from seventy-three

mothers and thirty-two wives thanking me for being the instrument of reclaiming their children and husbands. Then the persecution began. The saloons were losing their customers. Vice in high places was no longer safe from criticism.

"Geneva is a very learned place. There are many very fine churches there. The learned people could not bear the idea that a number of children—that is what they called us—should be allowed to produce such a ferment. Then I was imprisoned. Then the halls were closed against us. The singular thing is that we were not breaking the law. In prison I read up the law,

and they aided the magistracy in breaking the laws of the country to suppress us. We had a meeting once five miles in the country with nothing but the sky and the wood and the birds, and even there sixteen policemen and three officers came to arrest me.

"There was a lull in the persecution but it is breaking out again, but the work is steadily growing. I do not mean that we have the crowded meetings we had at the start, when the whole country was aroused, and my portrait was sold in every town, and the papers were full of us, and the people were being converted—and these



MRS. BOOTH-CLIBBORN.

and found that by Article 27 of the constitution religious liberty was guaranteed. The blood of patriots had been shed to secure it. But when I showed them the law, they said they did not want me to interpret their laws. The president of the canton—a desperately wicked man in league with the saloon-keepers—used to be concealed behind thick curtains when the magistrate was examining me. He was brutal. Remember, it was not the Catholics who persecuted us, but the Protestants. The ministers were *traditionnaires*. They did not like our unconventional methods. They saw thousands flocking to us and get-

ting converted, and they aided the magistracy in breaking the laws of the country to suppress us. We had a meeting once five miles in the country with nothing but the sky and the wood and the birds, and even there sixteen policemen and three officers came to arrest me.

Said the mother of La Marechale a little while before she died, when asked to give some account of her daughter's childhood, "From the first breath she drew Catherine was fervently dedicated to God, not only to be his property but to be used to the fullest extent for the carrying out of his purposes in the world. At two years of age she manifested great reverence and love for our little prayer-meetings with her two brothers." Between the ages

of seven and twelve years it was a common thing for her to get up after she had been put to bed to have her mother explain some texts from which she was trying to draw lessons bearing upon her own life and conduct, and would often ask her mother to pray with her. In her nursery long before she was twelve years old she held for several months at a time meetings of the children of the neighborhood, many of whom were then converted. Before she was fifteen years of age she conducted evangelistic campaigns in the large cities. Audiences of thousands of people were held spellbound by her. Over the roughest audiences she had perfect control. Yet, during all this time, she was threatened with curvature of the spine and for hours together she was forced to lie on her back in great pain and weakness. At the age of sixteen she went to Paris, accompanied by two other girls, to organize the work of the Army.

How she succeeded can best be told in her own words.

"The work here was a revelation to me. Though a public speaker from the age of 13, I had never come in contact with the class of people I met here. The hall we hired was in the very worst quarter of the city. We never went out without the feeling that we might never return. The sights baffled description. Men and women half dressed poured in; and girls, some only thirteen years old, from a low dance hall opposite, would come to be amused and throw their flowers at my feet. 'A bas Jesus-Christ' was the cry; 'Vive la Commune'; 'You are Jesuits; Speak politics or anything else here, but not religion.' This was at three o'clock in the morning. When the police were appealed to they refused to help. They dared not. 'Why,' they said, 'you have all the cut-throats in Paris here.' Said one man, 'Don't talk to me; I am an infidel to my finger tips. A Prussian, an Englishman, a Russian may take religion, but a Frenchman, never.' All his belief in goodness and purity were gone, yet before long that very man publicly announced, 'This God whom I declared a monster of cruelty I now intend to serve for the rest of my days. Those dear lost little girls too; they were saved and many of them we saw safely across the Jordan. The saloons around were soon emptied. Soon we went to another part of Paris, where I gave a series of lectures on 'The kind of religion to suit France.' Would a sad religion suit her, a formal religion, an intellectual religion, an easy religion, etc. ? These have since been published in book form. It was then I first saw how infidels suffer behind the scenes. One said to me, 'Voltaire is my God, but I wish you had a hall in every village of France.' Yet many a hall we had to refuse for the lack of a paltry \$20 to pay for it. Another man said, 'This religion is what we want. Our country is starving, not for bread but for