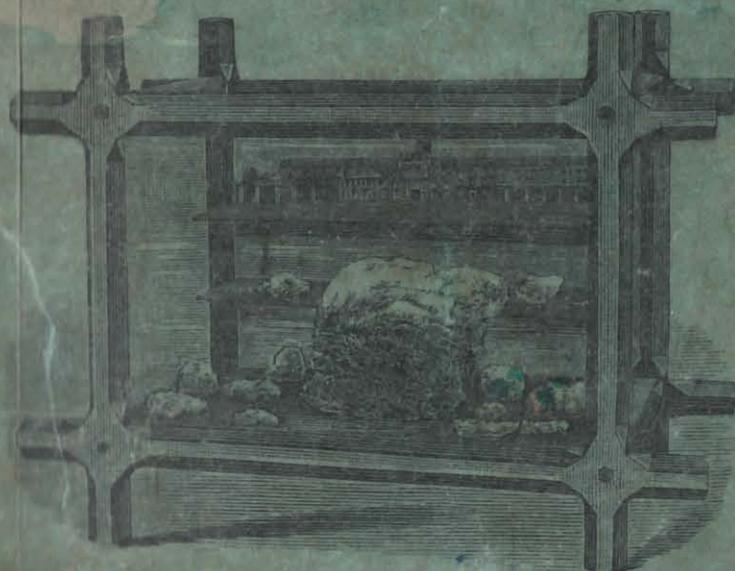


See Morning Thoughts January 13<sup>th</sup>  
The

**Battle of Torquay**  
and One  
**Month's Experience**  
in the  
**Devon County Prison.**  
THIS CABINET now in S. A. Museum



Cabinet containing Photograph of the Prison, the Twelve Stones,  
and the Loaf of Bread—(see page 5).

By Lt. Colonel Roberts,

OKAYAMA 144,  
LYNDHURST DRIVE,  
LEYTON, LONDON, N.E.

Pam/R 29

# • The Battle of Torquay •

...AND...

## One Month's Experience in the Devon County Prison.

BY BRIGADIER ROBERTS.

Six days' revival services have been held during the past week in the Salvation Army Citadel, Croydon, conducted by Brigadier Roberts, and in connection with which the Brigadier related on Thursday evening the story of his one month's experience in Exeter Prison.

The chair was occupied by a very old Army friend, Mr. Stark, architect, and he was supported by Mrs. Colonel Whatmore and Mrs. Brigadier Roberts. The latter opened the meeting by prayer, after which the chairman referred to the wonderful results of the Army's work which had come under his own observation during the past twenty-five years.

The Brigadier, before beginning his prison experiences, referred to the young people present who had been converted during the week, and read a number of interesting letters he had received that day from them. He then quoted: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," and then said:—

This was one of the first resurrection commands our Lord gave His disciples, which command they were determined at all hazards to obey, in spite of devils, laws, dungeons, prisons, prejudice, customs, education, infidelity, a corrupt priesthood, and every other obstacle, they went forth strong in the Lord and in the power of His might, filled with the Holy Ghost, and the burning enthusiasm of their Divine Master, and uneducated as many of them were, they shook thrones, stormed hell, bound devils, took the prey from the mighty, and led multitudes of precious

souls to the cross of Jesus Christ.

True, their teaching was "obey the powers that be," but anyone reading through the Acts of the Apostles will see how they obeyed God rather than man, and that their whole lives were given up to compel men everywhere to repent and submit to the claims of Jehovah. For doing this they "had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonments, they were stoned, were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword" (Hebrews xi., 36-37), and cruelly persecuted and imprisoned in all directions. But the more they were scattered and persecuted, the more successful they became, until their songs of salvation were soon heard ringing all over Palestine, and then, crossing "the Great Sea," they got into Italy, and marched on through Spain and France, crossed the Straits of Dover, and in due course arrived in London, where we have to-day our International Headquarters.

Great battles have, been fought right down through the ages by every section of God's people, and the Salvation Army has also had to engage in many a battle for God and the right. But He has always brought us off sooner or later victorious.

The Battle of Torquay began by the Local Board getting a Bill through the House of Commons to prohibit our musical processions. We had marche through the streets of this town unmolested and undisturbed for six years, and won scores of souls from lives of drunkenness and

crime to lives of soberness and righteousness, but because Satan was not able to raise "a skeleton army" from amongst the "masses" as he had done in several other places formerly, he succeeded in raising "a persecuting army" from amongst the "classes." *In 1888*

In 1886, in an Act of some thirty folios, which was supposed to relate almost entirely to the purchase of the Harbour by the Local Board, there was inserted a clause in the 38th paragraph, or section, to the effect that no procession, with music, should take place in the town on a Sunday, with the exception of the Military, or Volunteers. The whole town was in favour of this Torquay Harbour Act, nobody, for a moment, thinking it had in the middle of it about three lines which would effectually prevent our marching with a band of music on Sundays, by which we had hitherto attracted hundreds of people to our barracks, a number of whom would not have entered any place of worship whatever, but who would have been found wasting their time and money in the public houses, and other places of iniquity.

The Act, however, was passed, and even before it was printed the Clerk to the Local Board, who appeared to have been the principal mover in the whole of the persecuting business, gave instructions to the Superintendent of Police to stop our musical procession. This, of course, we could not think of, and the ratepayers in the neighbourhood where our band most frequented said: "This 38th section has been smuggled in, and you ought to pay no attention to it." This we felt to be our duty, and so forward we marched with music and song as before, but almost immediately summonses were issued against a number of those who took part in the procession. Those who were summoned were found "guilty" and sentenced to prison. The magistrates' decision, however, was appealed against, and after many weary months of waiting the Judge in the Queen's Bench Division decided that the Local Board had no power to delegate their authority to the police, and

so the decision of the magistrates was quashed.

This was in the beginning of 1888, and it was generally thought that this persecuting business was then at an end. But no the Local Board commenced again, and as they imagined in the correct way, by using their authority themselves, so that we after week "the acts" of the Torquay Salvationists were recorded in nearly all the Devonshire newspapers. Numbers of honest, sober, God-fearing men were sent to Exeter Prison for no other reason than marching orderly through the streets in musical procession, on a Sunday, to their licensed place of worship.

But God was not without His witnesses both on the Bench and in the Local Board.

The senior magistrate on one occasion arose, and before a crowded Court said: "I am sorry that I do not agree with my brother magistrates in this matter, but I have decided to wash my hands clean of the whole of this persecuting work, and shall leave the Bench, never to come on it again when men are prosecuted under the 38th clause of the Torquay Harbour Act," and this gentleman at once left the Court.

Also one of the twelve members of the Local Board, addressing the Board, said he had no idea the 38th clause was in the Bill at all, and now it was in, he would never vote for its being put into force, as he knew the character of the Salvation Army men, against whom it affected so seriously—he had proof of their being better men since their connection with the Salvation Army, and he would certainly never vote for their prosecution.

Other members, however, did, but we knew that to obey their "royal statute" (see Dan. vi.) would greatly interfere with our work for God and souls in that town, as well as religious liberty throughout the land. We therefore continued doing our duty precisely as before.

While the imprisonments were continuing, the experience of the three Hebrew children was being fully realised by a goodly number of Torquay Salvationists.

THE HEBREWS' EXPERIENCE.

"Oh, Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us out of the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of thine hand, oh king, but if not, be it known unto thee, oh king, we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."

From the former experience we learn that these young Hebrews were not only saved but consecrated to the war. Hence their experience:—Our God, whom we serve. This, too, could be said of many of our Torquay comrades—they were living to serve God and to do His will.

Then these young Hebrew warriors testified to their confidence in God. "Our God," said they, "is able to deliver us out of the burning fiery furnace." They did not know that He would, but they were certain that He could.

They also had a perfect assurance of victory. "He will deliver us out of thine hand." How, they did not know, but that He would, they could not doubt.

And then finally, they were determined to do the right at all costs. "But if not, be it known unto thee, oh king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."

Oh that we may possess at all times this unbounded confidence in our God, and full assurance of victory, so that we may be determined always to do the right irrespective of the consequences.

In the third chapter of Daniel we are

THE SALVATIONISTS' EXPERIENCE.

"Oh, Local Board, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us out of the cells of Exeter Prison and He will deliver us out of thine hand, oh Local Board, but if not, be it known unto thee, oh, Local Board, we will not obey thy coercive command, nor pay attention to the 38th section which thou hast inserted in the Torquay Harbour Act."

able to read the result of the experiences of the three Hebrews, and in these pages we are able to read the result of the Torquay Salvationists, which has been of such a nature that God's soldiers all round the world have glorified Him on their behalf.

One of the definite cases of conversion brought about entirely through listening to the ex-prisoners' testimony became a member of the Brass Band, and suffered a fortnight's imprisonment for so doing, while another became an officer in the Salvation Army.

This battle was the means of making the Acts of the Apostles appear to us in altogether a new form, the points of similarity in their prison experience and ours having been seen in such a wonderful manner, that we often felt like saying, "Surely this Book was written for our encouragement." Look at Paul and Silas. The gaoler fastened their feet but forgot their tongues, so that at midnight the prisoners "prayed and sang praises unto God," and probably there never was so much praying and praising God by prisoners in Exeter prison since the building was erected as there was during the period of the Torquay Battle. One comrade forgetting the rules, went pacing his cell, after reading Psalm xxxvii, and whistling "We're marching on to war," when suddenly the warder appeared and said, "Was that you whistling?" "Yes," was the prompt reply, and the warder, quite unaccustomed to hear prisoners confess the truth, said calmly, "Well, you must not whistle here." "All right, sir," our comrade replied, "I'll try and remember," and marched up and down humming the words.

In fact, the universal testimony of all the prisoners was that God's presence in prison had been more real to them than it had ever been before, they having the assurance that though they were prisoners they were not criminals, but enduring "hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ" for righteousness' sake.

MISS EVA BOOTH

not only came from London to see this

*2*  
*In the Book*  
*Thank*

battle, but also took an active part in it, so much so that during my imprisonment she was summoned and convicted, but was told by the magistrates that although she was guilty, she would neither be fined nor imprisoned, thereby intimating that no punishment would be awarded to those who broke the Local Board's Law provided they wore—instead of a cap—a bonnet!

Thank God, however, victory came at last, and came in the most unexpected manner. We had been hoping the Government would interfere on our behalf, and instruct the Local Board to allow us to march in procession, as other subjects throughout the land. But there was something in store for us much better than that, the first fruit of which was given us by the following report taken from the "Western Daily Mercury" of May 5th, 1888:—

#### HOUSE OF COMMONS.

##### FRIDAY.

The Deputy-Speaker took the chair at three o'clock.

#### SALVATION ARMY PROCESSIONS.

Mr. Henry Fowler asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether any of the private Bills referred to the Police and Sanitary Regulations Committee, contained clauses imposing restrictions on the liberty of the subject not imposed by the existing law, whether the Home Office had reported against these restrictions being enacted, and whether in the event of the police and sanitary regulations committee inserting these clauses, he would call the attention of the House to these clauses before the Bills containing them were passed?

The Home Secretary: Yes, sir; there were clauses against Sunday processions in the streets in the Kingston Improvement Bill, the Launceston Corporation Bill, and the Llanelly Local Board Bill. In the case of the Kingston Bill the clause was withdrawn by the promoters; the clause in the Launceston Bill has been struck out before the committee this afternoon; the Llanelly Bill has not yet been disposed of. In all these cases the Home Office reported adversely to the clause against processions as being matter for general legislation. The Under-Secretary of State has at my request been in communication with the Chairman of the Select Committee on Police and San-

itary Regulations and with the counsel to the Speaker of the House, with the result that the Chairman has promised to consult the Committee as to the possibility of bringing to the notice of the House in a manner more effective than that hitherto adopted, those matters upon which the standing orders bind the committee to make a special report.

Upon this report the Editor commented as follows:—

The Torquay Local Board stands condemned by the answer given in the House of Commons by the Home Secretary last evening. The Government have practically interposed to prevent the much debated clause from being incorporated in a number of Local Acts, on the ground that it contains a principle which ought to be settled by general legislation. Whether Mr. Matthews intends to meet the complaints as to Sunday processions by a special measure of prohibition we do not know, but it is clear from his answer that he feels very strongly that the Board, which already enjoy these powers have obtained them under a misapprehension. For the future the committee will be compelled to report specially to the House on all such matters in order that precedents may not be established, here and there, which interfere with the liberty of the subject, to say nothing of the freedom of conscience. The answer renders it morally obligatory upon the Torquay Local Board to cease their persecuting proceedings. They have obtained powers which the Committee should not have sanctioned, and they are really violating the conditions of the constitution by putting them into operation. Those who run may read that interpretation in the Home Secretary's reply to Mr. Henry Fowler, and in that reply the Salvation Army have their long-deferred justification. We do not approve of all that the Salvation Army think necessary in their cause, but we feel that the Salvation Army in Torquay have been compelled by the authorities to make themselves as troublesome as possible and that they would be failing in their duty to themselves if they did not do so after the pronouncements of Mr. Matthews. We only hope that Mr. Matthews will now be pressed to release the men who are suffering imprisonment for resisting a clause which was really smuggled through Parliament.

Soon after the foregoing a Select Committee was appointed to re-consider the whole of the Torquay Harbour Bill, in the doing of which they unanimously decided to strike out and for ever obliterate the ob-

nnoxious 38th clause, which prohibited musical processions through the streets of Torquay, so that our comrades were again able to continue their glorious work for God and souls without any further fear of being "sent up" to the Devon County Prison for so doing.

The Torquay battle was indeed both long and severe, but God heard the many prayers of His soldiers throughout the country and gave us the victory. For this we rejoice much, and give Him all the praise. We praise Him for His sustaining grace all through the battle, and trust all who have been engaged in it will be able henceforth to trust God more than ever at all times, knowing, as we now do, that the God of Daniel and of all other faithful warriors is the God of the Salvation Army.

#### MY PRISON EXPERIENCE.

"And they departed from the presence of the Council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His Name."

—Acts v. 41.

There were many difficulties in connection with my going to spend a Sunday in Torquay, while the foregoing battle was raging, and I purposely abstained from doing so as long as I could consistently, not wishing either the authorities or the public to feel that any of us were wanting to go to prison for the sake of demonstration, or mere bravadoism. God, however, directed me entirely in the matter. While reading over 1 Sam. xvii. I came across these words: "I will now go down and see how my brethren fare, and take their pledge," and I was constrained at once to say, "Lord, I will do the same."

Before doing so I fully counted the cost, and received the assurance that should it lead to my being imprisoned God's grace would be sufficient, and His power would sustain me, and although I might have to suffer to some extent no permanent harm would follow.

Accordingly, on Saturday, April 14th, I took train from Exeter to Torquay, and spent the week end with my tried and persecuted comrades, the doing of which led

to my being incarcerated in the County Prison. But the manner in which I was upheld and sustained has been the means of strengthening and increasing the faith of God's people in all sections of the Christian Church.

Before going to church on the last Sunday of my imprisonment I took up the Prayer Book to see what scriptures were appointed to be read in the churches that day. I then opened the little Bible to read them to myself. One of the readings was from Joshua iv., which describes the manner in which God divided the River Jordan for His people to cross over. I became deeply interested in this, especially in the fact of their having to take from the Jordan twelve stones, and keep them in commemoration of that event, and that when their children in days to come should say: "Father, what mean ye by these stones?" they were to say that they were keeping them in memory of the wonderful event God had wrought for them in dividing the River Jordan.

As I sat in my cell reading over this remarkable incident I thought surely God has wrought wonderful deliverances for me during the month I have been a convicted criminal prisoner, and if I can succeed in securing twelve stones, and taking them out when I am liberated, how pleased I shall be to keep them in commemoration of my spending this month in the Devon County Prison. The Lord granted me this desire. I was able to obtain the stones, and also to bring them out of the prison, together with the six ounces of brown bread which was brought me for my breakfast on the morning of that memorable day—June 6th. These stones I am keeping in a glass cabinet, together with the bread and a photograph of the prison (see picture on cover) and if my children ask me in days to come: "What mean ye by these stones?" I have a reason to give as to why I am keeping—these twelve stones.

#### STONE I.

I am keeping in commemoration of the Sunday—April 15th—spent with my comrades in Torquay, and accompanying them in an orderly musical proces-

sion through Union Street to the Salvation Army Hall. That day will live long in my memory. The crowds in the open-air meeting, the orderly procession, the number of policemen with us, the crowded building in the morning service, the enthusiasm, the collection, the prospects, and the spiritual power and blessing will probably never fade from my memory.

#### STONE II.

is to commemorate my receiving a summons eleven days afterwards—April 26th—for being in that procession, or for doing on that particular Sunday what I had been in the habit of doing almost every Sunday as a Salvation Army Officer in various parts of Great Britain since 1876.

#### STONE III.

commemorates my appearing in the Torquay Police Court, and the sentence passed upon me that day—£5, or one month in prison. It was somewhat difficult to understand why my sentence should be so severe, as at the beginning of the trial the magistrates objected to my being called Major Roberts. The solicitor for the prosecution was asked for his authority for calling the defendant "Major," and instructed to say "defendant" or "Roberts," but in summing up, the Chairman addressed me in the following manner:—

"Your case is altogether different from the others. You are the commanding officer of the district, and had it not been for you the matter might have ended long since. You therefore will be fined £5, or one month's imprisonment."

This heavy sentence, however, only reminded me of the one which was passed upon Micaiah, a prophet of the most high God centuries before. Ahab, the King of Israel, wished to go up to battle with Ramoth Gilead. But the prophet said, if you do go, God will be displeased, and will cause you to lose not only the battle, but also your life, whereupon Ahab, instead of thanking Micaiah the prophet, sentenced him to a severe term of imprisonment, and spoke of him in the most uncourteous manner by saying: "Put this fellow in prison, and feed him with bread

and water." (Chron. xviii. 26.) And just as Micaiah had to go to prison for faithfully warning Ahab, I too had a month's imprisonment for seeking to save the lost in Torquay.

#### STONE IV.

commemorates the ten days' suspense through which I passed between the day of my sentence—April 30th—and the day of my arrest—May 10th. This was really worse than the imprisonment itself, as whenever I left my house I was uncertain whether I should return again before being arrested, causing a feeling which perhaps none can fully understand but those who may have had a similar experience to pass through.

#### STONE V.

is kept in commemoration of Thursday, May 10th, when a policeman called at my house with a warrant for my arrest. I had only been home about half-an-hour, having spent the week in North Devon. My appointments had been announced in the daily papers, the following being an extract from "The Daily Western Times" of May 6th, 1888:—

"CONDEMNED CRIMINAL AT LARGE.—Such was the announcement when Major Roberts, of the Salvation Army, appeared at Barnstaple on Saturday evening. But the reason was soon made known when the Major arrived at the Salvation Army Barracks to lead the evening service. He there explained that he had been living in suspense the whole of the week until Friday morning, when he was interrupted at breakfast table by being informed, 'an unwelcome visitor is standing at the door wishing to see you.' This visitor proved to be an officer of the law, whose first words were, 'I have a warrant to make a distraint upon your goods.' Upon this statement the officer was invited into the Salvation Army Divisional Officer's Quarters, and conducted to the office, where certain books and documents were examined which led to the policeman saying, 'This is perfectly satisfactory and clear, and therefore you know what to expect?' 'Yes,' replied the Major, 'I suppose so, and have been expecting the same

ever since Monday, and do not very much like the suspense through which I am now passing.' Before the policeman left the Salvation Army Quarters he was informed that the Major proposed spending Sunday in Barnstaple, unless he was taken into custody before, 'But up to now I am at large,' exclaimed the Major, on Saturday, 'and if I am not interrupted by the police I propose visiting Torrington on Monday, Bideford on Tuesday, South Molton on Wednesday, and Tiverton on Thursday.' Major Roberts then read and spoke at some length from Daniel vi., the points in his address being:—(1) The enemies of God succeeded in getting a law created which would greatly interfere with the way in which Daniel worshipped his God. (2) Daniel might have gone on worshipping God without breaking the law, but he was convinced in his own heart that to do so would have grieved God. (3) He therefore determined at all costs to continue precisely the same as he had before, notwithstanding the wicked and unjust law. (4) The new and abominable law was respected as far as Daniel was concerned through his being thrown in the Den of Lions. After which the creators or promoters of the law were terribly punished. (5) But after the whole thing had ended Daniel (out of the den) went on as before, and prospered greatly, both in the reign of Darius and also his successor, and, continued Major Roberts, after the whole of the Torquay persecuting business by the Local Board and Magistrates have come to an end the Salvationists (out of prison) will go forward and prosper more than ever, both during the reign of the present Local Board and J.P.'s and their successors."

I was not, however, arrested by the police until I returned to my home. There being a number of important Divisional matters requiring my attention I innocently asked the policeman to call again in an hour's time, when I would be ready for him. He assured me, however, that he was quite unable to accede to my request, and a short time afterwards I was being conducted by him in the most courteous

manner through the city to the prison.

Where my clothes I had to change,  
Which made me look and feel so strange.

#### STONE VI.

will be kept in commemoration of the cell which I occupied during my term of imprisonment, a description of which is given in 2 Kings iv. 9-10:—"And she said to her husband, Behold now I perceive that this is a holy man of God which passeth by us continually. Let us make a little chamber I pray thee on the wall, and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick, and it shall be when he cometh to us that he shall turn in thither."

As I read these words in my prison cell, I could not help thinking that verse 10 was a very good description of my little cell, and that verse 9 was something like the conversation that passed between a few members of the Torquay Local Board that led to their getting three lines in their Harbour Act to authorise them to stop our musical processions on a Sunday. It was "perceived" that the Salvationists marching through the streets of Torquay were holy, godly, and useful men, and so power was sought and obtained by the Board to send us into the "little chambers," many of which were already fitted with "a bed, and a table, and a stool" on "the wall" of Exeter prison, and in those chambers a number of us have spent from one to four weeks,

Where in our cells throughout the day,  
We'd pick our oakum, read and pray.

#### STONE VII.

will be kept in commemoration of the way in which God cheered my heart during the first day of my imprisonment. I shall never forget the moment when I first needed a word of cheer. It was not when the policeman took me into custody. Neither was it when I first stepped inside the prison gates. Perhaps an hour had elapsed before I fully realised my position. I first entered the "Outfit Department," where I was ordered to take off my own clothes, have a bath, and put on the prison

dress. I then marched into the reception cell, where I knelt down and gave myself afresh to God for the prison experience. A few minutes afterwards a warder came and marched me up into my cell, the number of which was

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which was to be my home for a month. I commenced walking up and down examining the brick wall, stone floor, plank bed, and then read the dietary table for all prisoners, and the regulations to be carried out by each

"CONVICTED CRIMINAL PRISONER."

Presently my cell door opened, my dinner handed in, and the door immediately shut and locked. I sat down—not to eat—but to realise in full the fact that I was a "Convicted Criminal Prisoner." My mental agony then became so intense that I was quite unnerved and unmanned, and sobbed like a child. The afternoon passed away, and "supper" was brought, and as I knelt the Soc. of bread on the table, I knelt down and said:

"Oh, Lord, it is written that 'man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.' I have come to this prison to help Thy people in Torquay maintain their rights, and march through the streets with music and song to attract lost sinners to the barracks to hear Thy truth, therefore I look to Thee to supply me with those 'words' while I am eating my piece of bread each evening and morning." I arose from my knees, and ate the bread with the greatest satisfaction, but before I had finished the words in almost living characters were confronting me, a "Convicted Criminal Prisoner," and again I wept aloud.

But while prison bars can effectually lock prisoners in and their friends out, they cannot prevent admission to the God of Heaven. On my little table there was a small Bible together with a hymn-book and Prayer-book. I took the Bible and opened it, and the first word I saw was a word of cheer to my heart: "Put him in prison and in the stocks!" Never shall I forget

that. I got up from my stool and paced up and down my cell saying, "Praise God it might have been worse. Some people have not only had the 'prison,' but the 'stocks.' My feet are at liberty, and so is my tongue. I can walk and praise God with all my heart." Presently I sat down again, and then had another "cheer up," for the very next word that I saw was: "I will restore health unto thee saith the Lord, and will heal thee."

The fear of many of my friends was that my health would not stand the prison-confinement and fare, but here was the Lord telling me the first day that he would keep me in health. After praising God for this word of cheer, I looked in His precious book again, and then I saw the reason of it all, for on the same page I read: "For I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end." Oh, how I praised God for this. I, who had just been brought to prison, and who was feeling in the most acute manner the meaning of being a "Convicted Criminal Prisoner," was being told by the Lord that he knew the thoughts concerning me, and that they were thoughts of blessing and not of cursing, thoughts of gladness and not of sadness, and that the expected end would be eventually given. My heart was at once cheered, and I thanked God for permitting me to have that experience, for it enabled me to see how it is that sinners can be told the solemn truths of God's word with regard to their future punishment, and yet remain unmoved. I saw clearly that although they know they are in Satan's custody, they do not realise it, and I prayed that God would help me henceforth as never before to plead with them in such a manner that they should be brought to fully realise their condition before God, and cry to Him for help and deliverance.

These three texts also gave me much thought for reflection during the following days. As I repeated the words, "put him in prison and in the stocks," I thought of and meditated upon God's Mercy towards me, not only then, but all through my life,

and also of His willingness to have mercy upon all sinners who are longing for salvation. The second text led me to dwell upon God's Goodness. Oh, how good I saw it was of Him to have blessed me with Godly parents, to have saved me in early life, and to have led me into the Salvation Army. I thought of my wife, family, friends, Division, officers, soldiers, and surroundings, and I exclaimed with the Psalmist: "Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart." But the third text led me to dwell upon God's Love, and in this at times I became quite overwhelmed. Well might the Apostle John say: "Herein is love." I saw God's love to me and all poor sinners as I think I never did before, and with a grateful heart began to sing:—

"He saw me ruined by the fall,  
Yet loved me notwithstanding all,  
He saved me from my lost estate,  
His loving-kindness, oh, how great."

After this I saw that it was nothing new for good men to go to prison, and for God to cheer them while they were there. I read of David saying (Psalm lxx. 33) "the Lord heareth the poor, and despiseth not His prisoners." I also read Paul's experience when he was "a prisoner of Jesus Christ" in Rome (Phil. i.), a part of which was as follows:—"Though I have committed nothing against the people or customs of our fathers, yet was I delivered a prisoner" (Acts xxviii, 17). But "the night following the Lord stood by him and said be of good cheer Paul" (Acts xxiii, 11), which enabled him afterwards to say to others in trouble "and now I exhort you to be of good cheer" (Acts xxvii, 22). Paul never forgot the cheer-up he received in the Mediterranean Sea, as he was taken prisoner from Palestine to Rome, and I shall never forget the cheer-up I received on the first day of my imprisonment in the Devon County Prison.

STONE VIII.

Will be kept in commemoration of the way in which God blessed my soul on the first Sunday of my imprisonment. This blessing was given while I was "numbered

with the transgressors," and sitting in the church surrounded by all the other prisoners. The service commenced in the usual way about 10.45, from the church prayer book, soon after which the clergyman said: "This is the 13th day of the month, the psalm for this morning is No. 68." This psalm was read through, the clergyman and prisoners reading alternately. We soon came to verse 24, which was to be read by us, and oh, how my soul was stirred as I read out the words: "They have seen Thy goings, oh God, even the goings of my God my King, in the Sanctuary." I thought, why here is the psalmist discoursing upon the wonderful processions they had through the streets of Jerusalem, and he was declaring that they were no human affair because they who were in them belonged to God. "They have seen," said he, "Thy goings, Thy marchings, Thy processions, oh God, even the goings of my God, my King in the Sanctuary." But the moment we had finished reading our verse, the clergyman read his, and this verse just described how the processions were constituted and was read by every clergyman in church that morning, and listened to by the Torquay magistrates if they were in church:—"The singers went before, the players upon instruments followed after, among them were the damsels playing with timbrels."

Why, I thought, this is precisely the processions we have in Torquay, and I could not help but paraphrase the two verses thus:—"They, in Torquay, have seen Thy processions, oh God, even the processions of My God, my King, march through Union Street to the Salvation Army Hall. The singers went before, the players upon instruments followed after, among them were the damsels playing the timbrels," for we had a band of tambourine lassies in the Torquay Corps.

The Psalms being over, "the Holy Gospel" was read, which, said the clergyman, "is the third chapter of John, commencing at the 22nd verse." This verse was read by himself, and all of us read the next, when the clergyman read in a clear and distinct manner verse 24, which read as

follows: "For John was not yet cast into prison." "Was he not?" thought I. "He is now then, anyway, and the reason of his being in prison now is because he was

the governor, warders, and visiting justices can see at a glance the cause of his imprisonment. The card which was fixed outside my door read as follows:—

Previous Convictions, O.	
Name and Age .....	JOHN ROBERTS. 32
Religion and occupation .....	MAJOR SALVATION ARMY
Offence .....	MUSICAL PROCESSION
When and where sentenced ....	TORQUAY. REC'D HERE MAY 10TH
Sentence .....	£5 5s. OR ONE MONTH
Date of Discharge .....	JUNE 6TH

in the procession then." *Stop*

That procession in Torquay was not mine, nor the Captain's, but God's. The bandsmen were God's soldiers, the damsels beating the timbrels were daughters of the Lord Almighty, and the singers going before were the children of the most high God. As for myself, I was His servant going out that day in obedience to His command to tell poor sinners of Jesus, the Mighty to save, and for the doing of which I, John, was now cast into prison. When the service was over I marched back again to my cell, but oh, how my soul was blessed, and as I paced up and down the cell I kept praising God for showing me that day that I was only put into prison like John the Baptist, for doing in Torquay what David did in Jerusalem, and it made me more willing than ever to go forward, even though it led to "prison bolts and bars."

#### STONE IX.

Is to be kept in Commemoration of the instruction God gave me during my imprisonment. I learnt from experience what imprisonment was. I found it to be a place of separation from friends, confinement and punishment. A prisoner's liberty is entirely taken away, he is never able to do as he likes, but throughout the whole term of imprisonment he has to obey the warders in every particular. Outside the door hangs a card giving a description of the prisoner's offence, etc., so that

One day while sitting on my stool thinking over the condition of the prisoners, I thought of how many poor sinners there were who had been taken into custody by Satan, and were now in the prison-house of sin, from which by and bye they would be transported to the prison-house of hell, unless liberated by the conquering Saviour—the Lion of the tribe of Judah. And as I read Isaiah's prophecy concerning the coming of Christ, I saw that the object of His coming was "to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house (Isaiah xlii. 7), and I again knelt before the Lord and promised Him that all my future life should be spent in endeavouring to make sinners realise the terrible bondage in which Satan was keeping them, and of Christ's willingness to liberate them and set them gloriously free.

#### STONE X.

Will be kept in commemoration of the encouragement God gave me when I was longing for my month's imprisonment to come to an end. Every morning, weather permitting, we had an hour's exercise, each prisoner marching three yards behind the man in front of him, round a ring in the prison yard. The warders marched round the reverse way, so as to be able to see the prisoner's faces all the time, the rules forbidding any prisoner to "com-

municate or to attempt to communicate with another prisoner." This exercise commenced at 9.30 and ended at 10.30,

When to my cell I'd march away,  
And there remain alone all day.

and, as a rule, I would never step outside my cell door from 10.30 a.m. until the next morning. I, therefore, frequently longed for June the 6th, and continually prayed for the hours to pass rapidly away. But one day as I was wondering why I should have such a longing desire for the day of my liberation, when John Bunyan had been a prisoner for twelve years, and George Fox for many years, I came across the experience of Joseph, and found though

he determined to do right, yet he had no love for the prison itself, and longed to get out. "Think on me," he said to Pharaoh's butler, "when it shall be well with thee . . . and bring me out of this prison . . . for I have done nothing that they should put me in the dungeon." (Gen. xl. 14-15.) I also found that the prophet Jeremiah's experience was similar, for the moment he had an opportunity to see the king he said: "What have I offended against thee, or against thy servants, or against this people, that ye have put me in prison? Therefore, hear how I pray thee, O, my lord, the king, and let my supplication, I pray thee, be accepted before thee, that thou cause me not to return to the prison again lest I die there." (Jeremiah xxxvii. 18-20.) Also the Apostle Paul, though he was a "prisoner of Jesus Christ," longed to be set free, and wrote to his friend Philemon (v. 22): "Prepare me also a lodging, for I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you," and be set at liberty. The Lord showing me the feelings and desires of these holy men greatly encouraged me. I saw how they preferred liberty to imprisonment, but I also saw how they preferred imprisonment to grieving God, or ceasing to do their duty, and I said: "Lord, I only did my duty in Torquay, for the doing of which I am put into prison, and though I do not like being here, I am willing after my liber-

ation to come back again, if it is the result of obeying Thee."

The covenant entered into between God and my soul made His presence as real to me in my cell as I ever realised it in any place before, and caused me to exclaim with the Patriarch: "This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." And, indeed, as the days went by, the feeling that it was "a convicted criminal's" abode wore off, and the conscious presence of Jehovah made the cell a hallowed place, and thus Stone 10 will be kept to remind me of this wonderful encouragement God gave me in prison, when longing for the completion of my term.

#### STONE XI.

Is kept in commemoration of June 6th, when my warder walked into my cell just after 6 a.m., and said: "Get your cell washed and bedding rolled up at once, and be ready soon after seven to go down to the reception room, where you will receive your own clothes and remain until nine o'clock." I need not say how musical these words sounded in my ears, and at the time appointed I was ready. The warder who is specially commissioned for receiving and liberating prisoners came and opened my cell door, and said, "Follow me." I obeyed, and was soon lodged in the reception cell, where I found my own clothes which I had not seen for a month. I at once divested myself of the "Convicted Criminal's" dress, and made speedy preparations for my departure. Although I had to wait in this cell about an hour-and-a-half the time did not hang heavily, as I was now able to have my own Bible and other books which I had brought in my bag to the prison. I was therefore able to spend the time profitably and pleasantly, until at length the clock struck the hour of nine. My heart was then full of rejoicing, and a few minutes afterwards I was up before the Governor, who enquired if I had any complaint to make. "None whatever," was my reply, and the next minute I passed through the large iron gates of the prison and stepped out safe and sound into

the city. But how shall I describe the sight I then beheld? There was my wife and



Brigadier and Mrs. Roberts and Family.

family, Colonel Dowdle, Major and Mrs. Ewens, and all the officers of my Division.

The brass bands of Exeter, Torquay, Topsham, Exmouth and Tiverton were present, with numbers of soldiers and friends from all parts of Devonshire, so that whichever way my eyes turned I beheld nothing but Salvationists and sympathetic friends. This day will be long remem-

bered, and also the enthusiastic meetings which were held, conducted by Colonel

(now Commissioner) Dowdle, who had been sent down specially from London by the Chief-of-the-Staff.

The following are a few brief extracts taken from the lengthy reports which appeared in the daily papers:—

The "Western Daily Mercury" of June 7th:—

"On passing the prison gates the Major entered an open cab, and was greeted with

a hearty volley. The bands struck up lively tunes, and the procession after parading the principal streets of the town, proceeded to the Temple, where a public reception was held."

The "Western Morning News":—

"The demonstration in the evening was the biggest ever held in connection with the Salvation Army in Exeter. The procession, which started from the local headquarters of the Army, included five bands, and was accompanied by several thousands of people to the Victoria Hall, which was found inadequate to accommodate all who wished to gain admittance. About three hundred seats were reserved at a shilling each, and all were occupied; whilst every inch of sitting and standing space behind, which was free, was occupied.

At this point the Chairman read a telegram from General Booth, dated from Exeter Hall the previous evening, as follows: 'Thousands of Salvationists assembled here, praise God for the blessed endurance of Major Roberts and his brave comrades during their terms of imprisonment. Victory final.' (Cheers.) Mrs. Roberts spoke of the anxiety she felt for her husband, who was not of a strong constitution, while he was in prison."

THE MAJOR'S RECEPTION AT TORQUAY.  
(From the "Torquay Times and South Devon Advertiser.")

"In the afternoon a holiness meeting was held in the large public hall, and was largely attended.

'A GIGANTIC DEMONSTRATION' was advertised for the evening, and consisted of a parade of the principal streets of the town by the Salvationists, headed by the brass bands of the Newton and Torquay Corps, and a few carriages containing Major and Mrs. Roberts, Colonel Dowdle, and others. The procession subsequently made its way to the Royal Public Hall, which was quickly filled to its utmost capacity, notwithstanding that about two hundred seats were reserved at sixpence each, and a charge was made for other parts of the building. Several of the members of the Army who have suffered imprisonment were attired in a facsimile of prison dress—broad arrows and caps complete—and these naturally attracted a great deal of attention. Upon the entrance of Major Roberts a loud volley was fired. Colonel Dowdle conducted the meeting."

#### STONE XII.

Is being kept in commemoration of the souls that have been blessed and saved through reading or hearing of the wonderful way in which the Lord sustained me during my four weeks' incarceration.

The foregoing are a few of the experiences God gave me while I was an inmate of the Devon County prison, for taking part in a musical procession in Torquay, and while my month's imprisonment was in one sense a time of real punishment, it was on the other hand a time of real blessing to my soul, and of communion with God. Had I been the subject of atheistical views prior to my incarceration, I should now be perfectly delivered from them, for during my separation from home and friends I had such manifestations of God's presence as I never before realised. The way in which God spoke to me through His Word was marvellous. One evening, as I was praying for my wife and family, my heart became so full that I could only find relief in weeping. But the moment I arose from my knees I opened my Bible, and read:—"I have heard thy prayers, I have seen thy tears," which enabled me to exclaim, "Bless the Lord, oh my soul."

One day as I was reading the story of Christ feeding thousands of people with a few small loaves, I came across the words:—"Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place and rest awhile." These words were addressed by Christ to His disciples, and as I pondered over them it seemed as though He said to me: "Come thou thyself, apart into a prison cell and rest awhile," and as I listened to His voice it was so easy to hear Him say:—

"Come thou, my child, in prison and rest awhile,  
Weary thou hast been of the press and throng,  
Wipe from thy brow the sweat and dust of war,  
And in My mighty power again be strong.

Come thou aside from all the world holds dear,  
For converse which the world has never known,

Alone with Me and with My Father here,  
With Me and with My Father not alone.

Come, tell Me, all that thou hast said and done,

Thy victories and troubles, hopes and fears,  
I know how hardly precious souls are won,  
My brightest gems are often saved through tears.

including Torquay Band

Come thou and rest the battle has been great,

Or you may fall upon the field and sink,  
I've brought for you the bread of life to eat,

And I've brought you the wine of love to drink.

Then fresh from converse with your Lord return

And fight till daylight softens into even,  
This month shall not be lost in which ye learn

More how to lead lost souls from earth to heaven."

\* \* \* \*

And so in prison four weeks I have been,  
In sweet communion with my Lord above;

And 'oh, how many precious truths I've seen,

While God has filled my heart with boundless love.

#### TESTIMONIES FROM MY OFFICERS.

One of the first questions I put to my officers on my being liberated from prison was: What is the condition of your corps, and what has been done during the month? And both from their replies and statements made by Mrs. Roberts, who had taken the responsibility of the Division during my absence, I found that it had not suffered in any way whatever. The officers were kept fully employed in praying for "the Major in prison," and doing their utmost to improve the spiritual and numerical state of their corps, and from the number of letters I received from the officers in reply to the foregoing question, I am able to give the following facts:—

THE BRIXHAM CORPS had glorious meetings during the Whitsuntide holidays, and after a successful tea on the Monday, followed by a praise and testimony meeting led by the Dawlish officers, one backslider came to the Lord and again sought pardon and Salvation.

TORRINGTON.—I am thankful to say that while you have suffered in prison the Lord has wrought a deeper work of grace in my heart, and has created in me a greater determination to live for Him and with a single eye for His glory. The Lord has blessed me also in the corps, and a few sinners during the month have wept their way to Calvary.—A.S.R.

TOPSHAM.—The captain from this corps was spending three weeks in the County Prison at the same time as the Major. But God did not forget us, and one soul gloriously saved before the Captain's release and he is both seen and heard amongst us to-day.

TIVERTON.—We are able to report good times during our dear Major's imprisonment. We petitioned the Throne of Grace on his behalf, and God gave us the victory by adding to our number four precious souls.

ILFRACOMBE.—I am very happy to say that during the month of our Major's imprisonment, the Lord has greatly blessed me in my own soul, and also the corps and I believe the chief cause has been his imprisonment. When we knew that he had been arrested we prayed more earnestly that the Lord would give him grace, strength and endurance, and make his imprisonment a great blessing to the Division. We held a half-night of prayer, to pray for him and his fellow-prisoners, and also our Torquay comrades. Fifty people attended the "half-night," which was a season of great blessing to all present.—W.J.P.

THE NEWTON ABBOT CORPS thanks God for success. For years the meetings have been held in a large cold market place, which have been very much against the work. But now we have been able to take the Alexandra Hall, and Sunday after Sunday souls are being saved. Our first convert is a musician. He knew that one of our bandmen had been sent to Exeter prison for helping our Torquay comrades to maintain their rights, and God moved him to come and get saved, and take the place of Bro. Prowse in the band, so that through the imprisonment of one of our soldiers we have had an increase to both the corps and the band. During the Major's imprisonment, prayer was made unto God without ceasing for him, and God both heard our prayers and blessed this corps in a remarkable manner.

TOTNES.—The first Sunday the Major was in prison the Lord visited this corps, and displayed His power in the salvation of two precious souls.

SOUTH MOLTON.—The work here has gone on gloriously during the Major's imprisonment. The soldiers have gone in more for the war spirit, and sinners have been saved. Between the 10th of May and 6th of June, God has given us nine precious souls, to Him alone be the praise.

CREDITON.—It so happened that we came to this corps the day the Major was taken to prison, and during his month's incarceration God gave us some real good meetings. The last Sunday he spent in prison was a blessed day to us as four souls sought salvation at the close of the day's meeting.

TORQUAY I.—The Captain farewelled this corps on June 24th, and wrote the next day as follows:—We had a grand rush up here yesterday, 25 souls last night, and nearly all of them came out without being spoken to personally.—T.H.

#### LIBERTY.

The following lines were thought out the last Saturday of my imprisonment while having my morning's exercise:

Only a few days more,

Then from this place I go,

To see my friends on yonder shore,

They'll be so glad I know.

There'll be rejoicings real,

Both on their part and mine,

And mysteries we shall reveal,

Concerning things divine.

Then as I thought of the poor prisoners marching round the exercise ring with me, many of whom had weeks and months longer to remain, and many, too, with not only sad hearts but guilty souls, I continued:

Oh, that each prisoner here,

Could firmly say with me,

"From all my sins and guilt and fear

The Lord has set me free.

He's willing to reclaim,

And give them peace with God,

It was for such from heaven He came

And spilt His precious blood.

Oh, that they would to-day,

"Get saved from all their sin,

They then would learn the happy way

To live for God and win!

#### THE GOOD OLD DRUM.

I've gone into Torquay,  
I've gotchets you may see,  
I do not like the drum.

But we are in the Army,  
And for God we beat the drum.

The Devonshire bandmen travelled there,  
And met in the open air

To play and beat the drum.

The Torquay policemen gathered round  
When they heard the joyful sound,  
And watched us beat the drum.

But then with a reporter's sword,  
Our names were written to the Local Board,

Because we beat the drum.

And then before the magistrate,

All one day we had to wait,

Because we beat the drum.

Some were ordered down below,

To the county prison had to go,

Because they beat the drum.

And soon a policeman comes and takes

Me inside the prison gates,

But leaves outside the drum.

There my clothes I had to change,

Which made me look and feel so strange,

Of course I had no drum.

B 3

My number it was —

12

Plain enough for all to see,

But then I had no drum.

Then to my cell I marched away,

And that was on the 10th of May,

But I marched without the drum.

In my cell throughout the day,

I'd pick my oakum read and pray,

But never beat the drum.

We'd go to bed at 8 p.m.,

And then get up at 6 a.m.,

But never beat the drum.

We'd wash our cells and put things straight,

Then clean our tins — have breakfast at

eight,

But never beat the drum.

Then after breakfast go to prayers,

And stand or kneel on steps or stairs,

But sing without the drum.

After prayers we'd have a walk,

The order being "you must not talk,"

Nor take with you the drum.

This walk they called it "exercise,"

To stretch our limbs and clear our eyes,

But we marched without the drum.

Then to our cell we'd march away,

And there remain alone all day,

And never beat the drum.

Two pictures hung upon my wall,

And now I've nearly told you all;

One picture showed the "bill of fare,"

The other said "do wrong if you dare,"

And it forbade the drum.

But when my term was quite complete

Out I came my friends to greet,

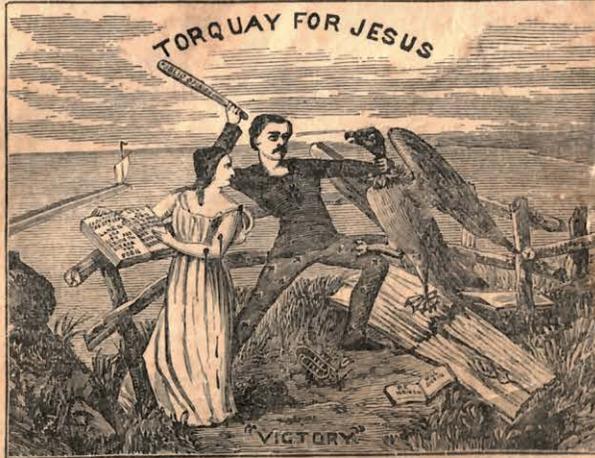
And beat again the drum.

And through this book I'm able to tell  
How the officials treated me pretty well,  
Altho' I had no drum.

But now the victory we have got,  
Which is excellent—is it not?  
We all may beat the drum.

For we are in the Army,  
And for God we beat the drum.

JOHN ROBERTS.



The illustration on this page is an engraving of the "Victory" Banner which was painted by Mrs. Hume — a Soldier of the Torquay Corps—and was carried in the procession on the occasion of the General's visit to Torquay to celebrate the victory God gave us in such a glorious manner.

The scene is laid in the Torquay Harbour, the infamous clause being part of what was called the Torquay Harbour Act. The female figure to the left represents "Liberty," who is holding an open Bible, with God's commands to go out into the lanes, etc., to compel the people to come in. She has been attacked and wounded by a vulture representing the 38th clause of the Torquay Harbour Act, which became so notorious during the year 1888. The vulture shown is one of the condor type, which is said to attack a man with impunity. A distortion of nature is apparent on the feet, one foot having 3 claws and the other 8—the 3 and 8 being put together making 38. One foot is supported by a broken board, the meaning of which is

obvious. The central figure represents one of those who went forth to the help of liberty, armed with the cudgel of "Public Opinion," which opinion was made known by the decision of the House of Commons when they virtually killed the clause, with its 38 claws, by repealing the Act which

endeavoured to prevent the Salvationists of Torquay making known Christ's power to save by marching in their orderly musical processions. It will be seen that the trousers of the warrior are those of a convicted criminal prisoner, which reminds us of the fact that about 90 summonses were issued against those who were determined to go forward for the sacred cause of liberty, and that 56 respectable God-fearing men spent from one week to one month—amounting in all to 926 days—within the walls of the Devon County Prison. The attention of Parliament was called to this matter by the Right Hon. H. H. Fowler, upon whose motion the question was referred to a Committee, with power to insert in a local Bill then before the House a clause repealing the persecuting enactment. And thus perished on the 17th July, 1888, this weapon which was secretly formed against us in a committee room two years before.

Alleluia, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth!