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ELIZABETH SWIFT BREngle



A GIRL COLLEGIATE



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## ELIZABETH SWIFT BRENGLE

### A GIRL COLLEGIATE

THE peculiar methods employed by The Salvation Army, and the simple sincerity of its adherents, have been used by God to influence people of widely divergent class and understanding. Its trophies have been won from slumland—a mighty host: its ministers from the public-houses. But that is not all. The long arm of The Salvation Army has reached upward also, and from the middle and higher classes has captured those who otherwise would probably only have spent their lives in self-pleasing, and turned them into paths of useful, active service.

Among those so captured was 'Lily' Swift, as she was familiarly known. 'If all the good things in life, together with health and ability to enjoy them, constitute the perfect lot,' says an intimate friend concerning her, 'then in youth she ought to have been a perfectly happy creature.'

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The home in which Lily was reared was an old-fashioned, comfortable Colonial farm-

house, with undulating meadow lands and a magnificent view of mountain scenery. A river which meandered through the pasture lands provided the little girl, with her companions, ample opportunity to bathe and fish, while the woods with their perennial treasures of flowers and ferns, and the farmyards with their hundred and one childish delights, never failed to interest her.

Of the goody-goody there was no trace in this healthy, happy girl. Brimful of health and spirits, she was out to enjoy life to the full; and being of strong and forceful character, it seemed as though she would carry all before her.

Nor was she in any sense of the word a model child in her general behaviour. A more wayward little maiden it would be impossible to imagine, and, but for the fact that she had inherited a goodly fund of plain common sense and sound reasoning powers, she would probably have found herself in difficulty again and again, and have become positively disliked. She quickly discerned that even where it went against the grain it was sometimes best to yield, for the time being, to the commands or wishes of others.

For instance, on one occasion she gave a rude answer to the man who cared for her horse. Her father, overhearing what was said, called her aside and told her that she owed the

man an apology, and until this was forthcoming her horse was not to be saddled for her again. Full of anger she declared to herself that that day would never come. Again and again her companions called for her to attend riding parties. All invitations were rejected by the girl. Her mother grew anxious. 'Are you sick, Lily?' she inquired. 'No, mamma,' she would answer glibly; 'I don't act sick, do I?' and no further explanation was forthcoming. One morning, after watching such a party disappear from view among the valleys, she reflected, and then remarked to herself, 'You—are—a—big—fool!' The next morning she expressed her intention to go riding; the apology had been given.

When playing with the neighbour's children, however, she usually had her own way. 'None of us children,' says one of her cousins, 'could talk her down.' She dominated the whole company, always convincing them that her ideas and plans were best. In the end, here again her sound judgment aided her, so that she came to the conclusion that domineering and 'won't-play-if-you-don't children' are not very welcome. Above all, Lily Swift had conceived a great ambition to be popular, and to attain the greater object she learned to yield her immediate wishes.

Coupled with those characteristics which, however troublesome when uncontrolled, at least are indicative of character and personality, she possessed a very sympathetic disposition. This revealed itself in practical form on more than one occasion when she was quite small. For example, a cousin who had been suffering from toothache shrank from paying a very necessary visit to the dentist. All persuasion failed. Then Lily made a proposition: 'Look here, Helen,' she said, 'if you'll come and have that tooth out, I'll have mine out first, and then you'll see it's not so bad.' Helen's fears somewhat allayed by Lily's readiness to undergo the dread ordeal, the two girls set out. Arriving at the place of torture, Lily hopped into the chair and had a tooth wrenched out without even a shudder. Helen confidently followed suit, and got immediate relief. 'All the way home,' her cousin says, 'I kept asking myself, "Could I ever do that for another?"'

Such actions, the outcome of a loving impetuous nature, were characteristic of this headstrong little girl.

Two other characteristics marked Lily Swift—an eagerness to obtain information, which her circumstances permitted her to indulge to the full: and a true devotion to beauty. Beauty of scenery, of colouring, of form and of feature,

all appealed to her keenly. This second characteristic being so strong it seemed almost a strange freak of nature that Lily should, in contrast to the natural beauty of her sisters, have been plain. They were blonde and plump and golden-haired—Lily was small and slight and brown. The girl, however, was not given to jealousy; but sometimes, as she noted her cousin Helen, she considered whether she might not be pretty, too, if she wore the same becoming clothes.

As to the part which clothing plays in producing a comely appearance, one day Lily made an important discovery. In the district in which she lived it was customary for the boys and girls to wear long-sleeved gingham aprons that covered them from neck to knee. Usually they were of blue and white check for the girls, and brown and white for the boys, with just a slight difference in the cut—the girls' garments having a wide turn-down collar while the boys had a straight, stand-up one.

On one occasion Lily robed herself in one belonging to her brother, and the mistake was not discovered till the school-bell was ringing out its last warning to the stragglers.

During the morning recess the girls commented on her appearance.

'Lil, you look different some way. Why, let's see—you've got on one of George's aprons!'

Then one girl with greater candour than politeness exclaimed: 'All I've got to say is, I'd wear it always: it's ever so much more becoming than your own. You look quite pretty!'

The other girls took up the cry, 'You do! Lil Swift, you do! Really, truly, Lil, you do!'

Then dress *did* have something to do with making people look beautiful or otherwise.

When school was over she scampered home, up into the spare chamber, and tipping a large mirror to a correct angle, posed before it. Eagerly she scanned her image in the glass. It was true! She had no idea that she could look so well. Lily was too young to understand why the difference in the cut and colour of an overall should make all that difference to her appearance, but there and then she registered a vow that when she grew up she would make a study of the subject—which she did very thoroughly in later life.

There was just one little cloud which would sometimes arise on the horizon of this otherwise care-free life: a cloud created all unconsciously by the religious teachings of her home. She had imbibed Calvinistic doctrines, and as soon as she could read at all, at five years of age,

had absorbed the Westminster Catechism. As she grew older and began to understand, she decided that the doctrine of election was a very comfortable one—provided, of course, that one could be quite sure that one is among the elect. It was this uncertainty which at times troubled the mind of the intelligent maid. Apparently absorbed in the reading of a story-book, in reality listening eagerly to the theological discussions going on around her, gradually, in spite of herself, she became almost convinced that one's eternal fate lay in one's own hands.

Once when her mind was troubled by this occasionally recurring problem, she wondered whether her favourite companion could throw any light on the subject.

'Come 'long, let's eat cherries,' she suggested seductively one warm afternoon. Into the garden the two went, and, agile as a pair of monkeys, climbed up—up—up into the great cherry tree.

Suddenly Lily startled her friend with the unexpected inquiry—'Kit, are you elect?'

Kitty stared in amazement, then replied evasively—'Why, 'course I am!'

It was grounds for this certainty that Lily was out to discover, so she eagerly questioned, 'Then, Kit, how do you know?'

Kit was not quite so ready with a reply, and to 'make time' crammed a handful of cherries into her mouth—at length mumbling somewhat inaudibly, 'Cause er gotter witness er Spirit.'

'Cause *what* ?'

Kitty deliberately finished her mouthful, and then answered somewhat more coherently, and as glibly as a small parrot: 'Got the witness of the Spirit'—and to avoid further explanation quickly reached for another handful of the convenient fruit.

True, Lily knew that was stated in the Catechism: but what was the witness of the Spirit ?

Again she probed Kit—this time expressing wonder as to whether she, Lily, were among the elect.

Kit's patience was giving out. Theological questions did not trouble her little mind. 'Course you are, so's our mammas and papas and all our folk,' she answered abruptly. 'What's the matter with you anyway, Lil Swift ?'

A call from little companions, and in a moment the girls swung themselves from their perch in the cherry tree to engage in a mad romp.

Taken to hear an Evangelist a short time

after, Lily was again brought face to face with the troublesome question.

'Will all who desire to go to Heaven stand up, so that the Christians present can pray for you ?' pleaded the speaker. Such a course would, perhaps, bring her the much desired 'witness,' and so risking, although inwardly fearing, the jokes which would be made by her companions at her expense on the following day, she responded. Then immediately the girl's active, eager nature cried out for practical service—but to become a Church member seemed the only reply.

In her search for Christian example Lily selected Aunt Eliza, who was simply adored in the wider family circle. Lily now came to the conclusion that her aunt's sweet temper and self-sacrificing life were not just natural to her, as she had before supposed, but were in some way connected with her habits of prayer and devotion. The little girl began to adopt a similar course for herself. First she read the Bible through, then made a study of the Epistles. Her findings puzzled, if they did not daunt, her. How could any one 'put away all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamour' ? was but one of the many problems that she could not solve.

Time passed, and Lily entered college.

Finding among her associates a young Episcopalian, and thinking she could get light on some of these problems, she ventured a few questions.

'Are you a Church member?' said the Episcopalian.

'Why, yes,' came the ready answer from the astonished girl.

'I mean an Episcopalian. We don't count any other Church.'

Lily replied in the negative, saying that she did not belong to that particular section of the elect, and meekly inquired whether it made any difference.

'Of course,' was the lofty reply. 'If you don't belong to our Church you're not a member at all. But you're very young. I'm twenty-two, and I don't mind explaining. Come on into the library.'

For thirty minutes sixteen sat at the feet of twenty-two, and heard the mysteries of apostolic succession explained—and the difference between regular and irregular baptism.

'Does it make you good?' suggested the eager listener.

Startled by her practical question her instructor demanded sharply, 'What do you mean?'

'Does it make you keep your temper and do all the hard things the Bible says you must?'

'Nonsense, no one does them!'

Then it provided no solution to Lily's problem. The conference was broken up, never to be reopened.

The world, offering tangible treasures, was tugging hard for ownership—the religion she knew was but unsatisfactory and vague. Was it any wonder that the girl yielded to the drawings of what seemed to offer the greatest gain?

\* \* \*

Very small incidents may produce great effects. Lily Swift had always been thought to be 'as tough as a little pine knot.' When, therefore, whilst out skating with a party she experienced difficulty with her strap, which refused to operate, and in consequence she had to remain stationary for a short time, no one expected she would experience any ill effects. The unanticipated happened—she contracted a chill which rendered her almost a semi-invalid for the rest of her life. It was an entirely new state of affairs for this formerly active girl to have to consider her health and the limitations of her strength. Most aggravating

and distressing of all was the intimation that, in the judgment of her own physician and the college faculty, she was not in a fit condition to complete the course of study she was then undergoing. She fought against this decision, but finally agreed to return home for one year, buoying herself up with the hope that she could return later and complete her term. That was not to be.

It was useless for her to weep and moan. A world of pleasure was still open to her. Open-hearted, witty, and possessing unusual charm of manner, she became the life and soul of every gathering she attended, and was widely sought after. In spite of a delicate physique the lines of her life ran in pleasant places.

By this time the old stirrings of religion had for the most part been stilled, or, at any rate, were controlled; but her writings concerning the next ten years of her career reveal a restlessness of spirit and hungerings for the Divine, such as once were expressed by St. Augustine—'Thou, O God, hast made us for Thyself, and we are restless till we rest in Thee.' She says:

'Once given over to the world, I got as much out of it as I believe any one does. All was fish that came to my net—books, music, art, society, a mad gallop over the hills, or a quiet morning at embroidery, night after night

of dancing, or evenings of scientific lectures and classical concerts. There was nothing in life that seemed good to me that fate did not give me, and yet the skeleton at my feast was a very literal one—the thought of death—and, "in that sleep of death what dreams might come," was often with me as a black cloud, dimming alike the fun out in the park and the lights in the ballroom.

'If that rearing horse fell with me—if that white dress were really my shroud—if my soul were scurrying through space like the wailing soul of Faust in Berlioz's *Symphonie*, with the following demons sure to overtake it—what then? These were the troubling thoughts which marred all my pleasure.

'Just in proportion as these unwelcome ideas possessed my mind I felt myself growing world-weary. Was that the secret of the discontented faces all about me, and did others wonder perpetually, as I did *occasionally*, why they were born, and if life, even at its best, were worth living? I looked at my neighbours to see if any countenance bore marks of peace. Religion, from which, except in its outward forms, I had long since parted company, must, I was sure, if really lived out, satisfy and bring rest. Did it? Only the calm face of the dear aunt at home, and the like look of two others

among all the nominal Christians I knew, gave any sign of an abiding, inward peace. Measuring the lives of all the others by that unforgotten standard of the New Testament, they fell far short: and while the lives of these three did not, yet when God took one Home, and the world took back another, leaving but one solitary soul filled with vital, active piety in all my universe, I said, "God has no followers. How can I be one?"

\* \* \*

The youngest member of the Swift family graduated from college in 1884, and instead of taking a much-needed holiday accepted a position in a fashionable school. A year of strenuous labour brought her to the verge of a nervous breakdown, and it was felt that only a trip to Europe could restore her to normal health. This she proposed to take, accompanied by a friend. In these days of rapid travelling facilities, such excursions are quite ordinary: but forty-five years ago it was by no means so, and Mrs. Swift was thrown into a state of nervous agitation until it transpired that Lily was to go with them to act as chaperon. So, in spite of their mothers' fears, the trio set out one charming day in the lovely month of May, to have as merry a time as

any three bright, clever, congenial spirits could. Everything which would tend to mar their happiness was set aside while they followed the god of pleasure.

Two weeks were spent in Ireland; then they crossed to Scotland. It was their intention to spend a long summer touring England, and then winter with friends in Rome and Naples. Their plans, however, were destined to be altered, and the first factor which contributed to the change occurred one Friday afternoon when the little party were driving slowly through Glasgow city. The sharp eyes of the girls noted the, to them, queer un-American signs over the shops and offices. Simultaneously the eyes of the two younger girls were attracted to the words 'Salvation Army' in red letters. They requested the carriage to be stopped, and jumped out to get a closer view. 'Salvation Army,' it read, 'Holiness Meeting to-night at eight.'

The College friend saw in the strange announcements possibilities for a magazine article, while the younger Swift girl was keen on adventure. Lily, however, felt it her duty to restrain them. Whilst reading a local paper, just before leaving home, she had seen some reference to The Salvation Army, and had questioned her father for further information

in regard to those apparently strange people. 'I only know,' he had replied with emphasis, 'what I have heard of them passing my hotel window in Poughkeepsie, and that's all I care to.' That was quite sufficient to decide Lily as to the attitude she should take, and she immediately told the two enthusiasts that nothing would induce her to go.

They went alone.

The Meeting apparently afforded them a fund of amusement, and after it was over they laughed together over the queer bonnets and straight skirts of the women, and the hideous red guernseys of the men. Then Lily listened to an account of the speaking, singing and praying—all of which was dramatized. But when they had completed their account, and laughed their hardest, the Swift girl said with emphasis, 'Yet they are good people.' Her companion agreed, adding, 'Yes, I believe in them.'

It was, of course, just another incident of travel—and Lily entered into the merriment created. When, however, the following evening the two girls decided on another visit, and routed the hotel porter up at 6.30 on Sunday morning to let them out to go to a Prayer Meeting, Lily got both disturbed and annoyed. There was no knowing what these two hot-

heads might do. She thought out a scheme. She would herself go and see these strange people, and then by a judicious mixture of sarcasm and irony nip their infatuation in the bud.

Putting her determination into effect she made her way to the tiny room where the Meeting was being held, there to find a dozen people of the working-class type, and on the platform two or three men and women wearing the grotesque apparel which her companions had so cleverly described. The Meeting progressed pretty much as the girls had said, but of the matter which appealed to Lily Swift they had made no mention—a certain pure, good look that marked every countenance, indicative of an inward peace. Of the terms used by them she understood absolutely nothing. 'A clean heart'—'Sanctification'—it was all Dutch to her. But when in simple testimony they said that 'God had made them good,' she, for one, believed their report. Against her will and inclinations she was forced to admit that here, among these strange people, she had found the religion for which her heart had long craved.

At the close of the Meeting a sweet-faced woman approached her and asked, 'Are you a Christian?'

'No!' came the truthful response, 'I am only a Church member. What must I do to be a Christian?'

'Give up your will to God,' came the instant answer.

'I shall never do that, I think,' Lily replied, but even while she looked into the serene countenance of her counsellor and noted the evidences of peace upon the delicate face, her heart surged with envy.

A tour through the Highlands, and very little reference was made to The Salvation Army. But on arriving in Edinburgh the two younger girls lost no time in discovering The Army Hall. On their return, the description given of the people who filled the large building so alarmed Lily that she concluded, if the girls were to attend at all, it was her duty to chaperon them.

'For the first time,' says Eileen Douglas, 'in their easy, luxurious lives they were brought face to face with "the masses." Respectable poverty and mild wickedness was one thing, but here, right before them (for Lily insisted that her charges should sit on the platform under the protection of the Leaders, if they *would* go to such dangerous places) was outright ruffianism of the sort they had read of in Dickens, and had hardly believed possible.'

Lily remained in the audience, in 'the seat of the scornful.' But looking about she said she saw 600 of the worst looking people she could imagine, and alarmed she fled to the platform with the other girls. When the Captain arose to give out the first song, that Scottish mob burst into wild tumult and would not give him a hearing. Finally, he turned to his little wife and said, 'Maybe they will hear you.' But when the little woman arose the storm of noise burst in greater fury. They stamped, whistled, cat-called, and then Lily's American blood began to boil, and forgetting herself she stepped to the side of the little woman and lifting her gloved hand called for 'fair play.' The wild mob was startled, and as the stormy sea stilled at the word of Jesus, so that tumult stilled, and 'at that moment,' said Lily, 'God spoke to me, and whispered, "These are your people, and you must give your life for such as these."' She left an account of this gathering:

'For two long hours we sat facing six-hundred evil-faced men and women, representing every state and stage of poverty, vice, and misery. Here was embodied before our shocked eyes all the evil of which we had ever heard: here was sin so apparent in faces, looks, and uttered words, as to convince the most sceptical

of the need of either a receiving hell or a reclaiming Gospel.'

The Meetings did not seem to awaken any anxiety in Lily's soul in regard to her own condition, but in those Edinburgh gatherings her heart was stirred, for the first time, in regard to the spiritual welfare of the degraded and wicked. She felt the urge to do something for them, and in her own way, and to the best of her ability, she responded. Well educated, able to express herself clearly, and having a good knowledge of Bible literature, she was sure she could convince them. Back to her hotel she went one evening, to sit up far into the night to compose a neat little sermon and prayer for use the next evening.

Opportunity was provided for her, and she was given a respectful hearing; but it was very evident that the neatly worked out arguments produced no effect, and her judgment compelled her to admit that this was to a large extent due to the fact that she herself was lacking in the Divine life. Her sister and the college chum had already sought and obtained full deliverance from the power of sin. Lily held aloof from all that. But the need of the masses appealed to her sympathetic nature, and she desired to help them to better things. It was no wonder that this uninvited guest, who

insisted on taking a seat on the platform, and in 'doing things in a hind-foremost manner,' attracted attention and interest.

Whilst she endeavoured to work in this way, Lily still quietly continued her search after truth.

'If I decide to be a Christian, what must I do?' she inquired of the Scottish Captain who was in charge of the Corps. 'First off,' came the forceful reply, 'ye maun repent, give up all your sins, tell Father, an' ask Him to forgive you, an' when ye ask Him that, repentin', ye maun believe that He does it. It's not to believe anythin' more, except as He shows ye. Then ye'll go to work an' serve Him wi' all your might: an tha'll be a Christian.'

For the first time Lily truly understood. 'The way to Heaven,' was, after all, 'straight and plain.' And in his blunt way, also the Scotch Captain had suggested opportunity for service, the very thing for which her heart had craved. But like the rich young man of old she considered the price she would have to pay. Instinctively she realized that the Salvation of her soul, and the hard path of Army service in some form were bound together, and she decided to wait until she found an easier way.

As the little touring party proceeded southward, to Lily her Salvation Army association

seemed to have become a thing of the past. The two younger girls, however, attended Meetings where opportunity presented, and their prayers were rising, and their minds plotting for her Salvation. The sweet-faced woman who had questioned her in Glasgow had not been successful in winning her, nor yet the big, open-hearted Scot. In their anxiety and determination they looked about for 'someone like herself,' who would perhaps be able to overcome her scruples.

Whilst they were in London the girls met a young man who, under the influence of his brother, a Salvation Army Officer, had become converted. The desire which now dominated his mind was to be a soul-winner, but while he had worked faithfully, no souls were awarded him for his hire, and he was becoming much discouraged.

The strategists saw in this young man the assistant they needed, and only too readily he lent his aid. But how were they to bring them together? The plotters then cautiously approached Lily, telling her that they had made an engagement on her behalf to meet this young man at the Headquarters of The Salvation Army. She had been trapped! At first she positively refused to keep the appointment, and freely expressed her annoyance. Then, softening a little, and feeling sorry for the

pickle in which the two girls found themselves, she consented, giving them, however, very definite warning that if they ever took such a liberty again they would take the full consequences.

On meeting the gentleman in question she felt a sense of relief. Undoubtedly he was a gentleman, and 'no gentleman could ever be disagreeably personal.' She was a little astonished, therefore, when he asked, 'Are you a Christian?' Finding that she made no such profession he asked, 'May I tell you how God saved me?' There was no way out but to agree, and the two sat down in the deserted meeting-room while he told his story. It was the story of an infidel, a reckless man who had sown his wild oats at home and abroad; but God had touched that hard, cold, proud heart, and in obedience to the call he had left all and followed.

Again Lily saw it all. 'A religion that did not involve entire obedience to God could never be the right kind.' There was no easier way. 'Christ-washed feet must follow the Saviour's path.' Lily decided to follow.

The room was even now filling for the noon-tide Prayer Meeting with all sorts of people—working men, factory girls, and boozers from the surrounding pubs. There was no opportunity

for personal prayer, but in that Meeting Lily Swift conquered. Rising, she told of her long search after God, and of her present surrender. She spoke from her heart, and other hearts were moved. Between her and these hungry souls, thief and drunkard and boisterous factory girl though they were for the most part, a kinship was established. The effect was strangely in contrast to that produced by the carefully-prepared sermon she had delivered in Edinburgh.

Again the question which had risen in her mind years ago when, under the teaching of the Evangelist, she had risked the jokes of her schoolmates, presented itself. 'Lord,' now cried her willing spirit, 'what wilt Thou have me to do?' So far, however, any idea of joining The Army did not seem to occur to her.

Continuing their tour, the party travelled through lovely Devonshire and Cornwall down to Land's End. Visits to churches and cathedrals were included in their schedule, but somehow the three travellers had lost something of their keenness, and sight-seeing was now rather a duty than a pleasure. At each new place entered their first business was to hunt up The Salvation Army. They turned to its Barracks as 'the heart turns homeward.'

While this was so, they did not immediately

accept all its odd methods as being quite correct. Much indeed of what was done offended their refined sensibilities, and, at first, they would have liked some alteration made. But gradually their judgments were carried. Reference is made to this transition of thought in an 'All the World' article, written by Miss Swift:

'Not one of The Army's peculiar methods had been accepted by us without objection. Each was opposed to our taste, inclination, habit, and acquired ideas of what was at once proper and necessary in religious services; but when we saw each successfully serving its purpose of attracting the lowest sort of people to the preaching of the Gospel, we felt all valid ground for objection removed. We watched the processions sweep hundreds of loafers into The Army Halls, heard scores of Army Soldiers testify that the Drum first called them out of the public-houses to the Meetings where they were converted, and learned that The Army uniform had the same value as that of a policeman or other official.

'As we read our Bibles we found these methods Scriptural. Jeremiah was imprisoned for holding an Open-Air Meeting. Ezekiel was commanded by God to do seemingly useless and absurd things for the express purpose of

arousing the people's curiosity, thereby giving him a chance to deliver the Lord's message to them.'

When necessity arose for the touring party to break up, the young enthusiasts had attended one hundred and twenty-five Meetings in twenty-six cities, and whilst their study had led them to believe in The Salvation Army, and Salvationists taken as a whole, the Swift girls felt that they would like to get a deeper insight into the workings, and arrangements were made for them to spend a further period in London, their college friend returning home to duty.

While Mrs. Swift was in favour also of her daughters returning, their father took a broader view, and, securing a promise that the girls would come home before definitely committing themselves in any way to The Salvation Army, he agreed to their proposal to remain for a further period in England.

The Salvation Army had no locked doors—everything was open to their inspection: Training Garrison, Headquarters, Corps, even the General's private house.

To obtain a better understanding of Army Doctrine and methods, the sisters paid a visit to The Army Mother's home. Mrs. Booth was then becoming recognized as one of the most

remarkable preachers and women of her age, and the girls had not visualized her in any other capacity than as a public figure. Lily, therefore, experienced something in the nature of a shock when, after the ordinary greetings were exchanged, she found herself seated in a shabby-looking sitting-room, and a motherly voice remarked, 'You won't mind my going on with my work while we talk?' The said 'work' was the sewing of a large patch on a grey flannel shirt. As she patched, Lily plied her with questions in regard to Justification, Sanctification, and the various Army doctrines and methods, to each of which she replied as lucidly and clearly as if from the public platform. Then for a moment the grey flannel shirt was laid aside whilst she prayed for the two young people.

As the Swift girls took the homeward journey Lily expressed her astonishment at the homely surroundings.

'What did you expect?' came the somewhat sarcastic reply. 'Don't you suppose that where there are men there have to be shirts?'

'Ye-es,' said Lily, 'but—but——'

'Well—what? Did you expect to find her on a seat of state with a halo around her head?'

'I guess I must have—or something of that sort. I didn't expect to find the greatest woman

preacher of the age patching her husband's shirt.'

The incident, however, made a life-impression on the girls. It had clinched their conviction that religion is something that has to be mixed up with every detail of a man's or a woman's life.

A period of Training Garrison examination followed, although, owing to her delicate physique, Lily did not sleep within the precincts of that noisy, bustling building. Her days, however, were fully occupied there. It was a few weeks after her entry that she made the acquaintance of Miss Emma Booth; the Principal, as she then was, had been absent for two or three weeks, and in a letter written at that time Lily expresses her admiration of the Consul:

'Everything is different now that Emma Booth is back. Such a compound of goodness and common sense as that woman has you never saw. She's only twenty-three years old, but she couldn't be more motherly to this flock of girls if she were fifty-three. Sister has fallen in love with her, and so have I, each in a different way. If you knew her, you couldn't help loving and trusting her entirely.'

Whilst Lily Swift and her sisters were studying The Army, and sizing up its people as their father had suggested, they were entirely un-

conscious of the fact that The Army Leaders were also studying them. Miss Emma Booth lost no time in beginning her investigation of their abilities.

'Sister and I hadn't opened our mouths in the Training Garrison before, but Miss Booth made us both speak and pray in her Meeting last night,' Lily wrote to her mother.

The Consul was evidently satisfied that these two cultured young women could give very real help in 'rolling the old chariot along,' for a few days later the aid of the elder girl was enlisted to teach the Cadets, whilst her sister was invested with the care of 'All the World,' then in its infancy.

Teaching was a joy and delight to Lily, and she was absolutely amazed to find what a desire to learn, coupled with earnest prayer for help, could do for even the most untaught, and least intelligent.

'I took a class of girls to-day who had never studied arithmetic before,' she wrote to her mother. 'I put them through the four cardinal rules in one morning. If they weren't well saved, do you think I could ever have done it? No, nor anyone else. It is certainly beautiful work to teach those who are saved.'

Before she fully realized it, heart and hands were busy. In addition to teaching, her ready

pen was requisitioned both by her sister in the interests of 'All the World,' and The Army authorities for newspaper articles explanatory of Army system. A booklet, the 'Cradle of Empire,' having reference to the Training Garrison, was also prepared by her. This book made a deep impression upon young Mr. Brengle (now Commissioner) who decided that the Salvationists should be his people

Whilst Lily Swift and her sister studied The Army methods at close quarters in London, their parents on the other side of the Atlantic waited—each viewing the position from different standpoints—in anxious anticipation of the final decision of their daughters.

In answer to their weekly budgets the father, with all a lawyer's caution, urged them to proceed slowly, and to 'try the spirits carefully,' but, viewing the whole with broad outlook, he was not greatly disturbed. Moreover, he had every confidence in his eldest daughter's clear judgment, and in her ability to 'weigh up' men and women at their true worth. It was a fact that The Army in America had been brought into disrepute by certain people, and extraordinary stories were current in regard to their actions; but he knew, also, that much of what was reported was entirely false.

With the mother, however, with her more

restricted view, every new abuse, every fresh assertion, every absurd sketch drawn, drove her to distraction.

'Fancy our girls consorting with that crowd, George,' she burst forth on one occasion. 'Look at that woman! Such a bonnet! Did you ever see anything like it?'

'Well, Mother,' came the unexpected reply, as he carefully scanned the obnoxious print, 'I'm not much on fashion, but it looks to me—yes, it certainly does—very like the bonnet I used to see on you long ago.'

'George!'

'Well, it does, but I guess yours had a bit of flower in front—or was it over one ear? Wherever it was, you always looked mighty sweet and pretty in it to me!'

The mother-pen was kept constantly busy writing, and writing again, and yet again to her daughters. Newspaper cuttings by the score were sent, so that they might judge for themselves the standing in which The Army was held in America. And nearly every mail brought an urgent appeal to return home and 'let papa talk to you.'

To answer all her objections and put her at her ease kept Lily's pen busy also. So judiciously did she conduct that correspondence that copies of her letters, sent by her mother, found their

way into various newspapers, being eagerly accepted as from 'An American Lady,' and giving another aspect of the doings of the much abused Salvation Army.

That a great change had come over the elder girl especially, she was convinced. To be well and becomingly dressed had been one of Lily's greatest ambitions in the old days. A letter in reply to her maternal inquiries as to 'how their dresses were holding out,' not only confirmed her theory, but horrified her. 'Admirably!' wrote Lily. 'They are likely to last ten years. We wear uniforms, as I told you. For everyday wear we have a skirt and a jersey (navy blue) with "Salvation Army" embroidered in dark red across the breast. "Dress" uniform consists of a long princess robe, looped up behind to walking length. I had my uniform very specially made to fit well, to please you. No, my dress doesn't offend any Christians now, that I know of: it does offend those who are not Christians, and that is the class I want to get at. If they can't see any outward difference between me and the worldly people, they won't believe in me. . . . God has led me so far. I objected to sister taking off her ring, and I disagreed with Mrs. Booth when she told me (in answer to my own question) that I ought to be distinguished from the world

by my dress. I couldn't see it then, but now I do.'

Her daughter's change of outlook on other matters was equally surprising. Years before, partly to meet a pressing need, and partly out of sympathy for the girl and her babe, Mrs. Swift had taken a girl of bad repute into her home as chambermaid. She remembered the attitude of her proud daughter to this girl, and therefore it is little wonder that she nearly 'dropped through the floor' on receiving the following letter in reply to one of her own:

'The letter from you, containing the little slip headed "A Salvation Demonstration," came last night. One of the celebrities mentioned in it, "Moggie, the Camberwell Wonder," is here in the Training Garrison now, and I held her hands five minutes last night while we talked about "my scamp." She is a wonder, mamma: she is an embodied miracle. She is an Irishwoman of perhaps twenty-five, and there is no known sin she hasn't been guilty of. She was regularly educated to all sorts of vice, and is by nature a coarse, unrefined sort of a girl. But she is, in spite of all that, a calm, high, beautiful soul. She was the boon companion of a man I've been working at and praying for all the summer—"my scamp," I call him.'

Not less astonishing was a letter detailing

a soul-saving expedition in the West End, made under the supervision of a Scotch girl, who, before conversion, 'was an actress and fallen girl here in London.'

Lily Swift, even now did not accept, unreservedly, all Army teachings. In her reasonings and intelligent questionings she made a special appeal to The Army Mother. Says General Bramwel Booth :

'My mother loved Lily Swift from her first contact with her. She recognized in her a rare soul, a kindred spirit. She was not a docile soul, but a sincere seeker after the truth. She combated any view that was not clear to her until by patient, clear reasoning her judgment was carried, then her faith was adequate to the light received, and she adopted it without reserve.'

So it was with the doctrine of Full Salvation. Here her reasoning powers were backed by a realization which was borne in upon her one day in an unexpected way, when, annoyed by something her sister had done, she felt a torrent of anger sweep over her. So well did she control herself that no one, not even her sister, even suspected that she was angry. Lily was shocked and humiliated. That evening, as though to add stress to her need, someone testified to having been in such a condition as she had

known herself to have been in that day, but told of being 'saved from temper.' She consoled herself by saying inwardly, 'One swallow does not make a summer.' But when in the succeeding Meetings she listened to unhesitating testimonies given one after another to freedom from temper, anger, and fretfulness, she reasoned—'Perhaps one swallow does not make a summer, but when there are dozens of them, what then?'

Again and again she came to the Mercy-seat, until one who had watched her apparently fruitless efforts suggested that perhaps she was looking for feelings whereas she must accept by faith. Acting on this advice she stopped coming to the Mercy-seat, and while she still had no 'feeling,' after several weeks she underwent self-examination and she realized that she had neither been angry, nor tempted to be so during that period. Then the realization came to her that the deliverance she had sought had really come.

\* \* \*

News concerning the Swift girls' conversion, or, as the less decorous described it—'new freak'—spread among their acquaintances and friends throughout the countryside, and their home-coming was eagerly anticipated.

Curiosity led friends and relatives to make early 'welcome-home' calls; some mourned, others went away indignant over the change this 'new religion' had wrought in the girls.

A Meeting in the Methodist Church was convened so that the girls might answer questions put to them, and the interest aroused made it necessary to continue the gatherings in the village hall.

Mrs. Swift did not agree to these Meetings without apprehension. 'We haven't got any roughs in this village. We have got our churches and ministers; surely there is no need for you two delicate girls to work yourselves to death?' she asserted. 'This isn't London—it's a decent country village.'

The coloured cook, however, had a little closer acquaintance with local doings: 'Laws, Mrs. Swif,' she said, 'dere's jest as much plumb wickedness in dis here place as in any London. You dunno: you always keep with 'spectable folk.'

It was only too true—all kinds of vices and wickedness found a hiding-place in that tiny hamlet nestling along the brooding mountains. And those little Meetings unearthed them and brought them to view.

Throughout the summer the Swift girls were kept fully occupied conducting Meetings,

visiting and heartening converts, caring for the sick and needy, and in superintending a Reading Room opened for the benefit of a number of young men who had been in the habit of spending their evenings in occupations which, to say the least, were doubtful. The Church Roll grew considerably as a result of their efforts, and at first the girls were heartily welcomed; but their popularity began to wane when they persisted in preaching the doctrine of Holiness. Young Converts rose, one after the other, and with shining faces testified to deliverance from anger, pride, self-seeking and a host of similar entanglements. While they did so, the old members sat silent—and an uncomfortable feeling was created.

Among those who entered into 'fulness of experience' were Lily's father and mother, Sarah the coloured servant, and her son, who, later, entered the ministry. Turning aside from his card-table, Mr. Swift threw the weight of his strong personality and splendid training in pleading and defence, into the work of soul-winning; while their mother, sweetly yet boldly, testified what her Lord had done for her.

The work was not without discouragements, for later the discomfort of old church members resolved itself into definite attempt to hinder

the work. Writing to a sympathetic friend concerning this, Lily said :

'A combined effort is being made by the churches here to break up my work by driving me out of the Methodist Church building and the village hall. Though I can control the Church building, and could build a new hall, yet the Lord does not lead me to do either. My heart aches over this poor Church. Before my Meetings began there were forty-two members on the roll : I believe forty-five have been added since. The others of my people will not join the Church because of the factions in it. But do not imagine I am cast down by the mountain of opposition which I find everywhere.'

And the reason she was not 'cast down' was that she realized that the blessing of God followed her efforts, and her labour was sealed with precious souls.

She toiled in the presence of those who had previously known her—and who were bound to confess, as did one of her former acquaintances, that 'the change in her was nothing less than a miracle.'

Entering a room where she was sitting with Bible on lap, this acquaintance said ironically, 'Do you really believe all those miracles actually happened ?'

'You mean, for example,' she replied, 'Elisha's

making the axe-head swim ? Yes, I do believe it. Why not ? That was merely the overcoming for a moment of a law of nature ; but God used a man full of His Spirit to win my will over on to His side, and so has overcome the law of sin in my heart. I *know* that. And isn't it easy after that to believe God can do anything ?'

'Yes, that *is* true,' came the answer now in serious tones. 'The change in you is a miracle. When I remember your training, your heredity, your habits, associations and tastes, and see you now, so changed that it would seem as though you had been newly created, I, also, am bound to believe in miracles.'

And it was probably this convincing proof in herself which brought the greatest glory to the Name of Christ, and which was the greatest asset to her preaching.

At the end of the summer the younger girl returned to England to take up an appointment as Editor of 'All the World.' Lily remained to care for the Converts and to continue the work in her home district.

\* \* \*

When Lincoln made his historical call for volunteers, among the crowd of men who

responded was a youthful father who, bidding his girl-wife and infant boy an affectionate farewell, set out to do what he felt to be his great duty. At the Siege of Vicksburg he made the supreme sacrifice. The young mother wept as she recalled the three years of married happiness, during which she had never heard her husband speak a cross word. He had always shown her the most tender and chivalrous devotion.

Her great desire was that her little son should emulate his example. Hugging him to her breast, as he grew older she would tell him how happy his father had made her, adding, as she looked him straight in the eyes—'And some day my boy will make some little woman unspeakably happy, too.'

The boy grew with this idea firmly implanted in his mind—that one object of his life was to make 'some little woman unspeakably happy,' while to injure a woman, to mar her life and blast her happiness, seemed to him the supremest cursedness and treason.

Then one sad day, whilst the boy was seated in the class-room at school doing his lessons, a message came: 'Sam, quick! come home, mother is dying.'

He left with all speed, but reached home too late to hear her last words. The memory of

her sweet, womanly character was enshrined deep in his heart, and in all his boyish loves and dreams it was sweetness and purity rather than flashing beauty and wit which appealed to him.

Soon after his mother's death Sam Brengle went to college. Surrounded by a bevy of lovely maidens, he, in common with his chums, frolicked and picnicked with the greatest freedom, but he lost his heart to none of them. His mother's training and his own intellectual outlook demanded that his chosen wife must have a range of vision and thought which would reach beyond the neighbourhood in which she lived. She must be educated, must know books, and also have some knowledge of the world's best thought. Though only nominally religious himself, he felt even then that the woman of his choice should be one of religious conviction. This latter, especially, was a 'miss' in the lovely girls with which he now mingled.

Passing from college, he entered a Theological Seminary. His first life ambition had been to become a lawyer. Guided by the Spirit of God, he turned aside from his chosen profession to enter the ministry. He seemed marked out for a position very near the top of his chosen profession when he became convinced of the truth of the doctrine of Holiness, and, having

sought and obtained the Blessing of Full Salvation, turned aside from a position of affluence to follow the strenuous life of an Evangelist.

The choice of his life-partner now became a matter of serious concern. He went a step further than before—'My wife,' he said, 'must not only have sweet womanly virtues adorned with refinement and the culture of the schools, but she must be genuinely religious, she must love God and His law, for then I feel that her love and loyalty to me could not fail. But where can I find such a woman? Solomon was a very wise man, and had a very wide marital experience, and he said, "A prudent wife is from the Lord."'

Sam Brengle determined to seek Divine guidance. One after another he brought before the Lord the young ladies of his acquaintance, but 'there was no answering voice, bidding him to go forward.'

One day a companion rushed into his room and declared with enthusiasm that he had 'found just the girl' for him. It transpired that the young man had been to a Holiness Meeting held in a church, led by a young Salvationist. The Evangelist promised to attend one of the gatherings—not on account of the woman—but because The Salvation Army appealed to,

and interested him intensely. His chum's jesting words, however, proved a prophecy. Nearly thirty years after he referred to the incident:

'I can see her still, as she stood there that night before that critical and only half sympathetic audience—a slender, delicate, cultured woman—and preached the truth as I had seldom, if ever, heard it preached, in language simple yet delicately refined, and searching as a fire to the consciences of men.'

'My chum was right—I fell in love with her at first sight, and lost my heart, but not my head. In matters of love involving marriage, I am persuaded that head and heart should keep pace with each other.'

As time went on his mind was thoroughly convinced that this was the woman of God's choice for him. Being unable to see her in person he wrote and told her all. In reply came the 'sweetest letter—and the bitterest'—he ever received. She was shocked. No such idea had ever presented itself to her. 'It would put the crown upon my womanhood,' she wrote, 'but it cannot be,' and she wept.

'You are surely under a spell, an illusion!' she said. 'All my sanctified common sense says loudly and clearly, "You must not marry him." Some day you will be glad that I couldn't think as you did, that I kept you free.'

Then she was heart-broken. Was this the end of their helpful friendship—for he had led her on to higher heights of Christian experience?

The latter part of 1886, and immediately after the foregoing, Lily went again to England to collect material for two small books she had been asked to write—'The Army Drum,' and, 'What Hinders You?'—and for the time being nothing further was said. Sam Brengle's silence, however, did not mean any alteration in his choice; and during their first meeting after her return he made that perfectly clear. Still she hesitated. At last to her mind came the clear realization that this 'Divine gift of a good man's love, that she had so persistently pushed from her and laid upon the altar, was for her.'

Meanwhile, Lily had continued her evangelical work in her home district, and Commissioner Brengle tells how on one occasion when they were driving together among the beautiful hills around her home, she told him of a nameless babe, a little child of lawless passions of the night, whose tender life was wasting away through the ignorance and lack of care on the part of its girl-mother. She coaxed the lass to let her have the baby for a while, and took it home and kept it for a year, nursing it back

to rosy health and dimpled sweetness. 'As she talked about that baby,' he said, 'I felt that in her heart were the germs of the richest and tenderest mother-love, and for this I loved her all the more.'

They were married one happy May day in the library of her home. Her wedding guests were chiefly composed of the poor of the district, her Converts, and those who attended the Meetings held by her in the village hall.

Sam Brengle had decided to throw in his lot with The Army, and after a brief honeymoon came to London to undergo 'Training,' leaving his bride to continue her spiritual work at home.

Their first appointment was to Taunton, Mass. It came in the winter time, and Mrs. Brengle being too delicate to do prospecting work, he went on in advance to make a home. Their Quarters in Taunton were as ugly a little flat as one could imagine, but it 'was heaven on earth' to this happy pair. Then to Danbury, and on to Boston, each place a little better than the last.

A baby boy came to this 'heaven on earth,' then, three years later, a girl. Delicate at birth, before she was many months old, she had contracted a severe attack of measles which worked havoc with her feeble constitution,

and it was all one person's work to keep the little one alive. Added to this there were the demands of an Officer's wife upon Mrs. Brengle, and just when she felt her burden was getting more than she could bear, a brick, hurled at the Captain by a rough in Boston, struck him a terrible blow on the head which brought on concussion. Herself in need of surgical treatment, and harassed thus with home sickness, for the first time this usually happy woman was threatened with melancholia. She fought against it. What had a Christian to do with melancholia? she urged. But there it was. The whole round of troubles would revolve in her mind. Sam's health, and the consequent breaking up of home, for he must have an entire rest; George's delicacy; and as for baby, the doctors told her frankly it would be the struggle of years to keep her alive. And then she felt so ill, probably the children would be motherless before long—and so they rotated one after the other.

On one such occasion, when in her extremity she cried to God for aid, the answer came—'Rejoice!'

'I do not know what to rejoice about,' she argued. Then like a procession her mercies passed before her. 'Her husband was still alive—he might have been killed—and there

was every hope he would in time be well; they could afford doctors for the children; they had food and clothes, and their love for each other grew stronger and sweeter every day.' The clouds lifted and 'the joy of the Lord became her strength.'

In her general home-life this happy spirit was ever after an outstanding characteristic. If there was a difficult or unpleasant task to be undertaken she would encompass it, and inspire others to do so, in 'picnic' spirit.

A few golden months were spent in Portland, Maine, where Staff-Captain Brengle was Divisional Commander. Every moment was passed in busy, happy service, then the death of her mother made it necessary for her to return to her own home again to care for her now aged father. At first it was thought that he could not live, but under the careful nursing of his daughter he regained a measure of health, but it was obvious that her duty was to remain by his side. The only appointment their circumstances now permitted the Major to fill was that of a Travelling Spiritual Special. Willingly they accepted this commission, in spite of the fact that it would, in all probability, mean the Major would have constant and lengthy absences from his loved ones. Neither hesitated about making the necessary sacrifice.

Writing to her cousin in regard to this, Mrs. Brengle said :

‘Yes, Sam is going to Australia. Oh, you know all about it, maybe more than I shall. You know how old the letters will be when I get them, and the grass might be green on his grave by the time one reaches me. I am not so brave as some women, and I admit that only one thing could make me endure the separation—the certainty that he will make hundreds of homes happy, and thousands of evil people good by his going. I have seen too much of the misery of the poor to stand in the way of his going, even though I feel India and Africa may be beyond Australia for him.’

Sometimes Mrs. Brengle, tied by home duties, longed for the wider platform, and to be by her husband’s side, and as far as her strength permitted she never lost opportunity of ‘doing what she could’ for the Lord. Especially she interested herself in the young people who crossed her path. One who lived with her for many years says :

‘It didn’t make any difference who the young man or woman, boy or girl was, Mrs. Brengle was always ready to take an interest in their hopes or plans ; always willing, if she could, to give them practical help or counsel or advice, in such a heartfelt way that

they were assured of her warm interest, and could not fail to respond to it.

‘There was a young Divinity student, for instance, who supplied the pulpit of the little village Church one summer. He was very much alone, and was obliged to board with a family entirely uncongenial to him. It was not long, however, before he found his way to her home, and found also a welcome that never died out. Mrs. Brengle was never too busy or too tired to give him the bit of advice or the kind word of motherly counsel that he needed. There, too, he not only heard Holiness preached, but saw it lived so truly that his own heart longed for it, and he sought the Blessing for himself.

‘Another young man, a travelling book agent, she became interested in spiritually, and not only kept in touch with him while he was in town, but kept up a correspondence when he left.

‘“Oh, Mrs. Brengle, your letters heal the ache in my heart,” wrote a poor lad who had been turned out of his home for Christ’s sake. I recollect his coming to see her one evening when he was suffering with a heavy cold. He left her with a roll of flannel for his chest, a dose of medicine, and much good advice on the care and prevention of colds.’

Her busy pen was ever occupied in writing

letters to young Officers who were in distress or perplexity ; while those to her husband and children are full of inspiration and understanding.

After the death of her father Mrs. Brengle accompanied her husband on several of his evangelical tours, and this was especially a joy to her because the Colonel's (as he then was) health was not good. To rest him, frequently she would undertake the conduct of the afternoon Meetings. God had given her her heart's desire. But it was to be but a stepping-stone to a better and higher service.

For some time she had observed in herself a lessening of the keen interest she had always felt in matters of world-concern. One day she remarked on this :

'I don't know what's the matter with me, but I do not seem to have head to follow anything like this any more.'

'Are you ill ?' came the anxious inquiry.

'Do I look so ?' she laughed. She did not, and the matter passed. Her letters also, during the Colonel's later absences, seemed to express a longing 'for the support of a human hand,' but in spiritual insight she grew stronger and stronger.

The Colonel was then appointed to take charge of the Training Garrison—and this pleased her greatly, for they would again be together, and

she could assist him in his work—but instead, an unexpected breakdown in his health, and the necessity for an operation took him into hospital. It was successful, and his wife wrote, 'I came home the happiest woman on earth.' Unfortunately, the trouble was not over, and he had to return to hospital for further treatment.

Then came the climax. One morning the children found their mother crying—'crying over buttons that wouldn't button, changed, and stricken in some mysterious way.' A doctor was called, who decided she was suffering from acute nervous prostration ; but further medical advice resulted in her being sent to a sanatorium. During the four months she spent there, in weakness and semi-consciousness, the Colonel underwent a further serious operation. She was spared, however, till he was able to go to her side—indeed, a wonderful rally gave rise to hope that, after all, she might recover ; but it was not to be.

'When death came,' wrote the Colonel, 'it found her ready. During the last weeks, when she had ceased to talk with us, and when she seldom gave any signs of recognition, she never failed to respond, if I asked her if Jesus were with her : "Yes, praise the Lord !"'

Her last hours were the fulfilment of the

last line of her beautiful hymn, 'God's Hour,'  
to the tune of 'My Rosary.'

The hours I spend with Thee, my Lord,  
Are as the wine of life to me.  
They bring me boundless peace, unmeasured joy,  
Those hours I spend, dear Lord, with Thee.

I hear Thy voice adown the years,  
'Could thou not watch one hour with Me?'  
O Thou, the Life, the Light, the Way,  
Help me to watch, my Lord, with Thee!

And when my days on earth are done,  
Heaven's morning breaks and shadows flee—  
When just before me waits Thy Judgment Throne,  
Earth's last dread hour I'll spend, dear Lord, with  
Thee.

Mrs. Brengle was laid to rest in The Army's  
little God's acre, beside other promoted comrades  
whom she had loved, and with whom she had  
toiled for the enlargement of God's Kingdom  
on earth. Inside the tiny wedding-ring which  
was cut from her finger a short time before her  
death, when her hands began to swell, were the  
words—'Holiness unto the Lord.' Her life  
had been a continual response to that hidden  
vow.

[EDITOR'S NOTE.—A more extended account of Mrs.  
Brengle's Life and Work is to be found in 'Elizabeth Swift  
Brengle,' by her late friend, Brigadier Eileen Douglas, and  
to be obtained from Salvationist Publishing and Supplies,  
Ltd., 117-121 Judd Street, King's Cross, London, W.C.1, or  
through any Salvation Army Officer. Cloth boards.]

### EXTRACTS FROM MRS. BRENGLE'S WRITINGS

I PRAY every morning that He will keep me from  
evil-speaking through the day, and yesterday  
the Spirit's prompting stopped me short from  
telling something in the sewing-room which, while  
strictly true, and not unkind, was still unnecessary.

When one comes to think of it, there is no sin  
so universal as that of evil-speaking—and this  
among good people as well as bad. By God's  
grace I'll be one Christian who will obey His will.  
It seems the highest resolve I have ever made  
(though I have made it after a vague and general  
fashion before), but there is power in my Saviour  
to enable me to live up to it.

\* \* \*

What is an 'idle word'? Rotherham, who dives  
deep into Greek meanings, translates the term  
'useless expression,' and thereby cuts off from  
those of us who like to talk any faint hope of a  
wide tongue range.

'Take heed WHAT ye hear.' Don't listen to  
gossip, scandal, backbitings, detractions, foolish  
jesting, malicious hints. 'Avoiding profane  
(worldly) and vain babblings,' wrote Paul to a

young Christian. Again Paul tells him to shun such babblings, because 'they will increase unto more ungodliness, and their word will eat as doth a canker.'

But suppose you must hear these things? Then 'take heed how ye hear.' If the outward ear must listen, keep the heart turned to God, keep your mind stayed upon Him, and never for an instant let your will assent to talk of this kind. It is not a mental attitude of resistance to what you hear that will help you—it is the turning of the soul to God, and the reposing upon Him and His promises for all your need that will prove your safety. Glory to our God for ever!

Make a covenant with your ears, as David did with his eyes, and the ever-hearing God will keep you from falling through any snare of words.

\* \* \*

'Who shall roll us away the stone?' cried the poor women at the sepulchre; and that is what the sins of your neighbours and friends are crying out to you, if you will only listen.

Roll away the heavy stone of disobedience, and let the imprisoned Christ come out and be manifested in your life, then God will use you to save these people.

It is useless for you to ask, 'Am I my brother's keeper?' God answered that question when He spoke to Cain, and said that the voice of blood cried out to Him from the ground where it was spilt. There are some sinners in the world who

will only look at a risen Saviour as they see Him in you, and you are the keeper of these souls.

Shall they cry out against you on the Last Day, at the Judgment Bar—'You did not roll away the stone that we might see Him'?

\* \* \*

'How shall I know the voice of God?' comes to us as an almost complaining question. 'I think that I am led of God sometimes, but the thing I undertake ends in disaster; my own soul is not satisfied, and others are not helped. I am bound to believe that I was mistaken and that it was some other voice than His which called me in that direction.'

Get where God wants you to be in your own soul, then your ears will be unstopped to distinguish His voice from others.

\* \* \*

You cannot, in true faith, ask God to take the carnal mind out of you if you are keeping anything back—if you are not fulfilling the condition of absolute self-surrender. I knew a man once whose daily prayer to God was for a clean heart, while he knowingly cherished within him an unholy, forbidden lust. And yet he wondered that God was silent unto him!

The tendency of nature in us is constantly towards sin, but God can utterly destroy that tendency, and can put in its place a something supernatural which tends always toward right, goodness, purity, holiness.

## CAREER

*Born in U.S.A.*

*Converted on visit to England.*

Engaged on Salvation Army Literary Work,  
1885-1887, during which time she wrote  
'The Army Drum' and 'What Hinders  
You?'

Married to Rev. (now Commissioner) Samuel  
Brenge in 1887.

Assisted him in various Field and Staff  
appointments; also writing 'Half Hours  
with my Guide.'

*Promoted to Glory : April, 1915.*